

**ASU GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 26, 2011

3:00–5:00 p.m.

Ira A. Fulton Foundation Center – 2nd floor- room 2490

Present: Craig Allen, Debra Campbell, John Chance, Ron Dorn, Barbara Fargotstein, Chouki El Hamel, Chair, Alejandra Elenes, Joe Foy, Antonio Garcia, Matthias Kawski, Barbara Lafford, Phyllis Lucie, Joe Rody, Jeff Ricker, Doug Spencer, April Summitt, Mike Tueller, Kathy Wigal

Excused: Rebecca Barry, Karen Bollermann, Cecelia Fiery, Karen Leong, Kristin LaCroix, Peter de Marneffe, Ron Roedel, Julia Sarreal

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes—March 22, 2011**

The minutes were approved as written.

**3. Announcements**

Dr. El Hamel thanked council members for their commitment to the GSC this academic year. Council members congratulated Dr. El Hamel on a job well done as chair of the GSC.

**4. Old Business**

To facilitate the understanding of general studies courses for faculty, staff and students, council members were informed that the GSC tutorial link can be included on their respective college websites (by a member of their college technical team).

**5. New Business**

A request was made by the Global Awareness subcommittee to amend the Global Awareness checksheet. Mike Tueller, Chair, will amend the checksheet and send to Phyllis Lucie for e-mail distribution to GSC members.

GSC members will review the amended checksheet and inform Phyllis Lucie of approval. The new checksheet will then be updated on the GSC website.

## 6. Subcommittee Reports

### A) **Literacy & Critical Inquiry (Barbara Fargotstein)** **From ASU**

**Approved for L designation, effective Fall 2011 (new):**

BIO 306 Modes of Biological Thought (revised & resubmitted)  
DCE 405 Rhetorical Moves (revised)  
SSH/ASB 322 Peoples of Latin America  
USL 210 Service Learning: Independent Placement (revised & resubmitted)  
USL 410 Service Learning: Independent Placement (revised & resubmitted)

**Approved for L designation, retroactive effective Spring 2011 (new):**

SOS 394 Inequality and Sustainability

### B) **Mathematical Studies (MA)/(CS) (Joe Rody)**

None

### C) **Humanities, Fine Arts & Design (HU) (Doug Spencer)** **From MCCCCD**

**Approved for HU designation, retroactive effective Fall 2011 (new):**

REL 291 Religion and Sexuality

### D) **Social and Behavioral Sciences (John Chance)** **From ASU**

**Approved for SB designation, retroactive Spring 2011 (new):**

SOS 394 Inequality and Sustainability

**Approved for SB designation, Spring 2012 (new):**

CRJ 225 Introduction to Criminology

MCCCCD (mandatory review)

**Approved to retain SB designation:**

GCU 221 Arizona Geography

**Request to Revise and Resubmit (new):**  
**From ASU**

FSE 194 Perspectives on Grand Challenges for Engineering

Rationale: This is an interesting and innovative course that focuses on the factors that have influenced how societies around the globe historically and currently respond technologically to challenges such as energy, the environment, food supply, and security. But just how the social sciences are involved in understanding this subject matter and what social science theories and/or methods will be covered needs to be made clear. None of the social sciences or their theories and methods is directly invoked in the checksheet or in the course outline. A Table of Contents is provided for only one of the two required texts; it covers environmental and technological problems but makes no explicit reference to the role of the social sciences in addressing those problems.

TEL 294 Entrepreneurial Solutions to Global Challenges

Rationale: This 8-week, online Education course focuses on “social entrepreneurship,” but the relationship of this construct to social science must be made clearer. The course intends an “interdisciplinary approach to problem solving” and students from other fields are invited to bring their own academic background knowledge to the course, but this is not sufficient to qualify for SB designation. The Tables of Contents of the two textbooks do not sufficiently clarify the social science content of the course. A resubmission must spell out how the course relates to the knowledge base of the social and behavioral sciences. We note that the guidelines state that predominantly applied courses for professional skills or training purposes are excluded from the SB area.

**E) Natural Sciences (SQ/SG) (Ron Dorn)**

**From MCCC**

**Approved for SG designation, effective Fall 2011 (new):**

ASM 265 Lab Methods in Archaeology

**F) Cultural Diversity in the United States (Barbara Lafford)**

**From ASU**

**Approved for C designation, effective Fall 2011 (new):**

USL 410 Service Learning; Independent Placement

**Revise & Resubmit**  
**From MCCCCD (new):**

DAH 250 Dance in Popular Culture

Rationale: Although the syllabus for the course shows that it fulfills the C criteria as it contributes to understanding cultural diversity in the US by examining dance as a socio-cultural practice. And the course outline clearly demonstrates attention to power, class, and gender, and the assigned readings include one book that has an emphasis African American aesthetics and two required videos that explore the social contexts of hip-hop and black social dance on film. The course objectives and the goals from MCCCCD do not specifically mention learning about minority cultures in the US. Although it is true that the content of this particular syllabus indicates a strong focus on African-American influences on dance in the US, this is not guaranteed if another person teaches the course unless the goals specifically spell out that focus.

We need to have a discussion with MCCCCD to specifically mention Cultural Diversity in the course goals if they want a C designation (or the same for G, HU, H, etc.). This keeps coming up as an issue.

**DENY (new)**

ISB 109 Cultural Dimensions for International Trade

Rationale: On the course outline, only 3 of the 10 competencies relate to the “C” designation. The primary focus of this class, as described in the course outline “Cultural Dimension for International Trade”, seems to be on foreign cultures, and foreign workers in the US. The required reading focuses on cultural differences and leadership; the suggested reading is very much related to ethnic and racial diversity in the US, but it is not required and there is no mention is made in the course goals about focusing on US minority cultures.

All of the diversity is about how to do business with these cultures—and Latin American and Hispanic-American; Asian and Asian-American; Middle East and Middle-Eastern American, pan-African and pan-African American are presented together in the same week. The TOC for the book focuses on international, not US based categories except for North Americans; there is a chapter about gender differences, yet it is unclear to what extent these are US based. One assignment is about cultural diversity in a US city; and the second assignment chooses an international city and compares to the US city.

Given the focus of “International Trade” the course seems to fit very nicely with the G designation. It consistently makes reference to comparing US and foreign (international) cultures, but makes no real mention of comparing the views of various minority cultures in the US. As we have talked about before, in many cases globalization has made the distinction between “foreign” and domestic diversity somewhat unclear (e.g., those courses dealing with border issues). However, these materials do not meet the specific criteria for a C designation, i.e., having more than 50% focus on US minority cultures.

REL 206 Religions in America (new – revised and resubmitted- 2<sup>nd</sup> time)

Rationale: One of the ten official course competencies is to “Describe the distinctive and very diverse religions of Native Americans.” A second competency is “Describe the distinctive and very diverse religions of European Americans.” The course outline mentions Native Americans and African Americans and European Americans in beginnings; African Americans are mentioned twice under “New and Expanding Nation” and Jewish Americans once; immigration is mentioned. African Americans are mentioned under “Post Civil War” and Jews are mentioned in relation to Catholics and religious pluralism under “Modern America.” 9/11 is a topic, so perhaps Muslims are included.

Just like last time, it is not at all clear 50% of the material focuses on cultural diversity. There is a book about snake handling in Appalachia and a reader which is about a subculture but how is this part of the larger patterns of cultural diversity in the US? The syllabus does not demonstrate a strong focus of these different contexts and cultures beyond religious organization and practices. The handouts on African American and American Indian religious practices aren't really very substantive, . The two critical papers focus on cultures foreign to that student's own culture—that does not necessarily fall under the GSC rubric for cultural diversity, and may not be consistently about cultural diversity.

Additionally, the handouts that were chosen to be part of this package conveniently focus on US diversity. However, once again, this focus is not mentioned in the course goals and the topics covered do not indicate at least a 50% focus on US minority views of religion.

**G) Global Awareness (Debra Campbell)**

**From ASU**

**Approve for G designation, effective Fall 2011 (new):**

TEL 294 Entrepreneurial Solutions to Global Challenges

**From ASU**

**Deny (new):**

FSE 194 Perspectives on Grand Challenges for Engineering

Rationale: The proposal included an introductory document for the GSC, which outlined a number of significant points of contact with global awareness. However, the course itself spent very little time addressing cultural issues, and culture was only a very minor part of course requirements. The textbook also had no significant cultural component.

SOS 394 Inequality and Sustainability

Rationale: One of the course's learning objectives is relevant to global awareness: “Appreciation of the diverse national, regional, and global perspectives on inequality and

sustainability.” The submitted materials, however, gave us no way to see how this objective was achieved or evaluated. All the assignments are papers that address the themes raised in class—there is no more specific description for them than that, and neither the class schedule nor the included bibliography included cultural material. No tables of contents were included for major texts.

**From MCCCDC :**  
**Revise and Resubmit (new):**

REL 291 Religion and Sexuality

Rationale: The course as outlined clearly meets the criteria. We were surprised, however, to find that awareness of global culture was not one of the course competencies. With this addition to the competencies, the course will easily pass muster.

**H) Historical Awareness (Jeffrey Ricker)**

**From ASU (new):**

FSE 194 - Perspectives on Grand Challenges for Engineering

Rationale: All four criteria must be met in order for a course to be granted the H designation, but the initiator checked the "No" box for Criterion 3 ("there is a disciplined systematic examination of human institutions as they change over time"). After reviewing the proposal, we agreed with the initiator that the course did not meet Criterion 3. In addition, we thought that the course also did not meet Criterion 1 ("history is a major focus of the course"): although the first three weeks focus on historical issues, after that time the primary focus shifts to contemporary issues and how to meet the challenges raised by these issues.

**6. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Submitted by Phyllis Lucie