

USU General Education in the Humanities

The humanities investigates big questions about the experience of being human. Its various disciplines together address how people achieve self-understanding through language, whether that language be oral or written, philosophical or political, literary or historical. Humanities courses all emphasize the reading and interpreting of primary texts, and the building and testing of critical interpretations.

A general education in the humanities will teach students:

- To compare and contrast different ideas both within and between historical periods, cultures, and/or civilizations
- To identify questions and issues that cut across human history and culture
- To connect those questions and issues to their own experience
- To exercise their faculty of reason and develop their capacity for critical thought
- To evaluate interpretations and test arguments, including their own
- To understand the history, practice, and purpose of humanistic methods

There are three levels of the curriculum: USU 1320: Civilization: Humanities; Breadth Humanities (BHU) courses, and Depth Humanities (DHA) courses.

USU 1320 introduces students to a variety of humanistic disciplines (e.g. history, philosophy, literary criticism, etc.) and covers a range of historical periods, cultures, and/or civilizations.

BHU courses, unlike USU 1320, emphasize a particular humanistic discipline, giving students a broad and balanced perspective of its subfields and its methods. BHU courses, however, still cover a range of ideas, historical periods, cultures, and/or civilizations.

DHA courses also emphasize a particular humanistic discipline; however, unlike BHU courses, they may focus more narrowly on a particular historical period and/or culture, or may confine themselves to ideas within a particular subfield.

Proposals for these courses will be evaluated according to the above criteria as well as the following rubric. The proposal memo should explain in detail—with reference to the syllabus—how the instructor intends to satisfy these criteria and achieve these outcomes. A DHA course will set a higher bar for achieving proficiency than a BHU course or USU 1320. In addition, to meet these goals, smaller courses may emphasize oral communication and information literacy skills more than larger courses.

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Integrated Humanities Rubric			
<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Outcome 1</u>	<u>Outcome 2</u>	<u>Outcome 3</u>
Students will learn to :	The student who achieves proficiency will:	The student who approaches proficiency will:	The student who lacks proficiency will:
1. Reflect on big questions about the experience of being human, by confronting primary texts and connecting ideas from other times and places with their own experience.	Articulate precisely the big questions of the course and apply its ideas directly to contemporary social issues and individual concerns.	Describe generally the big questions of the course and apply its ideas loosely to contemporary social issues and individual concerns.	Sketch inaccurately the big questions of the course and apply its ideas vaguely to contemporary social issues and individual concerns.
2. Compare and contrast different ideas both within and across historical periods, cultures, and/or civilizations.	Identify clearly not only key differences between those times and places but also common issues that cut across human history and culture.	Summarize briefly either key differences between those times and places or common issues that cut across human history and culture.	Point hastily toward key differences between those times and places, missing common issues that cut across human history and culture
3. Read analytically and think critically, summarizing and explaining the theses of a text.	Develop interpretations directly based upon and tested against textual evidence.	Develop interpretations loosely based upon and tested against on textual evidence.	Develop interpretations neither based upon nor tested against textual evidence.
4. Write clearly and argue logically.	Present clear main theses and develop coherent arguments.	Present fuzzy main theses and develop inconsistent arguments.	Present unclear main theses and develop incoherent arguments.