

3D (Design Across Diverse Disciplines) FAQ

What is the 3D requirement?

In SIM 201: Experience, students will design and propose a cluster of three courses that address a topic, problem, or issue from various disciplinary perspectives. Students will explain the rationale for their selection of these courses, focusing on the intellectual coherence of the courses they have chosen; the three courses must be topically connected. This requirement is designed to hone students' skills in integrated learning and interdisciplinarity.

- Each 3D course may fulfill a KCA.
- One 3D course may count in each major/minor/program of study.
- 3D courses must be drawn from three different disciplines.
- Two 3D courses may have been taken during the first or second year.

What is the purpose of this requirement?

The 3D requirement asks students to select courses from three different disciplines that are integrated around a common theme or idea of their choosing. The assignment is intended to allow students to delve more deeply into an area of interest and to see how different disciplines can illuminate issues they deem important and worthy of study. It is meant to allow students to personalize their education and to explore exciting interdisciplinary connections.

Do internships count?

Yes. As long as the student does a **credit-bearing** internship in line with the 3D theme, it can count.

Do study abroad courses count?

Yes. As do courses taken through the Colleges of the Fenway, courses taken to fulfill the language requirement, and courses taken at other universities.

Can 3D classes be taken pass/fail?

Yes. **One** class taken p/f can be part of the 3D.

Can a 2-credit class count toward the 3D?

No, only classes that are 3 or more credits count toward the 3D.

What if a student has two majors and a minor? Could they conceivably take all three of their 3D classes from these disciplines?

Yes, as long as the three classes are from different disciplines. The policy for 3D is that "one 3D course may count in each major/minor/program of study."

Can students use either their Boston Course or their Leadership course toward the requirement?

No.

Can students use their Learning Community toward the requirement?

Yes, students can use **one** of the **three**-credit Learning Community classes toward the requirement, but not both.

What about transfer students or students in accelerated programs?

Students in accelerated undergraduate-to-graduate degree programs may apply **two** courses taken during their first and/or second years to their 3D requirement. They must complete at least **one** 3D course during their third year.

64-credit transfer students may transfer up to 2 courses toward their 3D.

Can proposals be denied, and if so, what happens?

The proposals students write in SIM 201: Experience are drafts, not contracts. The only way a student could fail the proposal would be if it violates one of the stated rules (i.e., the proposed courses are not from three different disciplines) or if it fails to offer a convincing rationale for a course cluster. In these cases, students would be given the option to revise the proposal. In order to pass SIM 201: Experience, students need to have a viable, approved 3D proposal by the end of the semester. Passing the class and passing the proposal go hand in hand. In order to pass SIM 301: Excel, students need to have a finalized 3D plan. They will also need to fill out the [3D Course Selection form](#) and submit it to the Registrar.

How can students plan for the fact that some courses are not offered when they are supposed to be or are canceled due to low enrollments or don't fit their schedule?

In their 3D proposals, students should select three courses that they think are the very best options for their goals. That said, this is an aspirational document. It would behoove students to select a few other courses that can serve as backups. (The **3D Worksheet** is a good place to record this thinking.) We anticipate that 3D proposals are likely to undergo change and revision between the time a student takes SIM 201: Experience and when they finalize their proposal in SIM 301: Excel.

Suppose there are very different classes/skills within one discipline/major/minor/program, i.e. Art History and Studio Art?

We strongly discourage this option, but we listen if a student has a very strong case to make. Ultimately, this question needs to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If a student can justify such distinctions within a department, and both classes are absolutely integral to the 3D cluster (and nothing else could work), two classes in one discipline/major/minor/program might be a possibility. Please contact Kelly Hager, Interim Dean of the Undergraduate Program (kelly.hager@simmons.edu) to find out.

What if a student wants to use a class offered as a part of their major, but they are not using it toward their major?

This question depends on the discipline. If a student has an interdisciplinary major, they can conceivably use two classes offered as part of that major, as long as those two classes are from different disciplines **and as long as only one of those courses is being counted toward that major.**

What about cross-listed classes?

Students should register for cross-listed courses in ways that do not cause the appearance of overlap. For instance, if a student wants to take AST/SOCI 311, and they have already have a Sociology class in their 3D cluster, they must register for AST 311.

How are the protocols different for Honors students?

Honors students must take two of their three chosen 3D courses at the 200 level. Also, because Honors students take their Boston course as a Learning Community, they cannot use one of those courses as a class from their first or second year. For more information, see the Honors Programs Requirements: <http://www.simmons.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/honors-program/requirements>.

What happens if a student changes majors?

Students will be finalizing their 3D proposals during SIM 301: Excel, which they should take in the fall or spring of their junior year. By the time their 3D Proposal is official, students should have also finalized their majors.

Should KCAs be addressed in the 3D Proposal?

The KCAs do not need to be addressed in the 3D proposal. Students will likely be thinking about them, but it is not a requirement that they address how they are fulfilling their KCAs and when as a part of the 3D.

Are we expecting a logistical statement that indicates the specific semesters that students will take their 3D courses?

Students in SIM 201: Experience are not required to provide a timeline for when they will take these classes. That said, instructors and advisors should consider the feasibility of a student's plan, and advise them if the instructor/advisor foresees a problem. The 3D Worksheet is good way to map out various course options. In SIM 301: Excel, we recommend that students do decide when they plan to take their 3D classes. Students provide this information on the [Course Selection Form](#) for the registrar that they complete during SIM 301: Excel.

How are SIM 201: Experience and SIM 301: Excel different with respect to the 3D assignments?

Students take 201 in the fall or spring of their sophomore year. In this class, students submit a 3D proposal draft. In 301, students finalize that proposal and file the paperwork describing it with the registrar. At that time, they will need to document when they expect to take their courses and how they plan to complete the requirement. Students should take Excel in the fall or spring of their junior year.

What happens if a student is studying abroad their entire junior year?

Students abroad their entire junior year will register for SIM 301: Excel in the fall of their senior year.

Where and how are students' 3D Proposals collected?

Students' 3D proposals will be collected and commented on by their Experience and Excel instructors. Students should save copies of their proposals for their records and so they can refer back to them in case they need to revise their 3D plans.

What if a student transfers to Simmons as a junior, is exempt from taking Experience (SIM 201), and enrolls directly in Excel (SIM 301)? How do they develop their 3D plan?

These students should work with their Excel instructors to develop a viable 3D plan as soon as they begin taking Excel. They should also contact Anthony Scotina, Faculty Lead for SIM 201, 301, and 3D (anthony.scotina@simmons.edu) for assistance. These students do not need to write a full proposal, as they would in Experience, but they do need to articulate a coherent theme, the three courses they would like to count toward their 3D, and when these courses were/will be taken.

Who can I contact if I have a question that is not answered here?

Please contact Kelly Hager, Interim Dean of the Undergraduate Program (kelly.hager@simmons.edu) with any additional questions.