

IESE White Paper 06002
**Human Artifacts, Phenomena, and Interaction Themes
in the IESE Curriculum**

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Motivation

The current IESE undergraduate degrees require the standard number of humanities and social science hours (18) with the standard distribution (6 each in approved gen ed requirements for humanities and social science with one each having a Western and non-Western designation plus 6 hours that meet College of Engineering hum/SS requirements). At present, many students select these courses in a happenstance manner, and the most common question asked about humanities and social science courses is “Is this course easier than X?” At the same time, the radically networked world of the internet is changing the nature of engineering work, enhancing the importance of understanding human phenomena, artifacts, and interactions as a routine part of an engineer’s duties (see IESE WP06001).

Opportunity

This short white paper suggests the creation of Human Artifacts, Phenomena, and Interaction themes (HAPI themes) in IESE akin to the secondary fields currently used in the GE curriculum. The remainder of the white paper outlines key details of the proposal, proposes a number of HAPI themes, and raises the possibility of ultimately issuing certificates and charging a premium fee in connection with the HAPI program.

Proposal

The following briefly details the HAPI concept.

Requirements. By analogy to the secondary field, a HAPI theme is 12 hours of social science and humanities coursework in a coherent theme. Generally, HAPI themes will consist of six hours of social science and six hours of humanities coursework as a convenience in meeting overall gen-ed requirements; however, unbalanced HAPI themes are permitted as long as overall humanities and social science coursework requirements are satisfied.

Whence themes? Pre-approved or custom-designed themes are permitted as with the SF. Custom-designed themes are created by petition to the chief advisor. As with SFs, over time, a database of previously approved HAPI themes will accumulate.

Suggested themes to start. The following is a list of themes that can be used to start the HAPI program. Detailed course lists can be compiled from the catalog. Here, the idea of the theme is conveyed in broad terms.

Human Nature. Hum = Philosophy (intro + ethics), SS = Psychology (intro + adv course).

Economics. Hum = Philosophy and history, SS = Economics

Human Society. Multi-SS = Econ + Sociology + Anthropology + Social Psych

Government and Politics. Hum = Philosophy, SS = Political Science

Ancient Civilizations. SS = anthro/archaeology, Hum = Classic Civ/History

The Renaissance. Multi-Hum = History, Philosophy, Art, English, & Comp Lit

The Enlightenment. Multi-Hum = History, Philosophy, English, & Comp Lit

Modern Times. Multi-Hum = History, English, Philosophy

Great Thoughts Multi-Hum = Philosophy + History + Classic Civ.

Great Literature. Multi-Hum = English + Comparative Literature.

The Arts: Multi-Hum = Art History + Dance + Theatre + Music

Certificates. As stated above, the HAPI program is essentially the SF idea applied to humanities and social science requirements. An extension of the idea would be to offer a HAPI certificate. The certificate could be differentiated from the HAPI theme in three ways:

1. Certificate requires payment of fee (to be split between IESE and offering departments).
2. Payment of fee would give students enrollment privileges close to those of majors in the certificate participating department.
3. Certificate could require additional hours (15 hours say) and possibly a GPA requirement for admission to certificate status.

If we charged \$250/year for certificate enrollees, this would result in \$200,000k of revenue with 800 students.

Implementation. The HAPI program could be tried with NO formal curriculum change on a pilot basis. As we change the IE and GE curricula, the HAPI process could be inserted with low disruption to the curriculum. Certificates with fees require some bureaucratic changes and negotiation with other departments. Nonetheless, the promise of marginal funding should get some attention.

Summary and Conclusions

This short white paper has presented a proposal to create a HAPI (Human Artifacts, Phenomena, and Interaction) theme program akin to the secondary field program already in place for the GE curriculum. The program (1) organizes humanities and social science courses into themes, (2) encourages students to take hum/SS courses for a reason, and (3) helps innovate in the GE/IE curriculum at low disruption and cost. Ultimately, the program can be used to offer certificates for a fee in a manner that would possibly raise a sizable amount of money each year in addition to the State budget. These possibilities are sufficiently compelling and recommend the initiation of a voluntary pilot of the basic program fairly soon.