

## Comparative Studies 3658

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Good afternoon,

On Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, the Themes I Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee and the Theme Advisory Group for Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations reviewed a course proposal for CompSt 3658 to be included in the GEN Theme: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations category.

The reviewing faculty unanimously approved the request with three contingencies and two recommendations:

- 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.
- a. iv. *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.
- i. v. *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”.

As a reminder, **contingencies** (in bold above) must be addressed and resubmitted via curriculum.osu.edu before this course can move forward in the approval process to OAA. *Recommendations* (in italics above) should be implemented when the course is next taught. I will return Comparative Studies 3658 to the department queue via curriculum.osu.edu in order to address the reviewing faculty’s requests.

Should you have any questions about the feedback of the reviewing faculty, please feel free to contact Jim Fredal (faculty Chair of the Themes I Subcommittee; cc’d on this e-mail), Heather Tanner (faculty Chair of the Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations TAG; also cc’d on this e-mail), or me.

Best,  
Rachel



**Rachel Steele, MA**

(Pronouns: she/her/hers / Honorific: Ms.)

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