
Civics, Law, and Leadership 2130

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

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To Fortier, Jeremy <fortier.28@osu.edu>; Schoen, Brian <schoen.110@osu.edu>

Cc Vankeerbergen, Bernadette <vankeerbergen.1@osu.edu>; Soland, Birgitte <soland.1@osu.edu>; Steele, Rachel <steele.682@osu.edu>; Neff, Jennifer <neff.363@osu.edu>

Good afternoon,

On Thursday, Sept. 4th, the Themes II Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed a course proposal for Civics, Law, and Leadership 2130 to be included in the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Just and Diverse World.

The Subcommittee did not vote on the proposal as they would like the following points addressed:

- a. The Subcommittee requests that the Center provide a cover letter outlining the changes made to the course in response to the feedback below.
- b. The Subcommittee asks that the Center re-word the statement on p. 2 of the syllabus that says, "This course fulfills the GE Theme: Citizenship for a Just and Diverse World." Since this is a three-credit hour course, CLL 2130 does not, in and of itself, fulfill the GEN Requirements for the Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category (students must complete 4-6 CH in the Theme). Instead, the Subcommittee suggests the following wording: "Civics, Law, and Leadership 2130 is approved as a part of the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World category."
- c. The Subcommittee requests that the Center modify the course calendar (pp.6-9) 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.
- d. The Subcommittee asks that the Center provide additional information about the format, length, and content of the exams since these are central to how student mastery of key elements of the Theme will be evaluated. All courses in the GE are expected to be assessed every 5 years in a centrally coordinated process. The alignment of a course activities to ELOs in the course proposal is a key step in that process, since it gives the offering unit a roadmap for an assessment plan. Since the Mid-Term Exam and Final Exam together make up 60% of the course grade and thus provide the bulk of the opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of ELOs, the Subcommittee is concerned that some concepts, especially those in ELOs 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, and 4.2, may be challenging to assess in this format and may make assessment of the course difficult. For example, they are unsure how explaining "how primary source readings from this course changed their perspective on a particular policy issue they care about" allows students to identify, reflect on, and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for intercultural competence... required in ELO 3.2, or how "apply[ing] the conceptional and historical knowledge that that they have developed throughout the class..." will demonstrate metacognition and "a developing sense of self" (ELO 2.2). They offer the friendly suggestion that some activities other than exams may be more suited to evaluating students' mastery in those areas. If specific embedded questions will be used to evaluate these ELOs, sketching those out would be appropriate.
- e. The Subcommittee does not believe that the course, in its current form, meets the GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World Goals and their attendant ELOs. The Subcommittee offers the following comments to aid the Center in altering/augmenting the course:
 - i. ELO 1.1 –The Subcommittee requests that the course provide opportunities for students to engage with the work of modern scholars or contemporary debates and discourses in the field, and note that this includes "Highlighting open areas of inquiry, diverse

interpretations, and cutting-edge perspectives” ([GEN Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World Rubric](#)).

- ii. ELO 1.2 – The Subcommittee asks that the Center augment the course’s materials to include more “in-depth and scholarly exploration of the theme” (per the Goals and ELOs for all Theme courses). Specifically, they request that a variety of scholarly interpretations be included in the assigned readings for the course, so that students have the opportunity to engage with a range of different scholarly perspectives on the issues under debate for their interpretation of the primary texts and the topic of citizenship, justice and diversity. Also, given that Themes courses are intended to be “advanced courses”, the Subcommittee is concerned about the Center’s description of the course as “a foundational course for a Civics, Law, and Leadership degree path” (curriculum.osu.edu under “Course Change Information”), and they ask that the Center reconsider this description. (**Important note:** The Subcommittee does not object to all uses of the word “foundation” or “foundational”, i.e. “foundational debates” in reference to the early history of the United States or “second foundation” in relation to the period of Reconstruction after the American Civil War, but rather to the description of the course itself as “foundational” or introductory rather than advanced. If the intention here is to make clear that this course is a key component of that pathway, it may be more effective to simply describe the role [a prerequisite, required major course, elective, etc.] within a particular program.)
- iii. ELO 2.1 – Related to their comments regarding ELOs 1.1 and 1.2 above, the Subcommittee would like to see the inclusion of more opportunities for students to “identify, describe, and synthesize” different approaches to the interpretation of the primary texts and their relationship to citizenship, diversity, and justice; as described the emphasis is on comparing primary texts to one another across time and space. Scholarly secondary sources should make up a significant percentage of the course materials, so as to provide clear examples for students regarding the type of writing and advanced academic arguments expected for an advanced college level course and give ample opportunity for students to engage with review and critique of academic scholarship.
- iv. ELO 2.2 – The Subcommittee asks that the Center incorporate into the course schedule opportunities for students to demonstrate their “developing sense of self as a learner” in an assessable manner. While the Subcommittee notes and appreciates the presence of in-class debates and exam questions that focus on course content, 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.
- v. ELO 3.1 – As noted above, the Subcommittee requests that the “range of perspectives” include scholarly writings that approach the issues of citizenship, justice, and diversity from a number of different vantage points, and that these be an integral part of the course. Currently the course only appears to engage with the differing opinions of historical figures and institutions, in conjunction with the interpretations of the students and the instructor.
- vi. ELO 3.2 – The Subcommittee asks that the Center improve and expand the treatment of intercultural competency in the course. The [Center for Languages, Literatures, and Cultures](#) provides excellent resources regarding the [principles of intercultural competence](#) and the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and qualities that students should be developing to meet this ELO. The Subcommittee offers the suggestion that activities, assessments, and readings designed to meet this ELO may be an excellent opportunity to engage further with the concepts of diversity and justice and students’ developing sense of self as a learner.
- vii. ELO 4.1 - The Subcommittee requests that the Center include additional coverage of concepts surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion, being especially careful to incorporate activities, assessments and materials that consider a variety of lived experiences within the time and space explored by the course.

- viii. ELO 4.2 – The Subcommittee asks that the Center include in the course activities, assessments, and readings that focus on how “justice, difference, and citizenship interact with cultural traditions, structures of power, and/or advocacy for social change.” While they acknowledge that the examination of key Supreme court cases may touch on these issues, it is not clear how students will be encouraged to think about or be assessed, for example, on how difference intersects with cultural traditions, or how justice might include advocacy for social change.
- f. The Subcommittee recommends that the Center examine some of the [exemplar proposals for the Citizenship For a Diverse and Just World Theme](#), as well as the [new rubrics related to each Theme](#). Both of these resources (and others) are available on the [ASCCAS website](#). Should the Center need further information about the feedback above, they are welcome to reach out to Birgitte Sjøland, chair of the Themes II Subcommittee.

I will return Civics, Law, and Leadership 2130 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 Birgitte Sjøland, (faculty Chair of the Themes II Subcommittee; cc’d on this e-mail), or me.

Best,
Rachel



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

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