

Historical Awareness Subcommittee Report

Date: 9/23/20

To: General Studies Council

From: **Historical Awareness Subcommittee**

Denise Bates, Member

David Corlett, Chair

Matt Simonton, Member

Re: Recommendations for Course Proposals (H designation)

Recommend for Approval

From ASU: (none)

From MCCCCD: (none)

Recommend for Revise/Resubmit

From ASU:

CEL 394--American Constitution I: Structures

Rationale: This is an interesting course with the potential to hold H status. As it stands, the approach is somewhat static. The topical organization may have the study of change within each, but there does not seem to be a unifying arc over the course as a whole. Building the course around legal precedent/interpreting legal argument has resulted in the telescoping time without consideration for the broader context. As an example, on Day 6, the topic jumps from the 1780s to 1860s/1870s to 1923 to 1965. The Moot Court and essay prompts, while all laudable, are snapshot assignments, describing the current state of an issue. The lack of a synthesizing secondary source (or sources) that places the different court rulings in context and allows students to see what ideas and events caused change over time is a critical point to consider. The course could benefit from either a textbook that takes a historical approach to the interpretation of the American constitution or scholarly articles that help to tie the disparate sources together.

CEL 394--Arizona Constitutionalism and Political Development

Rationale: This course is the strongest of the three submitted, with great potential to meet the Historical Awareness criteria with minimal revision. The descriptions in the packet demonstrate greater focus on change/development of institutions within more robust environments, and the use of books and scholarly articles to supply some context. The course is structured thematically

but also progresses through time chronologically as the course goes on. Although the topics are very different from one another, their unfolding as subjects of constitutional debate within the same US state unifies them somewhat and might allow for the analysis of institutional change (for example, at the level of the state congress or the governorship) over time. A unifying text or set of scholarly articles that offer broader context (more than the very brief introduction in the Arizona Constitution book) could make the difference.

CEL 394—Debates in American Civic and Public Affairs

This course is largely about present-day debates and not about their evolution over time. The inclusion of primary sources serves mainly to establish the terms of debates in the past, not examine how those debates have changed over time. The discussion prompts reflect this focus as well, tending toward pragmatic or ethical terms (is this policy the right thing to do/ a wise thing to do?) and not requiring that the students know the historical background and development. As an example, the first discussion prompt on political parties ask if contemporary American parties could be reconciled with Madison's notions as described in the Federalist Papers, but this does not consider the two centuries between.

From MCCCCD: (none)

Recommend for Deny

From ASU: (none)

From MCCCCD: (none)