ASCC Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Diversity Subcommittee

Approved Minutes

Friday, May 10th, 2024 8:30-10:00 AM

Carmen Zoom

Attendees: Fletcher, Ponce, Pradhan, Steele, Vankeerbergen, Warren

**Agenda**

1. Approval of 4/12/24 minutes
   1. Warren, Ponce; unanimously approved.
2. Music 2245 (new course requesting GEN Foundation REGD)
   1. Comment: The Subcommittee felt that this was an excellent submission, and they especially appreciated the School of Music’s work on the GEN Submission Form, which clearly outlined the ways in which the course will fulfill the GEN Goals and ELOs.
   2. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee appreciates how the description of the final project (syllabus, pgs. 3-5) clearly outlines its association with the intersectional study of race, ethnicity and gender for students. The Subcommittee asks that the syllabus provide similar information to students about how the other assessments will relate to REGD topics. They note that there is some excellent material in the GEN Submission Form that could be modified for this purpose.
   3. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee requests that the School list the GEN Foundation: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Goals (in addition to the ELOs) on pg. 1 of the syllabus. The goals and ELOs can be found in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [Arts and Sciences Curriculum Website.](https://asccas.osu.edu/new-general-education-gen-goals-and-elos)
   4. *Recommendation:*  The Subcommittee recommends that the School consider including additional scholarly readings, especially in Weeks 6 & 12, to balance the materials and demonstrate the breadth of the scholarly field to students.
   5. *Recommendation:*  The Subcommittee suggests that the School enhance the statement on pg. 1 of the syllabus that describes the way that this course, in particular, meets the goals and ELOs of GEN Foundation: REGD by offering further details for students. They note that there is some excellent material in the GEN Submission form that could be modified for this purpose.
   6. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the School reconsider the requirement for students to have a Spotify account (syllabus, pg. 2). Since Spotify is not a university-approved tool, the Subcommittee cannot be certain that the platform meets OSU security and privacy standards. The university has been increasingly focused on the problems with mandating that students create accounts with third-party tools that require click through agreements as a part of a course assignment (more info here: <https://it.osu.edu/policies-and-standards/cloud-computing-guidelines>). The Subcommittee suggests that, at a minimum, the School have an alternate assignment available for students who do not wish to use this platform. Should the School wish to pursue approval of this software, the Subcommittee recommends contacting ASC [Software Security Coordinator](https://it.osu.edu/security/groups/security-coordinators/membership) David Sweasey to initiate a security review.
   7. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the School review the paragraph following the Land Acknowledgement on pg. 14 of the syllabus, as there is an incomplete sentence.
   8. Ponce; Warren; approved with **two contingencies** (in bold above), *four recommendations* (in italics above), and one comment.
3. Comparative Studies 2345 (new course requesting GEN Foundation REGD)
   1. Comment: The Subcommittee commends the department for a well-crafted course proposal that was clearly designed with the GEN Foundations: REGD category in mind. The course expertly demonstrates how REGD concepts can be taught with an intentional focus on intersectionality throughout the course.
   2. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee suggests that the department incorporate more of the language of the REGD category in the course schedule (syllabus, pgs. 5-7), providing additional “signposting” for students to guide their course preparation for the class sessions and demonstrate the course’s focus on REGD topics. Often, the Subcommittee sees such signposting take the form of topical questions or goal statements such as “What is photography’s relationship to journalism, and what issues of race, class, and gender are constructed in this relationship?” or “Goal of the week: Students learn about how the system of education in the United States (and India) devalues ways of speaking. Students learn that language is a critical part of ethnicity and policing language is an extension of policing people.”
   3. Warren, Ponce; Unanimously approved with *one recommendation* (in italics above) and one comment.
4. Hebrew & Jewish Studies 2700 (existing cross-listed courses with GEL Literature, GEL Diversity—Global Studies, and GEN Foundation LVPA; requesting GEN Foundation REGD) (return)
   1. Comment: The Subcommittee has read and discussed the department’s extensive response and carefully considered your arguments. They are always open to working with departments and instructors/course creators on existing courses that might need modifications to fit the Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Diversity GEN category. However, they ask that the department, when communicating with the Subcommittee, refrain from jumping to unnecessary and inaccurate conclusions (such as stating that the “committee did not read the accompanying form”). The Subcommittee assures the department that all submissions are read carefully in their entirety and discussed by the whole subcommittee. The Subcommittee disagrees with the idea that they were reviewing the course as a theological course, and they ask that the department refrain from implying that other courses in the category are somehow involved in “indoctrination”.

While the Subcommittee does believe that there could be a place for this course in the REGD category, they also understand the challenges that are inherent in designing and/or re-designing a course like Hebrew/Jewish Studies 2700. For example, they acknowledge that this course serves several curricular purposes already (general education in other categories, major/minor content, etc.). As such, they recognize the requests below may compel changes that shift the course’s curricular roles or pedagogical priorities and ultimately result in the department re-evaluating the pursuit of REGD approval for this course.

As a way forward, the Subcommittee would like to recommend that the department look to the successful passage of the course [Hebrew/Jewish Studies 3704 "*Women in the Bible and Beyond*"](https://ascnet.osu.edu/request/4811) **after a conversation with the Subcommittee chair and the course instructor, which addressed some of the issues surrounding historically-focused courses and how to engage the REGD requirements.**

The Subcommittee has voted to approve Hebrew/Jewish Studies 2700 to be included in the Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity GEN Foundations category, with the following contingencies:

* 1. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department provide further information in both the syllabus and the GEN Submission Form about the ways in which students will attain the necessary skills to provide a critical interpretation and analysis of the texts as they pertain to REGD concepts and what materials/texts they will use to gain those skills, thus enabling them to complete the assignments successfully. While the Subcommittee had previously mentioned secondary sources and secondary scholarship as a *possible* way of demonstrating this (as it is by far the most common way that units accomplish this for courses in this category), they did and do recognize that this is not the *only* way. To that end, they put forth the following potential solutions, as these have been successfully employed by other units/instructors who depend less on secondary scholarship:
     1. Provide, in both the syllabus and the GEN submission form, additional information about the required text (SBL Study Bible), what sort of extra-biblical writings it entails, and how it approaches the study of race, ethnicity, and gender diversity in the cultures of the Hebrew Bible. In the syllabus, this information should be focused on helping the students to understand how these writings will inform the readings of the primary sources.
     2. Amend the course schedule (syllabus pgs. 4-5) to include some signposting for students to guide their course preparation for the class sessions and demonstrate the course’s focus on REGD topics. Often, the Subcommittee sees such signposting take the form of topical questions or goal statements such as “What is photography’s relationship to journalism, and what issues of race, class, and gender are constructed in this relationship?” or “Goal of the week: Students learn about how the system of education in the United States (and India) devalues ways of speaking. Students learn that language is a critical part of ethnicity and policing language is an extension of policing people.”
  2. **Contingency:** Beyond the two sections of Project 1, the Subcommittee asks the department to provide more information about how and when students will be grounded in the intersectional study of race, ethnicity and gender. From the current course schedule and accompanying documents, the Subcommittee is unable to discern how students will gain a necessary vocabulary and understanding of basic concepts that will help them articulate and discuss these principles as they analyze the texts, reflect on their own lived experiences, and consider how the texts have influenced the modern world. The Subcommittee wishes to emphasize that they are *not* asking that the department apply a modern lens to an ancient culture, but rather requesting that the course help students to understand how these concepts were understood in the ancient Mediterranean world, and how that culture’s norms and mores relate to the modern world.
  3. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee requests that the department amend the course description in curriculum.osu.edu (under “General Information”) to include mention of the intersectional study of race, ethnicity, and gender. While the course description has been changed from “*Reading and analysis of selected chapters from the Hebrew scriptures and post-biblical Hebrew writings representative of major historical, cultural, and literary trends.”* to “*An introduction to the content of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (HB/OT) from a scholarly and historical perspective. Students will read, discuss, and critique large sections of the HB/OT. Students will learn about the social complexity and cultural intersectionality in the ancient societies in which the writers of the HB/OT lived and about which they imagined.*”,the new description should explicitly name the course topic’s interaction with race, ethnicity and gender.
  4. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee thanks the department for replacing the previous Religious Accommodations statement found on pg. 13-14 of the syllabus. However, the link at the bottom of the statement (“Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days, and Observances”) must be included to fully comply with the law. An easy-to-copy/paste version of the statement and links can be found on the [ASC Curriculum and Assessment Services website](https://asccas.osu.edu/submission/development/submission-materials/syllabus-elements).
  5. Note: Should the department have questions about the content of these contingencies, please reach out to the Subcommittee Chair, Richard Fletcher.161.
  6. Approved via e-vote with **four contingencies** (in bold above), one comment, and one note.