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Cc: [Cravens-Brown, Lisa](#); [Krok, Jessica](#); [Vankeerbergen, Bernadette](#); [Steele, Rachel](#); [Hilty, Michael](#)
Subject: Anthropology 5525
Date: Monday, January 6, 2025 3:45:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good afternoon,

On Thursday, December 12th, the Themes 2 Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee and the Theme Advisory Group for Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World reviewed a GEN Theme: CDJW request for Anthropology 5525.

The reviewing faculty declined to vote on the request at this time and ask that the following feedback be addressed:

- The reviewing faculty note that in the submitted cover letter, the department references several Anthropology courses that teach students about the concepts of citizenship, diversity, and justice, with this course serving as a capstone for juniors and seniors in the major to apply what they have learned in these other courses. While the faculty feel strongly that this is a wonderful Anthropology course, they are not convinced that the course in its current form is designed with the spirit of the GE in mind. For example, these aforementioned Anthropology courses that focus on topics relevant to the Theme assume prior knowledge that is not shared by all students, hindering those who come from other academic units in having a valuable experience with the Theme. This raises the question of whether the course has been designed for a general audience or if it is primarily targeted towards students within the major. If the latter, there are concerns about its appropriateness as a GEN Themes course, which should aim to do the following (per the GE Theme course submission worksheet):
 - “Courses in the GE Themes aim to provide students with opportunities to explore big picture ideas and problems within the specific practice and expertise of a discipline or department. Although many Theme courses serve within disciplinary majors or minors, by requesting inclusion in the General Education, programs are committing to the incorporation of the goals of the focal theme and the success and participation of students from outside of their program.”
- The reviewing faculty are confused by the designation of this course as a capstone course, which is typically designed for students who have already acquired knowledge within a field. By contrast, the GE is designed to be inclusive to students at various stages of their academic careers, providing opportunities for broad learning. For example, 4-credit Themes courses often appeal to students in high-credit, structured degree programs, but if the course is not appropriately scaffolded to set them up for success also, they could face challenges. Therefore, if this course is intended to be a capstone for Anthropology majors, perhaps it is not appropriate in its current form for inclusion in the GEN Themes.
- The reviewing faculty request that the syllabus make clear how students will directly and explicitly engage with the Theme in order to fulfill Theme ELOs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2 (e.g., the synthesis of scholarship and real-world applications should be framed clearly in the syllabus

in terms of citizenship, diversity, and justice).

- The reviewing faculty had initially requested revisions that would explicitly set the course up around the concept of citizenship, diversity, and justice, but the revised syllabus does not effectively demonstrate how the Theme is integrated into the structure of the course as a stand-alone, GE course. The reviewing faculty request that the course syllabus be further strengthened in its direct alignment with the GEN Theme and ELOs 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, and 4.2, not only in the course content but through purposeful and active engagement by students. Since this is a 4-credit Themes course, meaning that this will be students' only opportunity to engage with the Theme category, it is essential that the Theme be presented in a way in the syllabus that is immediately apparent to students.
- As it stands, the reviewing faculty cannot consider the course to be a GEN Themes course, and significant revisions would be required to bring it in line with the nature and requirements of the program. If the department is interested in revising the syllabus to better align with the GEN Theme, this will require reorganizing the course's focus to ensure that the concepts of citizenship, diversity, and justice are not only clear but integrated in a way that all students, regardless of their disciplinary background, can engage with them meaningfully. The prerequisites could also be revised to ensure that the course is more widely accessible. The reviewing faculty understand that this will be a significant revision, but they do believe that the course has potential to meet the requirements of a GEN Themes course while maintaining its disciplinary focus. The faculty encourage the department to reach out to Jessica Krok-Schoen (Jessica.Schoen@osumc.edu), faculty Chair of the Theme Advisory Group for Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World, and Lisa Cravens-Brown.1@osu.edu, faculty Chair of the Themes 2 Subcommittee, in order to schedule a meeting to discuss a future revision.
- The reviewing faculty ask that the unit provide a cover letter that details the changes that are made to the proposal in response to this feedback.

I will return Anthropology 5525 to the department queue via curriculum.osu.edu in order to address the above feedback.

Should you have any questions about the feedback of the reviewing faculty, please feel free to contact Lisa Cravens-Brown (faculty Chair of the Themes 2 Subcommittee), Jessica Krok-Schoen (faculty Chair of the Theme Advisory Group: CDJW), or me.

Best,
Jennifer



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