

Historical Awareness Subcommittee Report

Date: 9/12/19

To: General Studies Council

From: Historical Awareness Subcommittee

Julie Holston, Chair

Mark Tebeau

Julia Sarreal

Re: Recommendations for Course Proposals (H designation)

Recommend for Approval

From ASU: (none)

From MCCCDC: (none)

Recommend for Revise/Resubmit

From ASU:

**LAS/FOR/ Latin American Cinema: The Dead and the Disappeared
SPA 449**

Rationale: This revision of the proposal addresses some of the committee's previous concerns about the degree to which historical analysis is embedded in the course. For example, the "optional" historical/political framing of the final paper has been changed to "required", and the syllabus now clearly states that students will be expected to make connections between the films and their historical context in their journal assignments and presentations.

The committee still has some concerns, however. The applicant repeatedly mentions that the course deals with "historical context" and "historical trends" but neither is clear in the breakdown of the classes in the syllabus. Specifically, in relation to the criteria:

Criteria 1 and 3: The major focus of the course is film, and it is not clear how history is a focus of the course. The majority of the highlighted readings are about film, and there is no indication of lectures in the syllabus, especially lectures focusing on history. The course schedule indicates that films are shown each week during class meetings, which would leave very little time for lecture or discussion that would provide students with the historical background necessary for them to engage in historical analysis. The applicant does mention lectures under Criterion 3, but the syllabus does not indicate when in the schedule these lectures will occur. Additionally, the described lectures focus on filmmaking and not the history related to the dead and the disappeared.

Criterion 2: The proposal indicates that the course meets this criterion by being divided into three historical moments, but the descriptions of these moments are focused on how filmmakers responded to the political and social events of the time—again highlighting filmmaking while relegating history to context. Additionally, the course needs to provide information about the variety of historical factors that influenced these sequences of events. More clear divisions across time or across regions, and explicit explanation of the historical context is needed.

To meet the H designation, it would be expected that students would leave the class with a fundamental understanding of the differences/similarities/particularities regarding the human rights violations (the dead and the disappeared) in the different countries of Latin America. The course would need to undergo significant structural reshaping and content-altering changes to ensure that students would understand the differences and similarities between countries and the change over time, in addition to the course's more immediate focus on how films portrayed these human rights violations.

From MCCCD: (none)