



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
ASU GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 27, 2018

3:15–5:00 p.m.

Present: Patience Akpan, Katherine Antonucci, Charlotte Armbruster, Tamiko Azuma, Jason Bruner, Martha Cocchiarella, Jessica Early, Caroline Harrison GSC-Vice Chair, Julia Himberg, Julie Holston, Phyllis Lucie, Manisha Master, Michael Mokwa, Darryl Morrell, Helene Ossipov, Kristen Parrish, Steve Semken, Megan Gorvin Short, Matt Simonton, Mark Tebeau, Michelle Zandieh

Excused: Wendy Hultsman, Mickey Mancenido, Bertha Manninen, Peter Schmidt, Perla Vargas

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes—August 30, 2018

The minutes were approved as amended.

3. Announcements

none

4. Old Business

none

5. New Business

none

6. Subcommittee Reports

A) Literacy & Critical Inquiry

From ASU:

Approved for L designation, effective Fall 2019 (new):

TWC 453 Information and Technology in American History (new)

Recommend to Deny for L designation (new):

CEL 100 Great Ideas of Politics and Ethics (new/revised)

Rationale: The course meets Criterion 1 that “at least 50% of the grade in the course should depend upon writing assignments.” The course has two writing assignments and, together, count for 70% of the grade. However, the writing assignments do not clearly fulfill Criteria 2 and 3, that the writing assignments “should involve gathering, interpreting, and evaluating evidence,” and “two writing and/or speaking assignments that are substantial in depth, quality, and quantity.” It is not clear how much of the writing content goes beyond analyzing the views of Great Thinkers on democracy and equality to meet fully Criteria 2 and 3. Furthermore, ENG 101, 107, or ENG 105 are not prerequisites for this course. In addition, the final exam/essay seems to be a combination of the first two assignments, totaling 2500 words. The professor provides feedback one time and students receive peer reviews once, which does not meet Criterion 4, that “these substantial writing or speaking assignment be arranged so that the students will get timely feedback from the instructor on each assignment.” Students receive feedback from the instructor only on the “Midterm Essay” but not on the “draft version” of the final essay/exam.

TWC 443 Grant and Proposal Writing (new)

Rationale: The course *seems* to meet Criterion 1 with “at least 50% of the grade in the course depending upon writing assignments.” However, while the syllabus assigns point values to each of the writing assignments (e.g. worksheets, grant reports, etc.), it does not clearly show the % for each assignment counting toward the final grade. The reader is left guessing if at least 50% of the grade, is in fact, dependent on written assignments and if these assignments meet Criterion 2 requiring students to “gather, interpret, and evaluate evidence.” The course does not meet Criterion 3 which states that “The Syllabus should include a minimum of two writing and/or speaking assignments that are substantial in depth, quality, and quantity.” None of the assignments on the syllabus include a specific length requirement. Many of the assignments are worksheets, peer review, and emails, which imply short task-driven writing not involving “gathering, interpreting, or evaluating evidence.” The Analysis Report (50 points) might fit these criteria but the description is vague, letting the students know that it is a “short report in memo format” and instructing them to “identify” various aspects of the organization and need for funding. The applicant should include the required/suggested page lengths or word counts for each

assignment. Grant writing is a specific genre of writing, which almost always involves “gathering, interpreting, and evaluating evidence and critical inquiry.” However, as the syllabus is currently written, the grant writing in this course does not clearly require these components. Furthermore, the substantial writing assignments for this course are labeled as “midterm exam/essay” and “final exam/essay. If these are treated as exams, and not in-depth writing assignments, then they are take-home and, therefore, not eligible for the L-designation.

From MCCCDC:
Recommend to Deny for L designation

HUM 250 Ideas and Values in the Humanities (mandatory review)

Rationale: The course meets Criterion 1. However, Two-thirds of the writing for the main assignments in this class do not clearly meet Criterion 2 as they do not “reflect critical inquiry, extending beyond opinion and/or reflection.” For example, the “Reaction/response logs” are divided into three parts, according to the syllabus. The first two parts are statements of facts (“should simply objectively report where you went, what you saw, and when”) and opinion (“Explain how you felt about what you saw. Be honest!”), respectively. The prompt states “Step Three,” the analysis, is “the most challenging paragraph and the one that will carry the most weight for your grade on the assignment” yet the prompt requires each section to be a paragraph in length. These written assignments are designed to be largely opinion-based responses and are short responses not clearly reflecting critical inquiry, extending beyond opinion/reflection.” The same could potentially be said for the “Response Logs,” as it is not clear that writing is a tool for critical injury in these assignments. The written assignments should be revised or more clearly articulated to show they meet Criterion 2. It is also unclear from the syllabus whether the first exam is in-class or take-home, which matters for the L designation. Also, on the course schedule, December 12 lists “Exam 2” and “Exam 3: In-class final exam.” This may be an error but because point values are listed with them (200 and 100 points, respectively) it is unclear. In addition, the second “Analytical Paper” instructs students to “Submit as Part of the Final Exam” yet the syllabus includes separate point values/class percentages for both of them. The applicant should explain what percentage of the final exam grade comes from the second “Analytical Paper.” The syllabus states that the 2 “Analytical Papers” are worth 20% of the overall grade and the “Examinations” are worth another 20%. Does this mean though that part of both of those percentages comes from the same assignment? This should be explained in the syllabus and assignment prompt. Until these point values and percentages are cleared up, it is not clear if this course meets Criterion 1 that “at least 50% of the grade in the course depending upon writing assignments.”

HUM 251 Ideas and Values in the Humanities (mandatory review)

Rationale: Two-thirds of the writing for these assignments do not meet Criterion 2 as they do not “reflect critical inquiry, extending beyond opinion and/or reflection.” They are designed to be largely opinion-based responses. The “Reaction/response logs” are divided into three parts, according to the syllabus. The first two parts are statements of facts (“should simply objectively report where you went, what you saw, and when”) and opinion (“Explain how you felt about what you saw. Be honest!”), respectively. The prompt states “Step Three,” the analysis, is “the most challenging paragraph and the one that will carry the most weight for your grade on the assignment” yet the prompt requires each section to be a paragraph in length. The same could potentially be said for the “Response Logs,” as it is not clear that writing is a tool for critical inquiry in these assignments. If those two sets of assignments do not meet the criteria, then the course does not meet the requirement that 50% of assignments “should depend upon writing assignments.”

In addition, the second “Analytical Paper” instructs students to “Submit as Part of the Final Exam” yet the syllabus includes separate point values/class percentages for both of them. The applicant should explain what percentage of the final exam grade comes from the second “Analytical Paper.” The syllabus states that the 2 “Analytical Papers” are worth 20% of the overall grade and the “Examinations” are worth another 20%. Does this mean though that part of both of those percentages comes from the same assignment? This should be explained in the syllabus and assignment prompt.

B) Mathematical Studies (MA)/(CS)

From ASU:

None

From MCCC:

None

C) Humanities, Arts & Design (HU)

From ASU:

Approved for HU designation, effective Fall 2019 (new):

CEL 100 Great Ideas of Politics and Ethics (new/revised)

Approved for HU designation, effective Spring 2019 (new):
SPA 394 Cinema of Spain (new)

From MCCCCD:
None

D) Social - Behavioral Sciences (SB)

From ASU:
Approved for SB designation, effective Spring 2019 (new):
SLC 394 Culture and Society Transformation (new)

From MCCCCD:
None

E) Natural Sciences (SQ/SG)

From ASU:
None

From MCCCCD:
None

F) Cultural Diversity in the United States (C)

From ASU:
Recommend to Revise and Resubmi for C designation (new):

CPP 194 National Service and American Democracy (new)

Rationale: The proposal for this course is very well written, but this course seems to have been developed originally with civic engagement and service as the primary focus, and then the emphasis on cultural diversity and identity may have been worked in later to meet the criteria of the general studies designation. It does have potential to allow students to explore cultural diversity in the U.S. and how cultures can affect social activism and democracy. However, the course seems light on content focusing on the study of cultures in contemporary U.S. society (criterion 1). It seems to fit more comfortably into the Social Behavioral Awareness and/or Historical Awareness areas. That being said, it does mention the current #MeToo movement, but much of the study of cultures appears in a historical context (women's suffrage and prohibition, The Voting Rights Act from 1965, historical origins of the Jewish Family and Children's Service, etc.). Many of the contemporary aspects of the course are videos/readings describing current organizations or groups, but it's unclear how these videos/readings will incorporate a discussion of cultural diversity in U.S. society

and/or provide an in-depth study of culture-specific elements (criterion 2a). In addition, the Civic Action ePortfolio Assignments and the Civic Engagement, Identity, and Group Mobilization paper are very broad assignments. These assignments require students to choose a topic that matters to them and then research that topic in various ways. The paper does ask students to analyze an organization that has mobilized a group of people based on identity, but because both assignments are so broad, it is difficult to determine the depth to which students will be studying the social, economic, political, or psychological dimensions of relations between different cultural groups (criterion 2c). Thus, it appears that students will address learning about cultural diversity in individualized ways based on the topics they choose.

For a revision it would help to have a more specific attachment of a) how contemporary US examples will be used across the curriculum and b) more specifics about how the Civic Action ePortfolio assignment and the Civic Engagement, Identity, and Group Mobilization paper will go beyond the service perspective and more deeply incorporate an attachment to cultural diversity awareness

From MCCC:
Recommend to Deny for C designation

HIS 105 Arizona History (new)

Rationale: The focus of this course is primarily Arizona history, as the title suggests, from prehistoric times into the 1980's. Therefore, it doesn't meet criterion 1 of contributing to an understanding of cultural diversity in contemporary U.S. society. While it does mention various cultural groups within the U.S. (Native Americans, Latinx, Mormons, etc.), these cultural groups are actually studied in a historical context and not in a way that would lead to students' understanding of cultural diversity in contemporary U.S., which is the primary emphasis of this awareness area. From the syllabus it appears that students would study mainly the history of these various cultural groups and how they interacted with each other in Arizona so there are aspects that could potentially meet criteria 2a and 2c, but again, these groups and their interactions are being studied through a historical lens so would not necessarily lead to an understanding of cultural diversity in the modern U.S.

G) Global Awareness (G)
From ASU:

Approved for G designation, effective Fall 2019 (new):

ITA 423 Mafia and Film (new/revised)

Approved for G designation, effective Spring 2019 (new):

SPA 394 Cinema of Spain (new)

Recommend to revise and resubmit for G designation (new):

SLC 394 Culture and Society Transformation (new)

Rationale: The course introduces core elements of culture, cultural conflict, and drivers of change. It is using films/documentaries to apply the content to different sub-cultures in Europe and Asia. Based on the provided assignments, it is unclear that the students need to demonstrate an understanding of contemporary global context and awareness to complete the provided assignments and that the majority of the assignments have a contemporary global awareness focus.

Recommendation to resubmit with more details on the assignments with respect to in-depth contemporary global awareness (and include DB#6 and final project).

From MCCCDC:

None

H) Historical Awareness (H)

From ASU:

Recommend to Deny for H designation (new):

SPA 394 The Cinema of Spain (new)

Rationale: This course falls under the two exclusionary criteria of being “merely organized chronologically” and being “exclusively the history of a field of study or a field of artistic or professional endeavor.” In order to move beyond these exclusions, a course needs to demonstrate a greater degree of engagement with historical analysis than this course does. The designation specifies that courses embed “systematic historical analysis in the core of the syllabus, including readings and assignments.” The assignments in this course do not require substantial historical analysis, nor does the course require any specific historical readings. (The historical texts mentioned in the syllabus are optional, not required.) The chronological organization by historical periods seems to serve the primary purpose of providing structure, as opposed to establishing a basis for students to engage broad historical issues in a systematic

analytic exploration throughout the semester. The final assignment includes historical sources as one option with respect to evidence, but does not hold students accountable for having developed a sufficient degree of historical consciousness. The assignment's focus, and in fact, the focus of the course, is on cinematic representations of Spanish culture, politics, and historical events, rather than on understanding the broader spectrum of Spanish history itself.

From MCCCDC:

None

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Submitted by Phyllis Lucie