
German/Scandinavian 3354.02

From Steele, Rachel <steele.682@osu.edu>

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Good morning/afternoon,

On Wednesday, September 25th, the Arts and Humanities 2 Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed a new course proposal for German/Scandinavian 3354.02 (with 100% DL).

The Subcommittee unanimously approved the request with six contingencies, six recommendations, and 2 comments

- a. **Comment:** The Subcommittee would like the department to know that they appreciate the time and attention that has been given to this class, and they can clearly see the instructor/designer's enthusiasm for the subject matter. While they understand that such a significant amount of feedback can be daunting, they would like to emphasize that they are looking for more clarity rather than longer explanations or more information. They feel that this kind of clarity, especially regarding student grades, can be very important in a distance learning course, where students may not have any face-to-face contact with the instructor. Should the department wish to do so, the chair of this Subcommittee, Laura Podalsky, would be happy to discuss the feedback in greater depth, and you are welcome to reach out and schedule a meeting.
- b. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the revised submission of this request be accompanied by a brief cover letter that outlines the changes made to this course in response to the Subcommittee's feedback.
- c. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department change the "Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes" (curriculum.osu.edu under "Course Details"), reverting to the previous listing for 3354.01 (with slight changes based on content and research component, as necessary). The goals and ELOs in this part of the submission should not be a "copy/paste" of the GEN goals and ELOs; rather, they should be specific to the course.
- d. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department explain how students in this four-credit hour version of the course are receiving more regular and substantive interaction with the instructor than those students enrolled in the three-credit hour version. Both courses seem to share the same amount of contact with the instructor (Core Assignments, Core Discussion), and the increase in time spent for the students in the four-credit hour version seems to be exclusive to out-of-class assignments (Research Assignments, Research Project). The Subcommittee strongly recommends that the department work with the [Office of Distance Education](#) and their instructional designers to make certain that the amount of regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor in the 4-credit hour version is significantly "scaled up" from the 3-credit hour version.
- e. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department provide greater clarity about how students will be evaluated, especially with regard to Core Assignment #1. The chart on pg. 18 of the syllabus notes that 30% of a student's grade is coming from "reading, viewing" and 10% is coming from "completing assignments". However, on pg. 20 of the syllabus, the explanation of this assignment seems to associate those percentages to the expected *time* that students should spend rather than with their grade, and the reviewing faculty would like clarification on this. If the department is planning to grade students on their "reading, viewing", a brief explanation of how they will assess this should be included in the syllabus. Although they do not know if the instructor plans to do this, the Subcommittee would like to mention that using the log-in and time

spent data on Carmen is not an accurate reflection of student work, and it is not best practice to assess students based on this data.

- f. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department clarify what percentage of students' final grades will be constituted from the Final Project. On p. 4 of the syllabus, it implies the project is worth 25%, but the chart on p. 19 says that it is worth only 10%. The Subcommittee notes that, since the research instruction and research project should roughly correspond to one credit hour (or 25%) of the course material, it is appropriate to assign a similar percentage of the overall grade to those assessments. However, the difference in percentages on pg. 4 and pg. 19 may make this difficult for students to understand.
- g. **Contingency:** The Subcommittee asks that the department provide a brief explanation (syllabus pp. 20-21) of how students will be assessed on the Discussion/Engagement Assignments. As these will be graded P/F, students will need to know what will earn a "P" for this 20% of the grade.
- h. *Recommendation:* In order to make a clear separation between the percentages that are associated with time expectations and those that are associated with the overall grade assigned to each activity/assessment, the subcommittee recommends that the department remove the descriptions of expected time commitment from the chart on pp. 18-19, from the descriptions of the assignments (pp. 20-23), and from the Course Schedule (pp. 31-47). In its place, they simply suggest a brief statement under the "How this online course works" section that lays out a "typical" week for students (e.g. "In a typical week, students should expect to spend 1 hour watching lecture videos, 1 hour completing assignments associated with the lecture videos, and 1 hour completing the in-person or online discussions. Additionally, students should plan to spend 4-6 hours on readings, films, and larger writing assignments.")
- i. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee strongly recommends that the department consider making the weekly 55-minute discussion session mandatory, as they feel this could greatly enhance students' understanding of the material. They are particularly concerned that the high-impact practice student experience (especially as it relates to the scaffolded research project) may differ greatly from student to student if this is optional. Should the instructor decide to keep this as an optional activity they also recommend that the instructor give students information about whether they will have to commit to one or the other for the entire semester, and whether the instructor will cancel the in-person sessions if no or few students utilize them in the first few weeks.
- j. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the department consider adding the Creative Inquiry textbook from the 3-credit hour version of the class as an option for this version, as p. 23 of the syllabus seems to indicate that a creative project may be a possibility for this version of the course as well.
- k. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the department consider a more direct method (e.g. email, Carmen message, Carmen announcement) for changing due dates (syllabus p. 31), as simply changing them on Carmen may not be immediately noticeable to all students.
- l. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the department reconsider the length of the syllabus. While they appreciate the detail provided to the reviewers, they are concerned about whether a syllabus of this length will be overwhelming for students and impede rather than enhance their understanding of this exciting course. For example, they offer the friendly observation that the course description (syllabus pp. 1-4), the explanation of how the course meets the GEN goals and ELOs (syllabus pp. 5-8) and the explanation of how the course fills the departmental goals and ELOs (syllabus pp. 9-10) are much longer than those found in most courses. Generally, each of these features would be covered by one brief, student-friendly paragraph of 3-4 sentences.
- m. *Recommendation:* The Subcommittee recommends that the department update **both** the Student Life Disability Services statement (syllabus pp. 27-28) **and** the diversity statement (syllabus p. 26), as both of these statements have been modified for the 2024-2025 academic year. Both statement are available in an easy-to-copy/paste format on the [ASCCAS website](#).
- n. Comment: The Subcommittee offers the friendly observation that there are 14 instructional weeks in a semester (rather than 15), so the course designer may want to take this into account when working with the course

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 the Themes Subcommittee for review for inclusion in the GEN Theme: Sustainability category. *Recommendations* (in italics above) should be implemented when the course is next taught. I will return German/Scandinavian 3354.02 to the department queue via curriculum.osu.edu in order to address the Subcommittee's requests.

Should you have any questions about the feedback of the Subcommittee, please feel free to contact Laura Podalsky (faculty Chair of the A & H 2 NMS Subcommittee; cc'd on this e-mail), or me.

Best,
Rachel



Rachel Steele, MA

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

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