Bowdoin College Course Distribution Options and Qualifying Questions

Difference, Power, and Inequity (DPI)

These courses examine difference in terms of power and inequity. Students learn theories, methods, and skills to analyze structures of privilege and inequality. Students confront how such structures intersect with their own experiences. While DPI courses introduce students to a variety of pedagogical approaches, methodologies and theoretical perspectives, all courses fulfilling the DPI requirement have three main components at their core:

- the centrality of DPI themes and ideas throughout the course
- a critical balance of DPI-related content and DPI-related theories, methods, and skills
- an analysis of how a student’s own lived experience and subject positions intersect with structures of difference, power, and inequity

Please answer the following three questions, using language and level of detail that will inform colleagues from outside of your discipline.

DPI Question #1: Describe the course learning goals related to students’ examination of difference, power, and inequity.

DPI Question #2a: What are the principle theories, methods, and skills that your course will prepare students to apply in their analysis of difference, power, and inequity?

DPI Question #2b: Provide one or two specific examples of the types of assignments (e.g., papers, critiques, debates, discussions, journal writing, community service experience, etc.) students in the course will complete, briefly describing how those assignments will assist in students' acquisition of the terminology, approaches, and skills identified above.

DPI Question #3: How will students arrive at or reflect on dynamics of difference, power, and inequity that intersect with their own experiences? Provide one or two specific examples of learning activities and/or assignments (e.g., papers, critiques, debates, discussions, journal writing, community service experience, etc.) with which students in the course will engage.

Bowdoin students must earn at least one full credit for a letter grade (unless the course is graded Credit/D/Fail Only, i.e., some courses in music) in each of the distribution areas. Distributions may not be applied to first-year writing seminars, independent studies, or honors projects. Courses may have a maximum of two distributions.
Inquiry in the Natural Sciences (INS)

In these courses students engage in the practice and methods of inquiry-based learning in the natural sciences. This requirement is satisfied through courses that both fall within “Division A” (natural science and mathematics) and satisfy the INS learning goals.

INS Learning Goals:

1. Students will engage in the practice and methods of inquiry-based learning in the natural sciences, including hypothesis formation and testing and systematic observation.
2. Students will engage in data evaluation, analysis, and interpretation.
3. Students will develop essential skills for critically contextualizing and evaluating scientific information and sources.
4. Students will reflect on the practice of scientific inquiry as a tool to understand the natural world.

INS Question #1: Please describe how this course will satisfy the four INS learning goals listed above.
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International Perspectives (IP)

The main goal of the International Perspectives requirement is to assist students in developing a critical understanding of the world beyond the United States. IP courses provide students with the tools necessary to analyze non-U.S. cultures, societies, and states (including indigenous societies and sovereign nations within the United States and its territories), either modern or historical.

Please answer both of the following questions, using language and level of detail that will inform first-year students and advisors outside of your discipline.

IP Question #1: Which non-U.S. perspective(s) will be developed in this course? These perspectives may be cultural or social or focus on states or international institutions. Please focus on how course methodology will achieve particular goals, and use specific examples to elaborate (e.g., papers, critiques, debates, discussions, journal writing, community services experience, etc.).

IP Question #2: How will students learn to analyze or engage critically with social, cultural, institutional, or political dimensions of societies beyond the U.S.? Please focus on how course methodology will achieve particular goals, and use specific examples to elaborate (e.g., papers, critiques, debates, discussions, journal writing, community services experience, etc.).
Mathematical, Computational, or Statistical Reasoning (MCSR)

The main goal of the Mathematical, Computational, or Statistical Reasoning requirement is to enable students to use mathematics, statistics, or quantitative methods, models, and techniques to understand the world around them either by learning the general tools of mathematics and statistics or by applying them in a subject area.

Please answer two of the following three questions, using language and level of detail that will inform first-year students and advisors outside of your discipline.

MCSR Question #1: How will students interpret and draw appropriate inferences from mathematical, computational, or statistical constructs such as formulas, graphs, tables, and schematics? Please focus on how course methodology will achieve particular goals, and use specific examples to elaborate (e.g., exercises, lab projects, problem-solving or modeling activities, community service experience, etc.).

MCSR Question #2: How will students represent information, relationships, or data graphically, numerically, or symbolically? Please focus on how course methodology will achieve particular goals, and use specific examples to elaborate (e.g., exercises, lab projects, problem-solving or modeling activities, community service experience, etc.).

MCSR Question #3: How will students model and analyze real-world questions through the use of mathematical, algorithmic, or statistical methods? Please focus on how course methodology will achieve particular goals, and use specific examples to elaborate (e.g., exercises, lab projects, problem-solving or modeling activities, community service experience, etc.).
Bowdoin students must earn at least one full credit for a letter grade (unless the course is graded Credit/D/Fail Only, i.e., some courses in music) in each of the distribution areas. Distributions may not be applied to first-year writing seminars, independent studies, or honors projects. Courses may have a maximum of two distributions.