

MILLSAPS COLLEGE

December 6, 2016

Ventures in Problem Solving and Creative Practice & Integrative and Collaborative Learning (FYCS/FYCSFA/FYCSOC/FYCSTEM 1010) is a 4-semester-hour, skills-focused course designed to establish a foundation in four of Millsaps's general education learning outcome areas: problem solving, creative practice, collaboration, and integrative learning. The course is required for all Millsaps students entering as first-year college students.

Each section of the course explores a problem or tightly-focused set of problems using a range of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary techniques for defining, understanding, and addressing complex, open-ended problems. The primary pedagogical method in the course is problem-based learning, via which students develop skills in collaboration; creative thinking and intellectual risk-taking; and integrating diverse perspectives or approaches. Each section of the course is taught by a faculty member from a different discipline, so the specific problems students work on vary across sections. Specific course assignments also vary across sections, although all students will complete at least one collaborative project, apply specific disciplinary tools of inquiry, and engage in an iterative revision process to evaluate and refine their approaches to the problem at hand.

Ventures does not have a straightforward equivalent to courses offered at most other institutions. However, if the institution has a non-discipline specific, freshman-level course on Problem Solving (in the sense of solving open-ended, complex problems) or a freshman-level course on Innovation in which the emphasis is on hands-on learning of various processes that lead to innovation (as opposed to case studies, research, or theory related to existing innovations), *Ventures* is likely to be an acceptable substitute. Each individual section of *Ventures* may have be equivalent to an introductory methods course in the relevant discipline; this is best determined by examining the syllabus from the specific section of *Ventures* for which the student wishes to receive transfer credit. Some *Ventures* sections are approved to meet other Millsaps requirements including Fine Arts (sections designated FYCSFA), the Social World (sections designated FYCSOS), and STEM (sections designated FYCSTEM). For those sections, *Ventures* would be equivalent to an introductory methods course in the relevant Fine Arts, Social Science, or STEM discipline. Since the goal of *Ventures* is to develop a specific skill set rather than to cover any particular content, *Ventures* sections will rarely serve as satisfactory substitutes for content-focused disciplinary courses.

Millsaps keeps syllabi for each section of *Ventures* on file and can provide those as needed. Or, as Coordinator of the *Ventures* course, I am happy to work with you to make a determination of equivalency between a *Ventures* section and a course in your catalog.

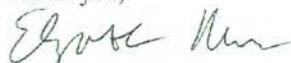
To summarize my recommendations, *Ventures* (FYCS/FYCSFA/FYCSOC/FYCSTEM 1010) is equivalent to

An introductory, discipline-general course in Problem-Solving, when the course focuses on open-ended and complex problems

An introductory course in Innovation when the course primarily involves hands-on engagement with the processes of innovation

An introductory methods course in the discipline relevant to the specific *Ventures* section, if syllabus review for that section reveals adequate equivalency.

Thank you,



Dr. Elizabeth Husa

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