

**MEMO - informational**

<i>To</i>	UCC
<i>From</i>	Todd Eisworth, Chair
<i>Subject</i>	Arch Requirements for BRICKS, revisited
<i>Date</i>	October 11, 2022

This document outlines several recommendations for the ongoing implementation of the Arches component of BRICKS. They are based on the experience gained since Fall 2021 and are presented to UCC for consideration as part of the review of Arches and associated requirements mandated to occur Fall 2022 (see the policy “Arches Requirements for BRICKS” in Appendix A). The intent is to have a policy drafted for first reading at the November UCC. The content of this document was presented to UCC in preliminary form at the March 2022 meeting.

## Background

### Original Version of Arches

The original implementation of OHIO BRICKS conceived of the Arch component as an opportunity for students to fulfill a portion of their lower-level general education requirements in a coherent manner. The idea was that three courses (9.0 credit hours) from the portion of BRICKS devoted to meeting the requirements of the Ohio Transfer 36 (OT-36) would be reserved and have an additional structure imposed on them. The three courses would still be used to meet the breadth-of-knowledge requirements for OT-36, but they were also to be thematically connected. The intent was to make the general education experience more meaningful for students by having them engage with a topic of interest through work in multiple disciplines.

The courses designated for Arches were to be classified by two attributes: a primary classification based on disciplines (Natural World, Constructed World, and Connected World) and a secondary classification based on topic (the associated “Arch”). In addition, courses in the Arches were to address the OHIO Common Goals of Critical Thinking and/or Teamwork.

The list of courses for each Arch was to be maintained in OCEAN 1.9 and coded in DARS, and the Arch requirement was to be satisfied once a student completed at least one course from each of the three “worlds” within a single topic.

## Implementation of Arches

In November 2020, UCC approved a scaled back implementation for Arches, summarized in the table below:

Requirements	Implementation Details
Students must complete at least one of each of the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constructed World</li> <li>○ Natural World</li> <li>○ Connected World</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may complete the Arch requirement by taking these components from the same Arch topic or from different Arch topic.</li> <li>• Standard undergraduate DARS will not differentiate between Arches. Instead, the DARS will simply show a requirement of Arch, with three sub-requirements: Connected World, Constructed World, Natural World.</li> </ul>
Arch courses will be classified into one Arch topic/theme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arches will be approved by the General Education Committee of UCC.</li> <li>• Courses may be approved for one Arch topic.</li> <li>• Courses that do not fit an approved Arch topic may be submitted for the Breadth of Knowledge Arch. Breadth of Knowledge Arch courses must incorporate both Critical Thinking and Teamwork common goals.</li> <li>• Lists of courses approved for individual Arches as will be maintained in a way acceptable to the Registrar's office.</li> </ul>
Completion of three Arch courses in a single topic will be encouraged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advising materials will describe the Arches topics and lists of courses.</li> </ul>

The key point is that the requirement that the three Arch courses must come from a single topic was removed, and the Arch topics were instead presented in the Undergraduate Catalog as recommendations. This was done for pragmatic reasons, as implementation arches in their original form was not viable given the sparse menu of courses available at the time and the challenges associated with combining this effort with Guarantee+ in the middle of the COVID-19 disruption. UCC did however mandate that Arch structure and requirements should be reviewed in Fall 2022 in preparation for AY 2023-24. The recommendations presented below result from consultations done on behalf of the General Education Committee during Spring 2022 in anticipation of this deadline. These were presented to UCC in preliminary form at the March 2022 meeting.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are submitted to UCC. These arose out of work done on behalf of the General Education Committee during Spring 2022

### Policy Recommendations

- Students should continue to satisfy the Arch requirement by completing at least one course from each of Constructed World, Natural World, and Connected World without the requirement that the courses should belong to a single topic.
- The Breadth of Knowledge Arch should be removed.
- Remove the restriction that Arch courses can belong to at most one Arch.
- UCC should revisit the structure and implementation of Arches in Fall 2024 in preparation for AY 2025-26.

### Implementation Recommendations

1. Arch topics should be coded in PeopleSoft as attributes attached to courses, rather than being maintained in OCEAN 1.9 or DARS. Arch courses should be searchable by topic as well as by component on the registrar's site.
2. Arch courses should be searchable by topic as well as by component on the registrar's site.
3. Arches topics should be used to ground certificates associated with the various Arch topics. The list of associated certificates should be linked to the topical search to allow students and advisors to explore the possibility of obtaining one.

### Rationale

The approach outlined above allows topical arches to gain a more concrete existence while avoiding the logistical problems arising with DARS implementation. This approach also eases the path through BRICKS for students with haphazard transfer credit.

In addition, it would provide a way of integrating certificates (in particular, 12-credit hour certificates made up of lower division courses) with paths through BRICKS. This also provides a mechanism for non-OT-36 courses that fit with an arch topic to maintain a link to BRICKS and incentivizes the completion of topical arches by using them as gateways to certificates.

This seems to provide a natural stable point between where we are now and what was originally envisioned. We are not forcing departments to choose a single destination for boundary courses. The implementation of the original version of Arches could be revisited in the future.