

Humanities and Arts Requirement

Overview

The Humanities and Arts Requirement empowers students to meet the broad educational goals of WPI. The balance between technological and humanistic education and the emphasis on inquiry-based approaches to student learning have been and remain hallmarks of a WPI education. In concert with WPI's other degree requirements, the Humanities and Arts Requirement embodies the institute's definition of an educated person. The Humanities and Arts Requirement engages students with theory and practice – *Lehr und Kunst* – through the following educational goals.

Goals of the Humanities and Arts Requirement

- To introduce students to the breadth, diversity, and creativity of human experience as expressed in the humanities and arts;
- To develop students' ability to think critically and independently about the world;
- To enhance students' ability to communicate effectively with others in a spirit of openness and cooperation;
- To enrich students' understanding of themselves;
- To deepen students' ability to apply concepts and skills in a focused thematic area through sustained critical inquiry;
- To encourage students to reflect on their responsibilities to others in local, national and global communities;
- To kindle in students a life-long interest in the humanities and arts.

Meeting the Requirement

Students fulfill the humanities and arts degree requirement by completing two units of work consisting of five student-selected courses followed by a 1/3 unit Inquiry Seminar or Practicum (HU 3900, HU 3910, or equivalent). In selecting the courses, students must complete depth and breadth components of the requirement, as described below. *All 5 HUA courses must be completed before beginning the Inquiry Seminar or Practicum.* At the end of the Inquiry Seminar or Practicum, every student will submit a completion-of-degree requirement form (CDR) to certify completion of the requirement.

Depth Component:

The WPI Plan calls for students to develop a meaningful grasp of a thematic area of the humanities and arts. *To ensure this depth, students complete at least three courses of thematically-related work prior to a culminating Inquiry Seminar or Practicum in the same thematic area.* Thematically-related work can be achieved in two ways:

1. Focusing on one of the following disciplines or disciplinary areas:
 1. art/art history (AR)
 2. music (MU)
 3. theatre (TH)
 4. literature and writing/rhetoric (EN, WR, RH)
 5. history and international and global studies (HI, HU, INTL)
 6. philosophy and religion (PY, RE)

Paths for language study are described below.

2. Defining the thematic area across disciplines or disciplinary areas in consultation with a Humanities and Arts faculty member.

To ensure that students develop a program of increasing complexity, at least one of the three thematically-related courses that precede the Inquiry Seminar or Practicum must be at the 2000-level or above. Students are strongly encouraged but not required to include a 3000-level course within their depth component. The structure of the requirement remains flexible so that students will become intentional learners as they select a sequence of thematically-related courses.

Breadth Component

To ensure intellectual breadth, before taking the final Inquiry Seminar or Practicum, students must take at least one course outside the grouping in which they complete their depth component. To identify breadth, courses are grouped in the following manner:

- art/art history, theatre, and music (AR, TH, MU);
- languages (SP, GN, ISE, AB, CN);
- literature and writing/rhetoric (EN, WR, RH);
- history and international and global studies (HI, HU, INTL);
- philosophy and religion (PY, RE).

WPI offers a flexible curriculum to entrust students with a significant amount of choice and responsibility for planning their own course of study. At the same time, WPI requires students to take at least one course outside the depth area in order to provide exposure to more than one disciplinary approach within the arts and humanities, which include the creativity of the fine and performing arts, modes of communication in languages and literature, and the cultural analysis of the past and present. Students are encouraged to experiment and to take courses in more than one group outside the depth area if they wish. By providing exposure to multiple areas, the breadth component encourages students to appreciate the fundamental unity of knowledge and the interconnections between and among diverse disciplinary fields.

The one exception to this breadth requirement is that students may take all six courses in a foreign language.

Depth and Breadth Components in Modern Languages

Development of proficiency in a language necessitates sustained engagement in the language beyond the elementary and intermediate level. Language instruction is broadly interdisciplinary and includes elements of the history, literature, and culture of a particular language area. A student in languages must still meet the depth component of the requirement by taking 6 courses in the language, one of which is approved as the final Inquiry Practicum or Seminar. Additional information about options for the Inquiry Practicum or Seminar in Chinese (CN), English for Non-Native speakers (ISE), German (GN) and Spanish (SP) can be found later in this section. A student who begins language study is not compelled to remain in that subject, but could choose to switch to another subject of study and complete the depth component in another thematic area.

Inquiry Seminar or Practicum

The culmination of the depth component of the Humanities and Arts Requirement is an inquiry seminar or practicum. The educational goals for the seminar or practicum are the same regardless of the format.

Objectives of the Inquiry Seminar or Practicum

- *Critical inquiry:* to develop each student's ability to apply concepts and skills learned in the humanities and arts, the seminar/practicum offers opportunities to engage in sustained critical inquiry, analysis, or problem-solving in a focused thematic area.

- *Research and investigation*: to engage students in research, discovery, creativity, or investigation, the seminar/practicum provides opportunities for students actively and critically to seek and evaluate new information and insights using multiple sources. These opportunities need not necessarily be research papers.
- *Communication and writing*: to develop each student's ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, the seminar/practicum includes discussion of appropriate communications skills and provides opportunities to revise written work after receiving feedback from the instructor.
- *Intellectual independence*: to foster independence of thought, the seminar/practicum offers significant opportunities for individual, self-directed work.
- *Conversation and dialogue*: to promote individual reflection and the appreciation of diverse perspectives, the seminar/practicum consists of classroom activities other than traditional lecture to encourage discussion and collaborative learning in a spirit of openness, cooperation, and dialogue with peers. The thematic focus, structure, and assignments for each seminar or practicum are to be determined by each individual instructor to achieve these goals.

Inquiry Seminar

The Inquiry Seminar, usually taken in the sophomore year, represents the culmination of the Humanities and Arts Requirement. The Seminar provides an opportunity for students to explore a particular topic or theme in the humanities in greater depth. The Seminar has two primary goals. The first is to foster independence of student thought, typically through some form of self-directed activity. The second is to encourage a cooperative, dialogic approach to inquiry, through open exchanges with peers in a small, intensive classroom setting (typically 12 students or fewer). Students learn how to frame questions in the context of a particular discipline or field of study, and to explore or investigate problems using methods appropriate to work in the humanities and arts.

As the student's capstone experience in the humanities and arts, the Inquiry Seminar is intended to help students take their knowledge of the humanities to a higher level. The purpose of the Inquiry Seminar, therefore, is not to provide a broad survey or general introduction to a given discipline, but to provide a structured forum in which students might approach a specific humanities-related problem or theme at a deeper, more sustained level of intellectual engagement than would normally be possible within a traditional course setting. The pedagogical idea behind the Inquiry Seminar is that work in the humanities and arts is at once an intensely personal enterprise, in which the individual freely draws on her or his own particular interests, abilities, passions, and commitments, and at the same time a form of ethical community in which the practitioner is always in conversation with and accountable to others.

While the specific content and requirements of the Inquiry Seminar vary from instructor to instructor, all Inquiry Seminars incorporate self-directed learning as a significant part of the curriculum. It is the department's expectation, therefore, that by the time they enroll in the Seminar, students should have sufficient background in the humanities and arts to be able to work independently and to pose questions of their own. Students will be asked to research and write a term paper, to assemble a portfolio of writings or exercises, or otherwise to demonstrate their ability to pose a question of relevance to humanities inquiry, and to answer it. At the same time, the Seminars are designed to foster an atmosphere of intellectual collaboration and discovery. Students are required to participate fully in seminar discussion, to share the results of their own research or activities, and to engage the ideas and interests of their peers in a constructive and collegial way.

Practicum in Humanities and Arts

Students in the performing arts have the option to complete their Humanities and Arts sequence with an Inquiry Practicum in music or theatre. A practicum shares the same goals and objectives of an inquiry seminar but provides students with a production/performance experience which emphasizes the hands-on, practical application of skills and knowledge gained from previous Humanities and Arts courses. Samples of practicums in music include composing, arranging, or performing a solo recital. Theatre students may choose to work on a campus production in a number of production roles, including but not limited to acting, directing, dramaturgy, design, technical production, or management. In addition to weekly meetings, students may be required to

attend rehearsals, performances, and other production-related activities. The design of the final project is determined through conversations between instructors and students. Due to the unique nature of the practicum, permission of the instructor is required to enroll in a practicum.

Languages: Practicum or Seminar

Students in languages may complete the Humanities and Arts Requirement in one of the following three ways:

1. *Practicum in the sixth and final course in a language.* The practicum will include evaluative components or exams to demonstrate overall language skills in four areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The practicum will require students to demonstrate breadth of cultural knowledge of the language area. (Examples of practicum courses: CN 2544, CN 3544, GN 3512, GN 3515; SP 3522; SP 3527)
2. *Advanced language seminar after five previous courses in the language.* The seminar will explore a thematic topic and provide opportunities for individual inquiry. (Seminar examples: GN 3513, GN 3514; SP 3523, SP 3524, SP 3525, SP 3526, SP 3528, SP 3529, SP 3530, SP 3531)
3. *Advanced language seminar after advanced-level language courses combined with courses from other areas of study.* Students who demonstrate basic oral, written, and cultural knowledge of a language in a placement test at the advanced level may combine courses from other areas for their requirement. (Seminar examples are the same as option 2.) International students who are non-native speakers may take a combination of ISE and WR courses and fulfill the HUA requirement by taking a 3000-level or above ISE/WR project-based course.

Option 1 and 2 require students to take six courses in a language. For example, in option 1, a student without prior language training might begin with GN 1511 Elementary German I and conclude with a practicum in GN 3512 Advanced German II. In option 2, for example, a student might start with SP 2521 Intermediate Spanish I followed by five Spanish courses which culminate in one of the designated seminars. In option 3, students who demonstrate knowledge of the language at the advanced level may mix courses from other areas in their course sequence. For example, a student might take two courses from history, philosophy, music, etc. along with four advanced Spanish courses which would culminate in a designated seminar. Students in the English language track might begin with three ISE courses, take one WR course, one from history, and conclude with a 3000-level ISE/WR course. Students in all three options for languages would be required to submit the same materials to demonstrate completion of the requirement as students whose culminating experience was an inquiry seminar or practicum in another area of the Humanities and Arts.

HUA Faculty Arranged by Disciplinary Group

Art/Art History (AR)

Roshanak Bigonah (AR)
Jennifer deWinter (AR)
Adryen Gonzalez (AR)
Edward Gutierrez(AR)
Marie Keller (AR)
Jo Ellen Reinhardt (AR)
Joshua Rosenstock (AR)
M. David Samson (AR)

Music (MU)

Scott Barton (MU)
Fred Bianchi (MU)
V.J. Manzo (MU)

Douglas Olsen (MU)
Joshua Rohde (MU)
Douglas Weeks (MU)
Brent Wetters (MU)

Theatre (TH)

Patrick Crowe (TH)
Laura Eckelman (TH)
Sarah Lucie (TH)
Kathryn Moncrief (TH)
Olivia D'Ambrosio Scanlon (Adjunct)
Steve Taylor (OBC/TH)

Languages (AB, CN, GN, ISE, SP)

Esther Boucher-Yip (ISE))
Althea Danielski (ISE)
Daniel DiMassa (GN)
Wen-Hua Du (CN)
Mohammed El Hamzaoui (AB)
Aarti Madan (SP)
Ingrid Matos-Nin (SP)
Angel Rivera (SP)

Lina Munoz-Marquez (SP)
Huili Zeng (CN)

Literature/Writing (EN,WR)

Joe Aguilar (EN)
Esther Boucher-Yip (ISE, WR)
Kristin Boudreau (EN)
Joel Brattin (EN)
Jim Cocola (EN)
Althea Danielski (ISE, WR)
Jennifer deWinter (WR)
Mohammed El Hamzaoui (AB, WR)
Michelle Ephraim (EN)
Brenton Faber (WR)
Joshua Harmon (EN, WR)
Shana Lessing (WR)
Kevin Lewis (WR)
Ryan Madan (WR)
Katherine McIntyre (EN, WR)
Svetlana Nikitina (EN, HU)
Lance Schachterle (EN)
Yunus Telliel (WR)

History/International and Global Studies (HI, HU, INTL)

Bland Addison (HI, INTL)
Steven Bullock (HI)
Constance Clark (HI)
Joseph Cullon (HI)
Lindsay Davis (HI)
Holger Droessler (HI, INTL)
John Galante (HI, INTL)
James Hanlan (HI)
Peter Hansen (HI, INTL)
Shana Lessing (HI, INTL)
Jennifer Rudolph (HI, INTL)
William San Martin (HI, INTL)
David Spanagel (HI)

Philosophy/Religion (PY, RE)

Bethel Eddy (PY, RE)
Roger Gottlieb (PY, RE)
Jennifer McWeeny (PY)
Rebecca Moody (PY, RE)
Geoff Pfeifer (PY, RE)
John Sanbonmatsu (PY)

AP Credit Policy

The Humanities and Arts Department will accept a maximum of 1/3 unit of AP credit towards the Humanities and Arts requirement. Students who score a 4 or 5 on the AP test in German or Spanish automatically receive 1/3 unit of credit in the language, provided they do not begin German or Spanish study at WPI with Elementary German I (GN 1511) or Elementary Spanish II (SP 1523). Students who score a 4 or 5 on the AP test in studio art may be eligible for HUA credit, subject to a portfolio review by art faculty. Students who score a 4 or 5 on the AP test in other subject areas of the humanities and arts will receive credit in the relevant discipline. AP credit beyond one course (1/3 unit) in the Humanities and Arts may be counted toward other requirements such as free elective credit or particular majors and minors at WPI.

Transfer Students and the Humanities and Arts Requirement

Students who transfer fewer than six Humanities and Arts courses from another institution must complete an inquiry seminar or practicum to complete the Humanities and Arts Requirement. Students who transfer six or more courses in Humanities and Arts will have the option of submitting a CDR form or engaging in additional work (or documentation of work) to earn an "A" on the CDR, in accordance with current transfer rules (see below).

All students may have the option of completing their Humanities and Arts Requirement while enrolled for 1 unit of coursework at an off-campus project center where one-third unit of the coursework shall include an inquiry seminar or practicum.

Transfer credit in the Humanities and Arts at WPI is granted on a course-for-course basis. All Transfer students entering WPI with *fewer than six courses or their equivalent of transfer credit in the Humanities and Arts* must complete work in the Humanities and Arts, including an Inquiry Seminar/Practicum to the extent that the overall Humanities and Arts credit totals two units.

No credit toward the Humanities and Arts Requirement is given for introductory-level foreign-language courses unless the entire program is in that foreign language. Usually only one transfer course in Freshman English can

be applied toward the requirement. In all cases, the professor for the Inquiry Seminar/Practicum has the final decision on what courses are acceptable within the student's sequence leading up to the project. Up to one unit (i.e. three courses) of transferred work in the Humanities and Arts that is not credited toward the Humanities and Arts Requirement can be credited toward the fifteen-unit graduation requirement; such courses shall receive credit under the category of EL 1000.

If a Transfer student *has completed two units of acceptable college-level work in the Humanities and Arts prior to entering WPI*, a Completion of Degree Requirement form will be submitted by the Humanities and Arts Department Coordinator for Transfer Students at the request of the student. The grade for such a Humanities and Arts Requirement met by transfer credit is normally a grade of "CR". Students whose grades on transferred courses average A can engage in additional work or submit samples of their previous work and may be awarded an A for the Humanities and Arts Requirement. Alternately a transfer student may elect to undertake an Inquiry Seminar/Practicum in an effort to achieve an A grade. These evaluation options must be exercised prior to the Department's submission of the Completion of Degree Requirement form to the Registrar.

Decisions concerning credit toward the Humanities and Arts Requirement are made by the Humanities and Arts Coordinator for Transfer Students, Professor James Hanlan. He can be contacted in room 28 of Salisbury Laboratories, or at extension 5438, or email jphanlan@wpi.edu.

Guidelines for Granting Transfer Credit to U.S. Students for Foreign Language Study

Beginning with students matriculating for spring semester/January 2024

1. **Grade needed for transfer credit**

HUA currently requires a B or better from accredited 2-year institutions and a C or better from 4-year accredited institutions. Recommendation: B- or better from accredited US institutions. Non-US institution will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. **Credit for language classes at other institutions**

A. **Credit for study on the high school level:**

1. Transfer credit of 1/3 unit is given for Advanced Placement with a score of 4 or 5.
2. Students with three or more years of modern-language study in high school, but who have not taken the Advanced Placement examination in that language, may receive 1/3 unit credit for their high school language study upon satisfactory completion of two courses in the same language on the intermediate level or above. (Note: Courses in Chinese, German and Spanish in addition to those offered at WPI, as well as courses in other languages, are available at other colleges in the Consortium.)
3. In either case 1. or 2. above, in order to receive 1/3 unit credit, students must begin their WPI course sequence at the Elementary II level or above.

B. **Credit for study at other colleges and universities:**

1. Language study which is done at other US universities and colleges prior to entering WPI, transfers on a course-for-course basis with a minimum grade of B- This course credit can count towards the student's Humanities and Arts requirement.
2. Language study which is done at universities, language institutes, or cultural institutes outside the US, prior to entering WPI, or done with the prior written permission of the Department Head as part of an agreed-upon Humanities and Arts sequence, is assessed by the relevant language faculty based on the grade earned, number of contact hours, instructional format, institution, and the level of work accomplished.

3. **Credit for online courses**

For entering transfer students, HUA will accept online course credit from accredited institutions in the U.S. (international institutions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis) that can be used to satisfy the HUA requirement.

Other Options

Interdisciplinary Study at the American Antiquarian Society

A unique opportunity for interdisciplinary work in the humanities and arts is offered by the American Studies Seminar sponsored each fall by the American Antiquarian Society. Organized in collaboration with Worcester's five undergraduate colleges and universities, this seminar focuses on topics that allow students to investigate the Society's rich holdings in early American history, literature, and culture. The Society's unparalleled collection of documents is a short walk from the campus. Information on application deadlines and academic credit toward the Humanities and Arts Requirement is available from the WPI Campus Representative to the American Antiquarian Society.

Off-Campus Option: Humanities and Arts Project Centers

WPI offers the option to complete the Humanities and Arts Requirement during one term of study at several Project Centers. Normally, students complete the requirement through at least six courses or independent-study projects on campus. However, the "Off-Campus" option allows students to combine at least three courses on campus with one term studying the humanities and arts at a Project Center. Students may use this option to complete the requirement.

Off-campus projects are available in Germany and Argentina for the study of foreign languages and in England, Taiwan, Japan, and Morocco for other fields. Students devote themselves to one term studying the history, literature, language, or culture at the project center with a WPI faculty advisor. The program might combine a thematic seminar in an area of the faculty advisor's expertise with visits to museums, the theatre, musical performances, or cultural excursions. Although themes or areas of emphasis vary from year to year, all off-campus Humanities and Arts activities culminate in a written report in an area of interest to the student.

To be eligible for participation, students must have already completed three courses in humanities and arts before they leave campus. Students may apply to the off-campus program before they have taken all three courses. In addition, students going to any Project Center must complete all of the forms required by the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division.

Requirements:

- Students must have completed at least three courses in the Humanities and Arts at WPI, or have earned equivalent course credit approved by the Humanities and Arts Department, before the term of the off-campus activity. The Department may allow students to count transfer or advanced placement credits toward the three course minimum;
- Students must be accepted into the off-campus Humanities and Arts program by the Humanities and Arts Department, and complete all forms required by the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division, in order to register for these projects.
- Students might be required by the faculty advisor to complete a PQP or attend required meetings before the off-campus project;
- Students must submit a written report or paper at the end of the program. Students also may be required to submit written updates at various times in the course of the program. In all cases, the faculty advisor at the project center will determine the precise form of the written requirements.
- Students may be required to give an oral presentation at the end of the program;
- Under normal circumstances, students must complete the program within one term in order to receive the full unit of credit;
- Only members of the Humanities and Arts faculty at WPI may advise off-campus Humanities and Arts programs.

Off-Campus Recommendations

All off-campus programs benefit from advance planning. Discuss the possibility of an off-campus activity with your academic advisor at the beginning of the freshman year. Consult with the WPI faculty who will advise these off-campus programs as early as possible, since they may be able to suggest useful courses or other background resources for the projects. Also keep in mind that three courses are the minimum required, but many students find it advantageous to take additional courses before going away.

The interdisciplinary programs are open to students with a background in areas of the humanities and arts besides foreign languages, including art history and architecture, drama/theatre, history, literature, music, philosophy, religion, or writing/rhetoric. After taking at least three courses in any of these areas on campus, you could then go to a HUA project center to complete your requirement. Some students also have participated in this program to study beyond the Humanities and Arts Requirement for a minor in international and global studies, history, literature, music, theatre, or other areas.

The Humanities and Arts Department advertises upcoming program locations and application deadlines at the Global Fair each September. Future programs might include other locations that provide the context for an intensive study of humanistic themes associated with particular locales within the United States. Contact the Department of Humanities and Arts for more information.