

Guidelines for the FFC Distribution Requirement

Rationale for the Distribution Requirement

As a liberal arts institution, Lake Forest College believes that the depth of specialization that is achieved within a major should be balanced by exposure to a range of knowledge and methods of inquiry, such as that found across the liberal arts. The intellectual flexibility and vitality that results from such a broad education is a key strength of the liberal arts graduate. The learning goals presented below capture distinctive aspects of vital areas of learning that we believe all Lake Forest College students should experience.

Learning Goals for the Distribution Requirement

Students satisfy the distribution requirement by successfully completing one course in each of these five areas: Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Quantitative Reasoning. In order to encourage exposure to breadth of content, students must take courses from five different departments or interdisciplinary areas (i.e. five courses with five different course prefixes). Courses that are tagged as satisfying one of these areas must fulfill the learning goals for that area, which are as follows:

Creative and Performing Arts

Upon successful completion of the creative and performing arts requirement, students should be able to:

- Engage imaginatively with an artistic medium, and
- Express creative ideas by producing original work or by reinterpreting artistic work made by others.

Humanities

Upon successful completion of the humanities requirement, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of artistic, historical, intellectual, literary, or religious traditions, and
- Find evidence (textual, artistic, or otherwise), develop arguments from that evidence, and evaluate arguments made by others.

Natural Sciences

Upon successful completion of the natural sciences requirement, students should be able to:

- Explain principles of scientific experimentation or observation, and
- Analyze and interpret evidence acquired through experimentation or observation.

Social Sciences

Upon successful completion of the social sciences requirement, students should be able to:

- Identify factors affecting human behavior manifested in either individual actions or social systems, and
- Use evidence to explain the structures and processes of social systems or human behavior.

Quantitative Reasoning

Upon successful completion of the quantitative reasoning requirement, students should be able to:

- Employ basic notions of arithmetic and coordinate geometry, and
- Frame and solve problems using quantitative principles.

Guidelines for FFC Designation: Distribution Requirement

A department's courses do not necessarily all fall into the same distribution area described above. Rather, courses are tagged on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the content and approach of each course. Each course may have no more than one distribution tag.

Distribution tags are requested through either the New Course Proposal (NCP) process or the Course Change Request (CCR) process, both of which are governed by the Curricular Policies Committee (CPC). Both the NCP and CCR forms ask faculty to briefly summarize their reasoning for why a particular course requires a particular distribution tag and this reasoning should explain how the relevant distribution learning goals (above) will be satisfied by the course.

Once approved by CPC, the course will begin carrying the new distribution tag in the following academic year because the College Catalog can only be updated annually (e.g., if approved by CPC 2021-2022, the new tag will become active for 2022-2023).

In rare situations, a Course Change Request (CCR) can lead to a "tag transition issue" where a course is being taught with new tags in mind, but the new tags won't actually take effect until the following academic year. In such cases, a student who prefers that their records reflect the new (not-yet-official) tags can submit an individual appeal to the Academic Appeals Board (AAB) for this exception.

Assessment of the FFC Distribution Requirement

In the years when the FFC Distribution Requirement is assessed, the Assessment Committee will complete a transcript analysis to determine whether the previous year's graduates have properly completed the requirement.