

University General Education Council
March 23, 2016, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: G. Straughn, E. Gumm, C. Niccum, P. Roggendorff, K. Pybus, M. Lynn, K. Hendrick, M. Garver, B. Hammack, J. Wallace, J. Xu, R. Ashlock, M. Smallwood,

Absent: K. Pamplin, P. Wertheim, N. Santana

Ex-officios: T. Milholland (T. Lee, absent)

Guests: Susan Lewis

The meeting began at 3:33 p.m.

I. Call to order by E. Gumm.

II. Prayer by J. Wallace.

III. Approval of the minutes from 3.9.16

Motion to approve by K. Pybus with correction to one spelling error on page 2; seconded by M Garver; all in favor; none opposed; motion passes.

IV. Cultural Awareness Criteria Revision.

G. Straughn – I think we need to simplify the name of the menu to get rid of all the various titles. Cultural Awareness best encompasses all items. The other subtitles are a little too specific to their area. So I recommend that title change.

For the criteria – please refer to the memo attached to the approval chart. I tried to focus on where these two sets of criteria (Foreign Language/Cultural Awareness and Fine Arts/Humanities) intersect to combine into a single set of criteria. Remember, this menu is in the new “University Requirements” area, not the “General Education” area, so we have more freedom to include upper-level courses.

This also incorporates an assessment plan. We would need to continue assessing Knowledge and Inquiry, but with the Cultural Awareness menu, there should also be an assessment for Intercultural Knowledge. I’m pretty confident that any courses currently on the existing menus would be able to easily adjust to allow reporting in this area.

J. Wallace – Changing the language from “ability to” to “reflect” in the criteria. G. Straughn – “Reflect” gives us more freedom there. S. Lewis – “Ability to” came about because the students might not have had actual opportunity to interact with people from another culture, but they developed an ability to do so. J. Wallace – “Reflect” is such a generic word. The student could just say, “I reflected” and it doesn’t show much of anything. T. Milholland – There should be a direct assessment. G. Straughn – There

should be an item in the course syllabus that demonstrates how the student was asked to reflect – paper, exam, project, etc. That would bring in the grading rubrics. M. Lynn – How about changing the word to “explore” since it is directed at the course itself, not learning outcomes?

P. Roggendorff – Are we pushing foreign language out of the Cultural Awareness menu? Foreign language was where this menu started. Now it has become so diluted and the criteria has nothing to do with foreign language at all. G. Straughn – Do you feel that the foreign language courses could not meet the cultural awareness menu criteria as stated here? P. Roggendorff – It is not the main thrust of the courses. G. Straughn – Do you think they *could* engage the criteria? P. Roggendorff – They *could*. G. Straughn – It doesn't have to be the majority of the course material. It just has to address those criteria in some manner during the time of the course. P. Roggendorff – If you're saying that the main thrust of the course doesn't have to address the criteria, then you are diluting the university criteria and the menus become meaningless because any course could add a one-week segment on something to address the criteria and leave it at that.

M. Lynn – Can you add an opening paragraph to add some guidance to the committee? Something like: We assume that any course included on this menu will contain a *significant* portion of content directly related to this criteria. G. Straughn – That is certainly a possibility and within the prerogative of this committee.

C. Niccum – To what extent should this criteria pervade the courses allowed on the menu? That is a good point, yet we have some courses that have been allowed on the menu in the past that had much smaller sections of cultural components. G. Straughn – I don't know that we have ever tried to quantify the amount for any menu. J. Wallace – The addition of “significant” would not quantify but it would give the committee a guideline of how to consider a course for the menu. P. Roggendorff – With this diluted criteria, will departments start adding their own courses into the university requirements menu to the point that in a few years, there would be no more liberal arts model, but silos of departments? G. Straughn – I don't see that happening. We already have courses in departments that fulfill a major requirement as well as a university requirement. That has happened for years and I don't think we are doing anything different with this.

C. Niccum – Among the optional criteria, I think it would be a good idea to add an item speaking directly to the foreign language component. G. Straughn – So I hear interest in having an 8th criterion in having a language-based component and an interest in creating an introductory statement about the criteria applying to a significant portion of the course. And we could add a similar statement to all the sets of criteria for the various menus.

J. Wallace – How about changing “reflect” to “identify”?

M. Lynn – Could we make the optional criteria items more general so that they don't fit directly to particular courses? And with the assessment piece – Knowledge and Inquiry don't really fit with Cultural Awareness. So couldn't we remove 1 and 2 and just leave 3

– Intercultural Awareness? Perhaps we could add a new item that would encompass the criteria to go along with it. G. Straughn – Picking up on that last comment, I think that's a good idea. We could remove assessments 1 and 2 and just leave 3. I don't think we should add something that doesn't already exist in our learning outcomes, however.

G. Straughn – Would the committee be amenable to some rewriting of optional criteria 3-5 to make them broader and applicable to a larger selection of courses? I don't want to edit criteria that were put together by faculty committees, however. What is the best way to conceive this new combined criteria? J. Wallace – We want to protect the integrity of the process. So we should have those original documents inform our choices moving forward. M. Lynn – Could we not just use all of the original criteria in the list instead of trying to combine them? P. Roggendorff – Foreign language fits 4 and 5 better than 1 and 2 that are the required criteria items. M. Lynn – Make the two #2s from the original criteria lists as the required items and delete 1 and 4 from the Fine Arts criteria list since they do not deal with culture. Then leave all the other statements as optional criteria. G. Straughn – That might be a more elegant solution.

M. Lynn – We might need to include in our opening statement that domestic cross-cultures are also to be considered as cultural awareness. G. Straughn – I think that is a good idea.

M. Smallwood – Criteria #2 on the revised list – Could we not just insert language into the list here to show the large part language plays in culture? Beliefs, values, *language*, artwork, etc. M. Garver – Could we set up a subcommittee to address this criteria so that we can come up with new clarity in this document before we consider it for a vote? G. Straughn – I will facilitate. Paul Roggendorff and M. Lynn will assist.

Motion by R. Ashlock to table the Cultural Awareness criteria discussion until the subcommittee comes up with new language. Seconded by J. Wallace. All in favor. Item is tabled.

V. THEA 490 – Inclusion on Historical Literacy Menu.

E. Gumm – We've looked at this twice in the past. The issue was never the content of the course, but the fact that it is an upper-level course with prerequisites. Since we clarified a separation between General Education and University Requirements, there is no longer a need for the compliance with general education requirements of lower-level, no prerequisites, and broad appeal to many majors.

Motion by B. Hammack to include THEA 490 in the Historical Literacy Menu; seconded by M. Garver; all in favor; motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.