Cross-Cultural Awareness Requirement

This requirement will be met by selecting a course from the approved list of Cross Cultural Awareness (CCA) courses or through a University approved Cross Cultural experience. The selected course or experience may be incorporated in the six required credits in the Arts and Humanities, the six required credits in the Social Sciences, the three required credits in Science and Technology in Society, or as an additional requirement within the major.

Degree programs may select the context of their Cross Cultural Awareness course/experience in such a way that benefits the total curriculum.

Current Competency: demonstrate the ability to critically compare and contrast world cultures in historical and/or contemporary contexts.

Proposed Competency: explain culture as an integrated world view; and then demonstrate how culture influences human behavior.

Rationale for change: faculty reviewers of Clemson students’ e-portfolio CCA artifacts have observed consistently that most students compare and contrast customs from various societies without really understanding how these cultural practices make sense within various cultures (typical: “Culture A does X behavior; Culture B does Y behavior.”) Faculty reviewers have argued that such superficiality does not prepare students for functioning in a globalized world, and does not help students appreciate and respect cultural differences. Given Clemson University’s 2020Forward emphasis on increasing our students’ global awareness, and given Clemson’s commitment to increasing student sensitivity to multiculturalism in the United States, it is time to revise the university’s CCA requirement.

Explanation of terms: “Integrated” refers to the idea that parts of cultures (e.g., belief systems, political systems, family concepts, historical events) systemically reinforce each other. “World view” refers to a culture’s perspective on the physical, social, and supernatural realms of existence.

To qualify for CCA designation, courses should have an emphasis on non-U.S. cultures and courses should also be broadly-based, introductory level, and with general content. By the end of the course, students should also have a recognition of, and appreciation for, the fact that cultural differences exist. Content and methods will be appropriate to the general education area in which the courses are offered.
**Examples of artifacts:** successful artifacts should demonstrate that students can relate a society’s beliefs and practices to that society’s culture (integrated world view).

Example 1: extensive maternity leave in European countries may be examined by relating the practice to economic systems, political systems, religious beliefs, cultural values, and historical events.

Example 2: Italian Renaissance art may be understood in relationship to political and economic conditions as well as to philosophical, religious and cultural values.

Reviewed by: Mike Coggeshall (Chair, CCA Subcommittee)  
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