

## Creative Process/Performance (CPP)

August 2008 [DRAFT]

### Description of the requirement

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The arts are a vital component of human life. They provide an opportunity to experience and express the world in ways distinct from other disciplines. Courses in the arts develop an understanding of the creative dimension of human existence as a way of experiencing the world.

The requirement in the arts focuses on learning through participation in artistic creation and through the interpretation of artistic creations through specific theoretical and cultural lenses. By taking two courses from among those offered by the departments of art, music, theatre, and English, students will develop an understanding of art as a constructed means for communication designed to reveal certain meanings and ideas or elicit specific responses. One course (designated as CPP-T) will emphasize the historical, theoretical, and interpretive aspects of music, art, theatre or literature, allowing the student to reflect on the creative process and the art produced. The other course (designated as CPP-A) must be an applied course in art, music, theatre or English (e.g. creative writing) that will enhance personal creativity through the development of specific artistic skills and techniques.

### Rationale

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In his 2007 commencement address at Stanford University, Dana Gioia, chair of the National Endowment of the Arts said, “we need to create a new national consensus. The purpose of arts education is not to produce more artists, though that is a byproduct. The real purpose of arts education is to create complete human beings capable of leading successful and productive lives in a free society.”

*Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* is one of AAC&U’s Essential Learning Outcomes. Focused on engagement through big questions, both contemporary and enduring, this outcome is accomplished “through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts.”

Below is an excerpt from the AAC& U document:

**How do we help graduates compose lives of meaning and integrity?**

*‘It is difficult  
to get the news from poems  
yet men die miserably every day for lack  
of what is found there’*

—William Carlos Williams

Throughout history, liberal education—and especially the arts and humanities—have been a constant resource, not just for civic life but for the inner life of self-discovery, values, moral inspiration, spiritual quests and solace, and the deep pleasures of encountering beauty, insight, and expressive power. Ultimately, it is this dimension—serious engagement with questions of values, principles, and larger meanings—that marks the essential difference between instrumental learning and liberal learning. For communities and individuals that are denied social power and voice, the arts and humanities make possible what Azar Nafisi calls “the Republic of the Imagination,” a space where those who have been marginalized and persecuted can draw courage and hope from stories, language, culture, and example. For all human beings, the arts and humanities invite exploration of the big and enduring questions about what it means to be human. They also foster the crucial human and civic capacity of empathy, the ability to care about and even identify with perspectives and circumstances other than one’s own. The moral power of the arts and humanities has been one of the secrets of their lasting influence; those who experience these sources of inspiration readily see their importance, both for the human spirit and for community. [http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/GlobalCentury\\_final.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/GlobalCentury_final.pdf)

## **Criteria for Approving Proposals**

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### **CPP-T (theoretical/historical examination of the arts and literature)**

A CPP-T course will emphasize the historical, theoretical, and interpretive aspects of music, art, theatre or literature, so the student can examine the creative process and the art produced. In studying the art and the process of their interpretation, students in these courses should:

- consider the form — for example, the various styles or genres — of communication;
- study various interpretive strategies and problems;
- examine dynamic relations among artist, audience and the art;
- explore whether — and if so, in what ways — the art embodies cultural values.

### **CPP-A (applied arts)**

A CPP-A course is an applied course in art, music, theatre or English that will enhance personal creativity through the development of specific artistic skills and techniques. Students in these courses should:

- acquire basic experience in an artistic medium;
- develop an understanding and appreciation for process in creative expression;
- negotiate between conceptual ideas and spontaneous opportunity/discovery;
- discover expression;
- exhibit or present their work publicly, at least within the classroom.

## **Source Information on Similar Requirements at other Good Schools**

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**Whitman College** uses a distribution program that includes six credit hours in the fine arts.

<http://www.whitman.edu/whitman/index.cfm?objectId=76CCE28F-A6C4-0374-4A7F6054C3D86490>

**St. Olaf** requires two courses in artistic and literary studies as a part of their core requirements.

<http://www.stolaf.edu/catalog/gradrequirements/comprehensive-requirements.html>

Part of the Hamline Plan at **Hamline University** is disciplinary breadth. Two of these courses must come from the fine arts and specifically deal with creative expression. <http://www.hamline.edu/cla/admission/transfer/guide.html>

**Carleton College** requires 12 credits in the arts and literature as part of their distribution requirements. “Courses in this group are intended to develop students’ creative potential in the arts and/or to enhance their sensitivity to artistic expression. This requirement can be fulfilled with designated courses in Art and Art History, Dance, English, Music, Theater, Classical and Modern Literature and specific courses in Cinema and Media Studies.” (Note—Carleton has a 210 credit graduation requirement)

<http://www.carleton.edu/campus/registrar/catalog/AcademicPrograms.html>

**Hiram College** focuses on “ways of knowing” in their curricular requirements. The college “is committed to a rigorous, creative, and demanding intellectual environment that focuses on methods for acquiring knowledge and understanding about human beings and the world. One course or experience that satisfies each of the relevant sets of goals is required.” Included in these “ways of knowing” are Creative Methods and Interpretative Methods.

*Creative Methods (CM):* The expression of human creativity involves the development of practical and evaluative skills. Courses and experiences satisfy this requirement by helping students understand the creative process and teaching them the intellectual skills necessary for reflection and evaluation of artistic products.

- Goal: Acquire the vocabulary necessary to talk intelligently about one’s own creative art as well as the creative art of others, and to clearly articulate the aesthetic experience.

- Goal: Develop hands-on skills necessary for aesthetic expression and reflection and practical knowledge essential to the implementation of creative techniques and concepts.

*Interpretive Methods (IM):* The human experience of meaning involves the application of interpretation to a broad variety of human endeavors, including art, music, literature, and philosophical and religious texts. Courses and experiences satisfy the goals for this requirement by teaching the skills necessary to interpret one or more forms of human expression.

- Goal: Interpret the human experience of meaning as expressed in artistic and intellectual products.
- Goal: Apply the knowledge and perspective gained from interpretive analysis to a broader understanding of the world or to one's own life. <http://www.hiram.edu/current/catalog/gradrequirements.html>

**Willamette University** requires students to complete work in six areas broadly defined as "modes of inquiry." These include "Creating in the Arts" and "Interpreting Texts."

*Creating in the Arts (CA):* Courses satisfying this requirement seek to provide an understanding of the creative process as a means of discovery, exploration, and self-expression. Students in these courses should:

- acquire basic experience in an artistic medium;
- develop an understanding and appreciation for process in creative expression;
- negotiate between conceptual ideas and spontaneous opportunity/discovery;
- discover expression;
- exhibit or present their work publicly, at least within the classroom.

*Interpreting Texts (IT):* Courses satisfying this requirement develop students' skills in analyzing and understanding textual representations of human experience. These criteria construe the notion of "text" broadly. The texts being analyzed might include literary works, films, music compositions, rituals, performances, or ethnographies. A text for these purposes is one that reveals its meaning to or intelligibly challenges a coherent practice of interpretation. Of course, a given text may do both. Furthermore, courses that satisfy this requirement should encourage students to consider the relationship between texts discussed and particular form/s of culture they may express or help constitute. In studying these texts and the process of their interpretation, students in these courses should:

- consider the form — for example, the various styles or genres — of textual communication;
- study various interpretive strategies and problems;
- examine dynamic relations among author, reader and text;
- explore whether — and if so, in what ways — texts embody cultural values.

<http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/2006/overview/cla/generated/>

## **Teaching Resources**

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## **Assessment Resources**

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## **Examples of Classes**

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*All courses listed below are current catalogue courses.*

### **CPP-T (Historical/theoretical/interpretive courses)**

Art 101 Discovering Art  
 Art 201-205 Art History courses  
 Eng 209-210 British Writers  
 Eng 212-213 American Writers  
 Eng/Thtr 255 Theatre and Drama in America  
 Eng 311 Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Brit Lit  
 Eng 314 Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Lit  
 Eng 331 The Age of Chaucer  
 Eng 332 Major Authors of the English Renaissance  
 Eng 333 Major Plays of Shakespeare

Thtr/Eng 371, 375, 377 Plays and Performance  
Mus 103 Discovering Music  
Mus 350 Romanticism in the Arts\*  
Mus 352 History of Opera\*  
Mus 353 Music of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century\*  
Mus 357 History of Jazz\*  
Thtr 112 Discovering Theatre

\*These courses are currently 2 credit courses.

**CPP-A (Applied courses)**

Art 121 Basic Drawing  
Art 141 Photography I  
Art 143 Pottery I  
Eng 203 Intro to Poetry Writing  
Eng 204 Non-fiction Writing  
Mus 214 Ensembles\*\*  
Thtr 130 Acting I  
Thtr 220 Stage Lighting and Sound  
Thtr 224 Costume History and Design  
Thtr 225 Scene Design  
Thtr 216 Oral Interpretation

Video production courses currently in development in the communications department could also be added to the list of applied courses.

\*\*Ensembles are currently .75 credit courses. They could be taken for three semesters to count for applied credit.

**Staffing and Costs**

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These changes will likely require more sections of applied course in the future.

**Implementation Challenges**

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