

## First Year Course Requirement

### *Rationale*

Students enter Macalester with a wide range of experiences and expectations. Many have only a vague notion of what a liberal arts college is all about. It is critical for the students' success at Macalester that they receive extra guidance during their first semester to help them adjust to Macalester's expectations and philosophy. The First Year Course requirement is designed to help incoming students in their transition to college, specifically to the liberal arts model, and to Macalester's academic expectations of them. All First Year Courses have a common emphasis on college-level writing and basic library research skills. A critical component of the program is the role of the faculty member as adviser to the students. The goals of the First Year Course requirement are:

- To introduce students to critical inquiry within at least one discipline or interdisciplinary area.
- To instruct students in college level writing (including multiple drafts and appropriate citation of source materials) and library research skills.
- To help students adjust to Macalester's academic expectations.
- To connect incoming students to advisers who get to know the students well from the start.
- To provide a supportive community of other first-year students with shared interests and experiences to aid in the transition to college.

**Motion:** EPAG moves that the Faculty endorse the refined description (statement, course approval criteria) of the First Year Course Requirement as follows:

***First Year Course Requirement:*** *One First Year Course completed during the first semester.*

### *Course Approval Criteria*

Courses fulfilling the First Year Course Requirement:

1. May either be regular course offerings or a specially designed first-year course. Regular course offerings are likely to require modification to meet the criteria of a FYC.
2. Will enroll no more than 16 students with registration reserved for entering first year students.
3. The instructor will be assigned as the students' adviser.
4. Will participate in the library instruction program to ensure that all students learn to effectively utilize Macalester's resources.
5. Will include at least one writing assignment that is evaluated for both content and writing style/mechanics. It is strongly recommended that the writing include drafting and revising a paper, researching and citing sources, formulating an argument, and instructor feedback.
6. Will include attention to the development of academic skills (e.g. critical thinking, speaking, problem-solving, discussion, goal-setting) essential for success in college.