

ASCC Themes I Subcommittee

Approved Minutes

Wednesday, May 8th, 2024

2:00-3:30 PM

CarmenZoom

Attendees: Andridge, Daly, Fredal, Griffith, Neff, Palazzi, Rehbeck, Steele, Tanner, Vaessin, Vankeerbergen

Agenda:

1. Approval of 04-10-2024 and 04-24-2024 minutes
 - a. Vaessin, Palazzi; unanimously approved.
2. Russian 4330 (new course requesting GEN Theme Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations)
 - a. TAG
 - i. The reviewing faculty ask that the department provide additional information on the syllabus (under “Descriptions of major course assignments”, pgs. 5-6) about how the course’s assignments will be used to assess students’ achievement of the ELOs.
 - ii. The reviewing faculty appreciate the variety of course topics listed on the GEN Submission Form under the ELOs associated with goals 3 and 4, but they request that the department amend their responses to provide further explanation of how the courses readings, assessments, lectures, and other activities will fulfill the course goals and allow students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the ELOs.
 - iii. The TAG declined to vote on the course at this time.
 - b. Themes
 - i. The reviewing faculty ask that the department provide further details for students in the Assignment Descriptions (syllabus, pgs. 5-6), including the expected length, format, and style of the writing assignments and exams; guidance about the way students’ mastery of the GEN goals and ELOs will be evaluated; and the expected level of writing. As a GEN course at the 4000 level that does not have pre-requisites, having clear expectations for students (who will come from a variety of majors and colleges and have many different academic experiences) is important for student success.
 - ii. The reviewing faculty request that the department provide additional information about how students will demonstrate an “evolving sense of self as a learner” (GEN Theme Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations ELO 2.2). While they note and appreciate the department’s indication that the students will engage in reflective writing and discussion participation, they are unsure how students will be assessed in this area.
 - iii. The reviewing faculty ask that the department modify the heading on pg. 2 of the syllabus that currently reads “General Educations Goals and Themes”, as this could be confusing for students. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest titling the section “General Education” and including a statement under the

- heading such as “Russian 4330 is a part of the GEN Theme: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations category. As such, it fulfills the following goals and ELOs:”
- iv. The reviewing faculty note and appreciate that the department has used the new Religious Accommodations Statement on pg. 10 of the syllabus. However, the link at the bottom of the statement as it appears on the [ASCCAS website](#) (“Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days, and Observances”) must be included to fully comply with the law.
 - v. The Themes I Subcommittee declined to vote on the course at this time.
3. Comparative Studies 3658 (existing course requesting GEN Theme Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations) (return)
- a. TAG
 - i. *Recommendation*: The reviewing faculty recommend that the department add to the syllabus and the GEN Submission Form a student-friendly definition of the term “expressive culture”, as that phrase may not be easily understood by those outside of the field.
 - ii. Approved with *one recommendation* (in italics above).
 - b. Themes
 - i. **Contingency**: Due to discrepancies in the proposal, the reviewing faculty are unsure what the department’s intentions are regarding the topic(s) of the course. They ask that these discrepancies (outlined below) be resolved. Please note that if the department’s intention is for the course to have a variety of topics, the reviewing faculty may ask for additional sample syllabi and/or other information to ensure that the GEN Goals and ELOs will be met in all iterations of the course.
 1. The following elements of the submission indicate that the course is intended to be exclusively focused on Appalachia:
 - a. The title of the course is “*Folklore of the Americas: Appalachia*” (curriculum.osu.edu under “General Information”).
 - b. The transcript abbreviation for the course is “*AppalachiaFolklore*” (curriculum.osu.edu under “General Information”).
 - c. The department has asked that the course no longer be repeatable (curriculum.osu.edu under “Offering Information”).
 - d. Several of the bullet points on pg. 1 of the syllabus (“*Through this course, students will...*”) seem to focus exclusively on Appalachia.
 - e. Various elements of the syllabus indicate an exclusive focus on Appalachia, including the descriptions of how the course meets the GEN Goals and ELOs, the required text, assignment descriptions, and the course schedule.
 2. The following elements of the submission indicate that the course is intended to have a focus on different geographic areas of the Americas depending on the term, instructor, etc.:

- a. The course description in curriculum.osu.edu (under “General Information”) is *“Comparative study of folklore and folk groups of the Americas through folk narratives, beliefs, customs, practices of Latino/a, Asian, African, Native, and Anglo cultures. Geographic focus and examples change with instructor specialization.”*
 - b. The Course goals or learning objective/outcomes are *not* specific to Appalachia (curriculum.osu.edu under “Course Details”).
 - c. The Content Topic List is *not* specific to Appalachia (curriculum.osu.edu under “Course Details”).
 - d. The title of the course on the syllabus (heading, pg. 1) reads “Folklore of the Americas”.
 - e. The course description on the syllabus (pg. 1) indicates a variety of geographic areas and indicates that “examples change with instructor specialization”.
 - f. The GEN Submission Form (pg. 1) refers to “shifting focus on diverse regions of the Western Hemisphere”, “instructor-determined focus”, and the Appalachia-focused syllabus being a “sample”.
 - g. The responses to the GEN category’s ELOs (GEN Submission Form pgs. 2-5) do not have any specificity regarding Appalachia.
- ii. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department modify the section on pg. 1 of the syllabus that currently reads *“As this course meets the General Education Theme “Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations,”...”*. This language could be confusing; students must take 4-6 credits per theme, so this course does not, in and of itself, “meet” the requirement. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest language such as “Comparative Studies 3658 is a part of the GEN Theme: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations category. As such, it meets the following goals and ELOs:”
 - iii. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty request that the department relocate/relabel the third paragraph under “OSU Resources and Policies” (syllabus, pg. 4), as that paragraph (which begins with “If you are ill...”) is not a part of the official SLDS statement. Additionally, the reviewing faculty recommend that the department unify the two prior paragraphs that *are* a part of the official SLDS statement by using the same font, font size, and emphasis.
 - iv. **Recommendation:** The reviewing faculty recommend amending or removing the statement under ELO 2.1 (syllabus, pg. 2) that says “Course activities and assignments to meet these ELOs”.
 - v. Vaessin, Rehbeck; unanimously approved with **three contingencies** (in bold above) and *one recommendation* (in italics above).
4. Art 3204 (new course requesting GEN Theme Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations)
 - a. TAG

- i. *Recommendation:* The reviewing faculty recommend clarifying how the course will meet ELO 3.2 (on both the syllabus and the GEN Submission Form) by making it clear that the “technological advancements” of the printing press and innovations in the art of papermaking are the impetus for the “long-lasting change” of marking-making moving from an elite to a common practice.
 - ii. Approved.
- b. Themes
 - i. The reviewing faculty ask that the department provide more information about how the course will synthesize the analysis of writing and mark-making as art forms with the study of the methods and materials of mark-making.
 - ii. Due to the breadth of the methods and materials that the course covers, the reviewing faculty find it difficult to see how the course will maintain a focus on a specific tradition and/or specific culture and its transformation. They ask that the department provide more information on how the course will “engage in an advanced [and] in-depth” study of mark-making in a culture rather than serving as a survey of this type of artistic production across multiple cultures. They offer the friendly suggestion that narrowing the course’s focus might aid in making this adjustment.
 - iii. Changes to University policies recently (03-01-2024) necessitated that the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee update the list of required syllabus statements for all syllabi to include a new statement on religious accommodations. The new version is a result of a directive by the Executive Vice President and Provost and can be found here on the [ASC Curriculum and Assessment Services website](#). The reviewing faculty thank the department for replacing the previous statement found on pg. 14 of the syllabus. Please note that the link at the bottom of the statement (“Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days, and Observances”) must be included with the statement to fully comply with the law.
 - iv. The reviewing faculty request that the department use the most recent version of the Student Life Disability Services Statement (syllabus, pg. 13), which was updated to reflect the university’s new COVID-19 policies in August 2023. The updated statement can be found in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [Arts and Sciences Curriculum and Assessment Services website](#).
 - v. The reviewing faculty recommend that the department provide a more specific list of required supplies (syllabus pg. 10), information about where these supplies can be purchased, and an estimated total cost for students. As a General Education course, there will be many students enrolled who do not have previous experience with art-making, and who may not be familiar with some of the necessary supplies.
 - vi. The reviewing faculty recommend that the department update the Title IX statement (syllabus pg. 14), as Kellie Brennan no longer works for the university. An updated statement can be found in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [ASCCAS website](#).

- vii. The reviewing faculty recommend that the department use the most recent version of the Mental Health Statement (syllabus, pgs. 14-15), as the name and phone number of the Suicide/Crisis hotline have changed. The updated statement can be found in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [ASCCAS website](#).
 - viii. The reviewing faculty recommend that the department amend the statement on pg. 15 of the syllabus that gives information about the Wilce Student Health Center, as the Center does not give absence excuses. For more information, please see their website here: <https://shs.osu.edu/appointments/absence-excuse>.
 - ix. The Themes I Subcommittee declined to vote on the course at this time.
5. Geography 2200.01 (existing course with GEL Data Analysis and GEN Foundation Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning [or Data Analysis]; request to drop GEN Foundation Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning [or Data Analysis] and replace with GEN Theme Lived Environments)
- a. TAG
 - i. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department provide a further explanation of how the course meets ELO 3.2 in both the syllabus and the GEN Submission Form. Specifically, they are interested in how students will be assessed on their ability to “describe examples of human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time...”, as the “time” component is currently missing from the course. To this end, they suggest revising or replacing a lab or other assignment to incorporate an evaluation of student understanding in this area.
 - ii. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty request that the department include in the course schedule (syllabus pgs. 9-11) further “signposting” that demonstrates how each topic relates to an understanding of the human/environment interaction. Often, the reviewing faculty see this in the form of a topical question or goal statement for each week that helps students to focus their preparation and thinking on the GEN category and its connection to the topic.
 - iii. *Recommendation:* The reviewing faculty recommend that the department consider the Lived Environments theme when describing the topics of the final paper, and strongly consider requiring students to demonstrate their understanding of humans’ interaction with their environment(s) in the final paper.
 - iv. Approved with **two contingencies** (in bold above) and *one recommendation* (in italics above).
 - b. Themes
 - i. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty note that Geography 2200.01 has a “sister” course, Geography 2200.02, which is currently [in limbo](#). This course was an “education abroad version” of 2200.01. However, given the changes made to 2200.01 for inclusion in the GEN Theme: Lived Environments, the reviewing faculty believe these courses are now substantially different enough that they should not carry the same course number, even in a decimalized version. They offer the following two options:

1. **If the department believes that 2200.02 will not be offered again**, the reviewing faculty ask that the department put a request into curriculum.osu.edu to withdraw the course, and change the number for the course currently under consideration to 2200 (as opposed to 2200.01) via this curriculum request.
 2. **If the department believes that 2200.02 will be offered again and plans to request its removal from limbo**, then the reviewing faculty request that 2200.01 be assigned a new number via the current request in curriculum.osu.edu.
- ii. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department include in the syllabus and GEN Submission Form information about how students will be asked to reflect on their learning throughout the course (GEN Themes: Lived Environments ELO 2.2). At this time, it does not appear that reflection on their own learning is a part of the course's assessments.
 - iii. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty request that the department consider the Lived Environments theme when describing the topic of the final project paper (syllabus pg. 6). Furthermore, they ask that the assignment require students to demonstrate their understanding of humans' interaction with their environment(s).
 - iv. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty asks that the department re-phrase the statement which describes the way in which this course fits into the new General Education Curriculum (syllabus pg. 2 under "General Education"). Since this is a 3-credit hour course, it does not, in and of itself, "meet the requirements of the General Education Theme: Lived Environments". The requirement is for students to earn 4-6 credit hours in this category; thus, stating that a single course fulfills the requirement can be confusing or misleading for students. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest wording such as "For those students who are following the New General Education curriculum, Geography 2200.01 is an approved course in the GEN Theme: Lived Environments category."
 - v. **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that the department include in the syllabus a short, student-friendly paragraph following the listing of the GEN goals and ELOS that explains how this course, in particular, meets the goals and ELOs of the GEN Theme: Lived Environments category, per a [requirement of the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee](#).
 - vi. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee thanks the department for using the new Religious Accommodations statement on pg. 8 of the syllabus. However, the link at the bottom of the statement ("Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days, and Observances") must be included with the statement 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](#).
 - vii. **Recommendation:** The reviewing faculty recommend that the department provide clear guidelines for students about which assessments, assignments, and activities allow for collaboration, and which require independent work.

They suggest that this be included with the descriptions of each assignment (syllabus, pg. 6) so that academic integrity expectations are clear.

- viii. Rehbeck, Vaessin; unanimously approved with **six contingencies** (in bold above) and *one recommendation* (in italics above).