**ASCC Themes II Subcommittee**

Unapproved Minutes

Thursday, October 2nd, 2025 2:15PM – 3:45PM

Hagerty 255

**Attendees:** Conroy, Cravens-Brown, Daly, Gregoire, Hunter, Nathanson, Palazzi, Søland, Steele, Vankeerbergen

1. Approval of 9-18-25 minutes
	1. Tabled
2. Civics, Law, and Leadership 2420 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World) (tabled from last time)
	1. The Subcommittee asks that the Center provide additional information in the syllabus and the GEN submission form regarding how the Theme is the central focus of the course. Specifically, they would like to see: 1. more evidence that the justice and diversity aspects of the Theme are an intrinsic part of the course’s description (curriculum.osu.edu under “General Information” and syllabus, p. 1), readings (syllabus p. 5-8 under “Course Outline”), and topics (syllabus p. 5-8 under “Course Outline”) and 2. more evidence that citizenship, justice, and diversity are centered in the course’s assignments/assessments (syllabus, p. 4). The Subcommittee offers the friendly advice that the Center may wish to consider how a student, looking at the syllabus, would see the Theme “signposted” throughout. Additionally, they ask that the GEN submission form provide more details about exactly how the course will assess students’ performance, with clear examples of prompts and questions that center the theme.
	2. The Subcommittee requests that the Center more clearly articulate in the syllabus how the course will ask students to “Examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, inclusion, and explore a variety of lived experiences” (ELO 4.1) and “Analyze and critique the intersection of concepts of justice, difference, citizenship, and how these interact with cultural traditions, structures of power, and/or advocacy for social change” (ELO 4.2). While they appreciate the several class sessions focused on marginalized populations, it is unclear if/how students will be expected to analyze, critique, and evaluate the concepts presented in the readings and synthesize them with ideas presented in other parts of the course. For example, the Subcommittee notes that the Course Objectives (syllabus, p. 2) state that students will be able to “analyze how individuals’ identities-as well as their political, cultural, religious, and national contexts-have influenced conceptions of citizenship”. However, this description (and indeed all of course objectives) leaves out any mention of gender, race, or class – issues that are central to ELOs 4.1 and 4.2.
	3. The Subcommittee requests that the Center include in the course some additional modern (i.e. “cutting-edge”) scholarship. For example, they note that the readings in the first two weeks of the course were all originally published between 1975 and 1999 (with one that was updated in 2005), and they encourage the Center to contrast these historical readings with some of the excellent scholarship in the field that has been produced in the last 10-15 years.
	4. The Subcommittee asks that the Center provide examples of exam questions and discussion board prompts so that they can better evaluate how students will be assessed on their mastery of the GEN Theme Goals and ELOs. Since 80% of students’ final grade for the course comes from these elements, it is important that the Subcommittee be able to see how the Center will make the Theme the focus of these assessments.
	5. The Subcommittee asks that the Center incorporate into the course schedule opportunities for students to demonstrate their “developing sense of self as a learner” (ELO 2.2) in an assessable manner. While the Subcommittee notes and appreciates the presence of in-class activities and writing assignments that focus on student’s perceptions about citizenship, this ELO is focused on students’ awareness of their own learning and reflection on/analysis of the ways that their thinking has changed over the duration of the course. While the Subcommittee acknowledges that there are many methods for assessing this ELO, they offer the friendly suggestion that asking students to complete a graded reflection on course topics at the beginning, mid-point, and end of the semester can be a simple and effective way to meet this ELO.
	6. The Subcommittee asks that the Center 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 Category and Expected Learning Outcomes”). Since this is a 3-credit hour course, it does not, in and of itself, “fulfill” the GEN Theme. As the requirement is for students to earn 4-6 credit hours in this category, stating that a single course fulfills the requirement can be confusing or misleading for students. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest wording such as “Civics, Law, and Leadership 2420 is an approved course in the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category.”
	7. The Subcommittee declined to vote on the course at this time.
3. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3550 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World) (tabled from last time)
	1. The Subcommittee commends the Center for the creation of this compelling course, and they note that it will likely be an excellent course for students in the unit’s future majors, minors, or certificates. However, they do not see how this course, which is focused on the role of the U.S. President, could be reimagined to center the theme of “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World” without changing the content of the course so substantially that it would essentially be a different course, and thus be of less service to the Center’s academic program as a whole.
	2. Cravens Brown, Conroy; the Subcommittee unanimously voted “no” on the course.
4. Ethnic Studies/WGSS 3340 (existing course with GEN Foundation: REGD – requesting a change in level from 2000 to 3000, a change in title, and request to remove GEN Foundation REGD and replace with GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. **Contingency**: TheSubcommittee thanks the units for the focus that they have placed on citizenship in this revised version of the course. However, they find that the presence of diversity and justice (as opposed to citizenship) are not as explicit in the syllabus. While they believe that these concepts *are likely present* in the course, they ask that the department make them clearer to students via the course description (syllabus, p. 1-2), GE rationale paragraph (syllabus, p. 4), assignment descriptions (syllabus, pp. 5-7) and class calendar (syllabus pp. 12-17).
	2. Nathanson, Gregoire; unanimously approved with **one contingency** (in bold above).
5. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3500 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee commends the Center for the creation of this compelling course, and they note that it will likely be an excellent course for students in the unit’s future majors, minors, or certificates. However, they do not see how this course, which is focused on the role of politics and statesmanship, could be reimagined to center the theme of “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World” without changing the content of the course so substantially that it would essentially be a different course, and thus be of less service to the Center’s academic program as a whole.
	2. Hunter, Conroy; the subcommittee unanimously voted no on the course.
6. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3220 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee commends the Center for the creation of this compelling course, and they note that it will likely be an excellent course for students in the unit’s future majors, minors, or certificates. However, they do not see how this course, an analysis of both American Literature and the concept of a “great American Novel”, could be reimagined to center the theme of “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World” without changing the content of the course so substantially that it would essentially be a different course, and thus be of less service to the Center’s academic program as a whole.
	2. Palazzi, Cravens-Brown; unanimously voted no on the course
7. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3212 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee does not believe that the course, as it is currently presented, is a good fit for the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category. However, they can see how the course’s topic could fit within the theme if the Center is open to a substantial restructuring and reimagining of the course. Currently, the course is focused on the study of Christianity and its existence with and relationship to government and the law, rather than being focused on citizenship, diversity, and justice (as experienced by a variety of different populations) in a Judeo-Christian legal framework.
	2. The Subcommittee finds that the connection between Christianity and Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World is not strongly demonstrated via the descriptions in the GEN Submission form, nor explicit in the syllabus, and they ask that this be more developed and explicitly expressed. They note that one of the functions of the Subcommittee is to be a “proxy” for students who will take the course. Thus, they are reviewing the syllabus with an eye toward “signposting” for students how the course is connected to the Theme – the syllabus is, in many ways, the *evidence* of the claims made by the form. The Subcommittee offers the friendly observation that making the connection between Christianity and Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World stronger and more explicit may help the course to increase its level of rigor (see item “c” below).
	3. The Subcommittee asks that the Center enhance the rigor of the course so that it is an “advanced, in-depth, and scholarly exploration” of the theme. Currently, the course’s readings and assignments are not commensurate with synthesis, critical thinking, or scholarly exploration at an advanced level. The Subcommittee asks that the Center augment the course’s materials to include a variety of scholarly readings, so that students have the opportunity to engage with a range of different scholarly perspectives for their interpretation of the primary texts, the topics of citizenship, justice and diversity, and the issues under debate. For example, the Subcommittee observes that the students will read “Letter from a Birmingham City Jail”, a text that is required in many foundations-level GEN courses, but it is unclear from the materials provided how students will engage with this differently or in a more in-depth manner than they do in the typical introductory-level GEN Foundations courses. Additionally, while the Subcommittee appreciates the pedagogical purpose of the Gobbet-style essays, they do not believe that these, in conjunction only with two multiple choice and short essay exams, allow students to demonstrate mastery of “critical and logical thinking about…the theme” (ELO 1.1), “identify[ing], describe[ing], and synthesize[ing] approaches…as they apply to the theme” (ELO 2.1), or “demonstrat[ing] a developing sense of self as a learner” (2.2).
	4. The Subcommittee asks that the Center provide examples of exam questions, Gobbet prompts and any additional writing assignments so that they can better evaluate how students will be assessed on their mastery of the GEN Theme Goals and ELOs. Since 75% of students’ final grade for the course comes from these elements, it is important the Subcommittee be able to see how the Center will make the Theme the focus of these assessments.
	5. The Subcommittee appreciates the interdisciplinarity of the primary texts that is noted on the GEN submission form (ELO 2.1). However, they do not see this interdisciplinarity developed further in the course design, and they ask that the Center include additional opportunities for students to “identify, describe, and synthesize” approaches from different fields.
	6. The Subcommittee appreciates the value of robust classroom discussion; however, they note that it is difficult (if not impossible) to utilize this as a fair and consistent tool for assessment of the GEN ELOs for every student in the course. The Subcommittee asks that the Center minimize the use of classroom discussion to meet the goals and ELOs, instead focusing on written assignments, projects, presentations, or other products produced by students.
	7. The Subcommittee asks that the Center incorporate into the course schedule opportunities for students to demonstrate their “developing sense of self as a learner” (ELO 2.2) in an assessable manner. While the Subcommittee notes and appreciates the presence of activities that focus on students’ ability to critique and improve their own writing, this ELO is focused on students’ awareness of their own learning and reflection on/analysis of the ways that their thinking has changed over the duration of the course. While the Subcommittee acknowledges that there are many methods for assessing this ELO, they offer the friendly suggestion that asking students to complete a graded reflection on course topics at the beginning, mid-point, and end of the semester can be a simple and effective way to meet this ELO.
	8. The Subcommittee asks that the Center re-phrase the statement which describes the way in which this course fits into the new General Education Curriculum (syllabus pg. 2 under “GEN Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes”). Since this is a 3-credit hour course, it does not, in and of itself, “fulfill” the GEN Theme. As the requirement is for students to earn 4-6 credit hours in this category, stating that a single course fulfills the requirement can be confusing or misleading for students. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest wording such as “Civics, Law, and Leadership 3212 is an approved course in the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category.”
	9. The Subcommittee declined to vote on the course at this time.
8. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3310 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee does not believe that the course, as it is currently presented, is a good fit for the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category. However, they can see how the course’s topic could fit within the theme if the Center is open to a substantial restructuring and reimagining of the course. Currently, the course is focused on a study of the history of Christianity in America, rather than being focused on citizenship, diversity, and justice as experienced by a variety of different populations and viewed through the lens of religious history. The Subcommittee also notes that, despite the course title, there does not to appear to be a significant engagement with religions outside of the Christian tradition, which substantially hampers the course’s connection to diversity and justice.
	2. The Subcommittee finds that the connection between the history of Christianity in America and Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World is not strongly demonstrated via the descriptions in the GEN Submission form, nor explicit in the syllabus, and they ask that this be more developed and explicitly expressed. They note that one of the functions of the Subcommittee is to be a “proxy” for students who will take the course. Thus, they are reviewing the syllabus with an eye toward “signposting” for students how the course is connected to the Theme – the syllabus is, in many ways, the *evidence* of the claims made by the form.
	3. The Subcommittee asks that the Center enhance the rigor of the course so that it is an “advanced, in-depth, and scholarly exploration” of the theme. Currently, the course’s readings and assignments are not commensurate with synthesis, critical thinking, or scholarly exploration at an advanced level. The Subcommittee asks that the Center augment the course’s materials to include a variety of scholarly readings, so that students have the opportunity to engage with a range of different scholarly perspectives for their interpretation of the primary texts, the topics of citizenship, justice and diversity, and the issues under debate. For example, the Subcommittee observes that the students will read “Letter from a Birmingham City Jail”, a text that is required in many foundations-level GEN courses, but it is unclear from the materials provided how students will engage with this differently or in a more in-depth manner than they do in the typical introductory-level GEN Foundations courses. Additionally, the Subcommittee observes that the writing assignments, while substantial in length, are reflections, and thus do not ask students to engage with scholarship on the topics, cite sources, or synthesize what they are learning in class with scholarship that is not a part of the course reading schedule.
	4. The Subcommittee asks that the Center incorporate into the course schedule opportunities for students to demonstrate their “developing sense of self as a learner” (ELO 2.2) in an assessable manner. While the Subcommittee notes and appreciates the presence of in-class activities and exam questions that focus on skill building in the areas of writing, observation, and interpretation, this ELO is focused on students’ awareness of their own learning and reflection on/analysis of the ways that their thinking has changed over the duration of the course. While the Subcommittee acknowledges that there are many methods for assessing this ELO, they offer the friendly suggestion that asking students to complete a graded reflection on course topics at the beginning, mid-point, and end of the semester can be a simple and effective way to meet this ELO.
	5. The Subcommittee requests that the Center modify the Course Schedule (pp. 5-9) to reflect the 14 instructional weeks/70 instructional days that make up an OSU semester. Specifically, they are concerned about what material may be “cut” from the current 15-week curriculum when the course is taught. They offer the friendly suggestion that basing the course calendar on an actual OSU semester calendar (and notating/taking into account holidays and breaks) may be useful.
	6. The Subcommittee asks that the Center re-phrase the statement which describes the way in which this course fits into the new General Education Curriculum (syllabus pg. 2 under “GEN Goals & Learning Outcomes”). Since this is a 3-credit hour course, it does not, in and of itself, “fulfill” the GEN Theme. As the requirement is for students to earn 4-6 credit hours in this category, stating that a single course fulfills the requirement can be confusing or misleading for students. Instead, the reviewing faculty suggest wording such as “Civics, Law, and Leadership 3310 is an approved course in the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category.”
	7. The Subcommittee declined to vote on the course at this time.
9. Civics, Law, and Leadership 2300 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee commends the Center for the creation of this appealing course, and they note that it will likely be an excellent course for students in the unit’s future majors, minors, or certificates. However, they do not see how this course, which is focused on civic friendship and thoughtful debate, could be reimagined to center the theme of “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World” without changing the content of the course so substantially that it would essentially be a different course, and thus be of less service to the Center’s academic program as a whole.
	2. Hunter, Nathanson; the Subcommittee voted “no” on the course with one abstention
10. Civics, Law, and Leadership 3320 (new course requesting GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World)
	1. The Subcommittee commends the Center for the creation of this appealing course, and they note that it will likely be an excellent course for students in the unit’s future majors, minors, or certificates. However, they do not see how this course, focused on the philosophical concept of toleration, could be reimagined to center the theme of “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World” without changing the content of the course so substantially that it would essentially be a different course, and thus be of less service to the Center’s academic program as a whole.
	2. Cravens-Brown, Conroy; the Subcommittee voted “no” on the course with one abstention.