

English Department Guidelines: Courses Taken Off-campus for 300-level Credit

All students seeking departmental credit for off-campus programs (other than at the University of East Anglia) **must** see the department chair **in advance** for preliminary approval of the course or courses.

Primary Reading/Viewing should approximate in quantity what is normal in English courses offered on campus. What follow are rules of thumb rather than formal minimums:

Lyric Poetry: 100-150 poems

Narrative Poetry: 300-500 pages

Novels: 6-8

Plays: 8-12

Films: 8-12

(For courses mixing genres, proportional figures can be generated by the students and advisors.)

Literature must be read in English. Some courses taken abroad cater primarily to students for whom English is not their native language. In these cases, when the syllabus reflects an appropriate reduction in reading, the Dickinson student will be expected to do extra reading to compensate. (See section on Research, below.)

Formal assessment should include essays, totaling 15-25 pages (3750-6250 words.) Where such essays are not assigned as a normal part of the course, the student might seek to substitute them for other forms of assessment. If that is not possible, the student should undertake them as additional work, as they will be the surest evidence that the course experience has been equivalent to one on campus. This and all other course work (syllabus, notes, quizzes, exams, etc.) should be retained and brought back to Dickinson as prime evidence for determining transfer credit.

Research beyond the assigned primary texts is expected of all 300-level courses. This may involve other primary texts, secondary material, or some combination. Results of this research should find their way into the course requirements, most likely the essays mentioned above. As a rule, essays should cite 5-10 sources beyond the set texts. Exceptions might involve an essay in sustained “conversation” with one or two authorities, as, say, a paper on *Hamlet* in which the student tested the utility of Aristotle’s *Poetics* as a critical tool in analyzing Shakespeare.

Material read as part of research that is not required by the off-campus course may be considered as “additional reading” in cases in which the assigned syllabus involves fewer texts than are normally assigned in 300-level courses on campus.

Substantial awareness of critical method is stressed by the English major at Dickinson and should characterize, if not the design of the course taken abroad, at least the essays written for it.

Advice for planning, preliminary, and final approval of courses taken abroad: This document should assist students and their advisors as they anticipate study abroad. Where possible, students should secure course descriptions and syllabi in advance in order to gauge the appropriateness of particular courses. It may be helpful to contact the foreign professors to determine if their courses either align, or can be adjusted to align, with the criteria listed above. As noted above, students seeking departmental credit for off-campus programs other than at the University of East Anglia **must** see the department chair in advance for preliminary approval of the course or courses. Students must also be sure to **bring all course material back to Dickinson** with them so that the department chair will have all the evidence needed to approve the transfer of credit for the major. It is suggested that students take advantage of e-mail to keep the chair and your academic advisor apprized of any questions or concerns that emerge while they are abroad.

Courses without written assessment (i.e., essays and exams) cannot be granted English Department Credit.