



# Transfer Course Petition Guide

The information below explains the criteria used in evaluating courses for general transfer credit and for applying courses to the Liberal Education, First-Year Writing, and Writing Intensive requirements at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities. Please review these criteria carefully before submitting your petition.

## Transfer Policy Overview

The University of Minnesota accepts transfer credit from regionally accredited colleges or universities in the United States and from internationally recognized institutions of higher education in other countries.<sup>1</sup>

Transfer credit will generally be given for coursework that is similar in level and content to courses that are offered at the U of M–Twin Cities campus. Standard liberal arts courses tend to transfer routinely (e.g., courses in the arts, humanities, mathematics, physical and biological sciences, and social sciences).

Vocational, technical, or skills-based courses generally do not transfer. In addition, courses usually do not transfer for subjects that are not offered for credit on the Twin Cities campus, such as aviation, restaurant or hotel management, or real estate. (See U of M Transfer Credit Policy at <http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/policies/transcredit.html>.)

**Military training and experience:** Credit for completion of military school programs is very limited. Credit may be allowed in some cases where the material covered in military schools is similar to material in courses offered at the University. Appropriate department faculty make the final determination. No credit is given for an MOS (Military Occupational Specialty).

**Religion courses:** Religion courses from private colleges and universities must be reviewed for transfer approval. The U of M–Twin Cities accepts transfer credits for religion courses that are not doctrinal, confessional, or sectarian in nature.

**Credit for national tests:** Credit award information for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and the College Level Placement program (CLEP) may be found at [http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/admissioninfo/trans\\_evaluation.html#nontrad](http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/admissioninfo/trans_evaluation.html#nontrad).

## Liberal Education Course Transfer Policy

### UMTC Liberal Education Requirements

The Liberal Education requirements are intended to introduce students to the major branches of knowledge and methods of inquiry, or “ways of knowing.” This includes the kinds of questions asked and the ways in which insight, knowledge, and information are acquired and used; how ideas change over time; and how ideas are related and applied in human society.

The Liberal Education requirements consist of three parts: the diversified core curriculum, the designated themes of liberal education, and the writing intensive requirements. An explanation of the requirements and the criteria for meeting them is described below.

### Diversified Core Curriculum

**Physical and Biological Sciences**—a minimum of two courses totaling at least 8 credits, including one physical science course with a laboratory or field experience, and one biological science course with a laboratory or field experience.

Subject areas that are good candidates to fulfill the *Physical Science With Lab* requirement include physics, chemistry, geology, astronomy, natural resources, meteorology, physical geography, oceanography, and soil science. Subject areas that are good candidates to fulfill the *Biological Science With Lab* requirement include biology, anatomy, zoology, botany, physical anthropology, ecology, and environmental science. Labs and/or field experiences must focus on hands-on activities (as opposed to audiovisual, “virtual” labs) and meet for at least 2 hours per week. Field experiences need to be more than just field trips.

<sup>1</sup>Students with coursework from non-accredited institutions may pursue credit through the Credit by Special Exam procedure. Contact the Office of Admissions for more information.

**Social Sciences/Humanities** – a minimum of at least 15 credits distributed as follows:

- At least 3 credits in historical perspectives,
- At least 6 credits in the social sciences,
- At least 3 credits in literature, and
- At least 3 credits in other humanities (non-literature).

Courses that fulfill the *Historical Perspectives* requirement include those that cover a period up to and including the Vietnam War era (up to the mid-1970's). A history course covering more current events might be a candidate for a social science requirement. Courses with a history designator are very good candidates to fulfill the Historical Perspectives requirement. In order to fulfill this requirement, a course must introduce students to the discipline of history—the methods and approaches used by historians when studying an event or era—rather than simply describe a chronology of past events. Other courses that might be good candidates for the Historical Perspectives core could include American studies, ethnic studies, or western civilization courses. A course such as “History of Philosophy” would likely be a better candidate for Arts and Humanities (non-literature) than Historical Perspectives, just as “History of Psychology” or “History of Economics” would probably be better candidates for Social Science than Historical Perspectives. Art History courses almost always fulfill the requirement for Arts and Humanities (non-literature).

Courses that are good candidates for *Social Science* include psychology, anthropology, economics, geography, political science, American studies, ethnic studies (e.g., Latin American Studies, African American Studies, etc.), women's studies, and sociology. Philosophy courses that are political in nature (e.g., “Political Philosophy,” “Marxist Philosophy”) will often fulfill the Social Science requirement.

Courses that are good candidates for the *Literature* portion of *Arts and Humanities* are literature courses from English and other appropriate academic fields (e.g., languages, classics). Creative writing and oral interpretation courses also typically fall under this requirement. Composition courses that focus specifically on the mechanics of writing will not count in this area.

Courses typically found to fulfill the *non-literature* portion of the *Arts and Humanities* requirement come from a wide variety of disciplines, including: studio arts, art history, some architecture, applied design, dance (non-lesson), music theory

and appreciation, theater/drama, philosophy, humanities, mythology, cultural studies, and language courses that are interdisciplinary in nature. Dance, music, and theater courses are included only if they contain theory and are not all skill-based (e.g., private music lessons). Religious studies courses approved to transfer to the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities may also fulfill this requirement.

**Mathematical Thinking** – a minimum of 1 course totaling at least 3 credits

*Mathematical Thinking* courses must introduce and emphasize modes of thinking rather than computational skills. Courses that are good candidates are math, logic, and statistics courses (including statistics for the social sciences). This requirement includes courses in cultural (liberal arts) math and math required for elementary education teachers; it does not include computer languages.

### Designated Themes of Liberal Education

- **At least one third** of a course must cover topics related to a theme in order to count toward that theme, and the theme must be integrated throughout the course.
- **At least 3 credits** are required in **each** of the theme areas.

**Cultural Diversity**—Courses fulfilling this theme must focus on present-day issues related to race, ethnicity, age, and/or gender as social and cultural forces affecting the *United States*. In order to qualify for designation, a course must offer students an opportunity to critically examine social and cultural diversity in the U.S. and increase understanding of the contributions of different groups to the social and cultural fabric of the U.S. Courses that are good candidates for this theme include African American studies, Native American studies, Asian American studies, Hispanic/Chicano/Latino-American studies, and some women's studies courses. U.S. history courses are sometimes applicable, but the course material and/or description must indicate a focus throughout the course on issues related to cultural diversity within the U.S.

*Introductory sociology courses that are transferred as “equivalent” to the U of M–Twin Cities’ Soc 1001 do not automatically receive the Cultural Diversity theme, as such courses may cover the same theoretical constructs and concepts as 1001 yet may not incorporate enough material that focuses on cultural diversity within the United States to qualify as Cultural Diversity courses.*

**International Perspectives**—Courses fulfilling this theme must increase students' understanding of their rapidly changing global environment. To qualify, a course must engage the student in learning about a country or countries outside the United States or in comparison/contrast with the United States. These courses may focus on cultural, political, economic, diplomatic, or other historic or contemporary interdependencies (e.g., "History of Western Art," "Comparative World Politics", etc.). Courses with "global," "world," "Western," or "Eastern" in the title are typically good candidates for this theme.

*Introductory economics courses that are transferred as "equivalent" to the U of M–Twin Cities' Econ 1101 or 1102 do not automatically receive the International Perspectives theme as such courses may cover the same theoretical constructs and concepts as 1101 and 1102 yet may not incorporate enough material on international issues (e.g., international trade, comparative economics, etc.) to qualify as International Perspectives courses.*

**Environment**—Courses fulfilling this theme must focus on the interactive effects between human beings and their physical environment; that is, they must teach the student about the impact of humans on the environment and the consequential impact of the environment on humans. Such courses might focus on issues such as water quality or water systems, the impact of fertilizers or pesticides, development versus conservation and preservation, attitudes expressed toward the environment by various cultures, and/or the management of environmental resources. Courses applicable to this theme area should provide the student with a forum to discuss and debate environmental issues. Courses that simply teach students about the structure or history of their physical environment (e.g., "Physical Geology," "Physical Geography," etc.) are not good candidates for this theme.

*Introductory chemistry courses that are transferred as "equivalent" to the U of M–Twin Cities' Chem 1021 and 1022 do not automatically receive the Environment theme as such courses may cover the same theoretical constructs and concepts as 1021 and 1022, yet they often do so without incorporating the relationship of chemistry to environmental issues (which Chem 1021 and 1022 do very deliberately) throughout the course.*

**Citizenship & Public Ethics**—These courses should enable students to reflect upon the ethical dimensions of their public lives and to discuss, deliberate, and participate in public affairs. To qualify, a course must apply the abstract issues and themes of citizenship and public ethics to concrete instances. Courses that tend to be strong candidates for this theme are often introductory political science or ethics courses as these courses tend to introduce the student to contemporary social and ethical issues and *require the student to develop, discuss, debate, and evaluate his or her own civic responsibilities* related to such issues (e.g., voting, family planning, community service, professional conduct, political activism). Such courses also often require the student to perform some type of community service or observe and evaluate a social or political event or institution (e.g., local government, alternative K-12 schools, political rally, etc.). Ethics courses which only present ethical theories and theorists and decision-making models, without providing the student with an opportunity to consider his or her own opinions and behavior related to citizenship and public ethics, do not fulfill this theme requirement.

## UMTC Writing Intensive Requirements

Writing-intensive courses integrate writing into the work of the course that is appropriate to the academic discipline and professional requirements of the field. One of the advantages of writing intensive courses is that they aid students in learning the course materials, and they stimulate thinking and critical reasoning skills. In formal writing, students might learn the formats characteristic of the discipline or field, such as a research report, a critical essay, or a laboratory report. In informal writing, students use writing that may include logs, journals, or short in-class responses to readings and lectures in order to learn course material. Through both formal and informal writing, students come to understand something of the goals, assumptions, and key concepts operating in their discipline.

Students must complete a minimum of 5 courses for the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities writing requirement:

- One freshman writing course.
- Four writing intensive courses—at least two of which must be upper division (one of the upper division must be in your major).

### Guidelines for identifying transfer Writing Intensive courses

- a. A first-year writing course (offered for at least 3 semester credits/4 quarter credits) from another university or college that fulfills the writing requirement of the source institution may transfer to fulfill the first-year writing requirement. If an institution requires that a student complete two terms of first-year writing, the second term may count as one lower division Writing Intensive (WI) course.
- b. WI courses—consideration will be based on course descriptions and syllabi that demonstrate the following:
  - a significant amount of writing—minimally 10-15 finished pages beyond informal writing and in-class examinations.
  - instruction on the writing aspect of the assignments, with at least one assignment where a student is required to revise a draft after receiving feedback.

- a significant portion of the student's grade must be based on evaluation of the writing.
- the intent of the writing must be to teach and inform; informal journal writing or in-class writing assignments are not acceptable.

### Other Liberal Education & Writing Intensive credit and course load guidelines

#### "Double Dipping"

One course may, if appropriate, be used to fulfill:

- a core,
- a theme,
- a core AND a theme, or
- two themes.

A course cannot fulfill two core requirements, or a core and two theme requirements. A course may fulfill a Writing Intensive requirement, in addition to a theme and/or core.

#### Credit Minimums

Courses fulfilling core requirements must be at least 3 semester credits/4 quarter credits. Courses fulfilling theme requirements may be less than 3 credits, but each theme area has a minimum requirement of 3 semester credits. Freshman writing courses must be a minimum of 3 semester credits. There is no minimum credit requirement for Writing Intensive courses, although a transfer course must meet all the writing intensive criteria.