

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**GENERAL EDUCATION COUNCIL**  
**concerning a**  
**POLICY ON USING**  
**NON-UMASS COURSES TO SATISFY**  
**THE INTEGRATIVE EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT**  
**(#5950)**

**Presented at the**  
**785<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate**  
**March 7, 2019**

**COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

**Philippe Baillargeon, Carol Barr, Jessica Barr, Jeff Beaulieu, *Chair*, Abigail Dallmann, Elizabeth Donoghue, Justin Fermann, Laura Furlan, Cynthia Gaudet, Ela Gezen, Cynthia Goheen, Patricia Gubitosi, Claire Hamilton, Nadia L'Bahy, Dori McCracken, Stephen Olbrys Gencarella, MJ Peterson, Elsa Petit, Rebecca Petitti, Sarah Pfatteicher, Mei-Yau Shih, Razvan Sibii, Reiko Sono, Martha Stassen, Patrick Sullivan, Anna Telder Arcello, Kalpen Trivedi, Annette Vadnais, Jack Wileden, Martha Yoder**

**COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION**

**The General Education Council recommends approval of this proposal.**

The Integrative Experience (IE) is a 3-credit, upper-division option offered as part of the undergraduate major that completes the General Education requirements. The purpose of the IE option is specified in Sen Doc No 11-039A:

The Integrative Experience (IE) requirement at UMass Amherst addresses the challenges associated with educational fragmentation. Positioned in the *upper-division*, the IE provides students with a structured opportunity *to look back on* their early college learning experiences, *reflect upon and make connections between those earlier experiences and the more advanced work in their major*, and use their integrated learning to *prepare for the demands of the world* beyond the University (Sen. Doc. No. 11-039A).

Departments/major may design various options to meet the IE requirement, however all IE options are expected to meet the following criteria:

- 1) provide a structured, credited context for students to reflect on and to integrate their learning and experience from the broad exposure in their General Education courses and the focus in their major
- 2) provide students with the opportunity to practice General Education learning objectives such as oral communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary perspective-taking at a more advanced level
- 3) offer students a shared learning experience for applying their prior learning to new situations, challenging questions, and real-world problems (Sen. Doc. 11 – 039A)

It is possible for a non-standard credited activity (including non-UMass courses) to satisfy the IE requirement, but *the expectation is that requests for IE course substitutions from departments will be rare.*

Under exceptional circumstances, a non-standard credited activity may be approved as fulfilling the IE requirement at UMass Amherst. For example, a student who is no longer in residence at Amherst and who must complete his/her/their degree remotely may need to use a non-UMass course (or combination of courses) to satisfy the IE requirement if returning to UMass is not possible, or a student pursuing a second bachelor's degree may request a waiver of the IE requirement if his/her/their first bachelor's degree included upper-level courses that satisfy the criteria for IE and are relevant to the student's current major at UMass.

In no case can lower-level (equivalent to our university's 100- or 200-level) undergraduate courses be used to satisfy the IE requirement. A student can satisfy the IE requirement through a single course that meets all three of the IE criteria or through an approved combination of courses that collectively meet the three IE criteria.

To request that a non-standard credited activity fulfill the IE requirement at UMass Amherst:

- 1) A student must submit the following to the Undergraduate Program director or Chief Undergraduate Advisor in his/her/their major: (a) rationale for why it is necessary to take a non-UMass course to fulfill the IE requirement, (b) syllabus for the proposed IE course(s) substitution and other relevant documents as needed (e.g. official transcripts), and (c) an explanation of how the course(s) meet(s) the IE requirement.
- 2) If supporting the request, the UPD/CUA should then indicate his/her/their approval and forward the student's request to his/her/their School or College Academic Dean for approval.
- 3) The Academic Dean should indicate his/her/their approval and forward the substitution request to the Registrar and the General Education Council attached, as appropriate, with a Registrar Prior Approval Form or the Senior Year in Absentia Form.

**MOTION: 19-19 That the Faculty Senate approve the Policy on Using Non-UMass Courses to Satisfy The Integrative Experience Requirement, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 19-053.**