
Biology 3001

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To Andrews, Adam <andrews.171@osu.edu>; Sabel, Jaime <sabel.12@osu.edu>

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

Good afternoon,

On Thursday, December 4, the Themes II Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed a course proposal for Biology 3001 to be included in the GEN Theme: Origins and Evolutions category.

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

- a. The Subcommittee requests that the unit provide a cover letter that details the changes made to the course submission materials in response to the feedback below.
- b. The Subcommittee asks that the unit more clearly articulate how the course is centered around the origin and evolution of natural systems. Currently, the course seems to be focused on biology, biotechnology, and the growth of biotechnology i.e., the main focus is not on natural systems but on the human manipulation of these systems. As a result, it is difficult to see how the course will substantively engage with ELOs 3.1 and 3.2, or how the course's assessments will compel students to demonstrate their knowledge in these areas. The Subcommittee offers the friendly suggestion that this course may be better suited to a different theme, such as Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations or Lived Environments. However, regardless of the category, the Subcommittee notes that the theme ELOs should be the focus of the course's topics, activities, readings, and assessments. Should the unit be open to the possibility of reimagining the course for a different theme, the Subcommittee encourages them to reach out to Meg Daly, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, to discuss a possible redesign.
- c. The Subcommittee asks that the unit provide further evidence that the course is at an "advanced and in-depth level" (Goal 1) and spurs students to "mak[e] connections to out-of-class experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in the future." (Goal 2). Currently, it appears that the only required reading/text for the course is the Michael Crichton novel, which does not promote "an advanced, in-depth, [and] scholarly exploration" (ELO 1.2), and the course materials do not appear to compel students to "identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences" (ELO 2.1). Generally, courses at the level of the GEN Themes involve the reading of a significant number of scholarly sources that provide students with a variety of viewpoints – i.e. "research or cutting-edge findings," or other ways of "deeply engag[ing] with the subject matter" (Goal 1), and course assessments which ask them to synthesize, describe and interact with these sources in a variety of ways.
- d. The Subcommittee asks that the unit amend and/or expand the descriptions of the course's major assignments (syllabus, pp. 7-8) to explain more thoroughly how they will assess students' achievement of the GEN Theme ELOs. The Subcommittee offers the friendly suggestion that the unit consider how a student reading the descriptions of the assignments might see the theme "signposted" throughout.
- e. The Subcommittee appreciates the unit's attention to ELO 2.2, and the assessments that the course employs to evaluate students' achievement of this ELO.

I will return Biology 3001 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 Soland (faculty Chair of the Themes II Subcommittee; cc'd on this e-mail), or me.

Best,
Rachel



Rachel Steele, MA

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

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