Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Language, Philosophy and Culture. Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

The course (CLAS 250: Greek and Roman Civilization) is a survey of the Classical World designed to introduce students to the most important and enduring aspects of Greek and Roman civilization. Students learn about some of the most important political, military, social, artistic, scientific, and cultural developments in Classical Antiquity. Topics to be covered include the methods used by scholars to study the Ancient World, Greek rationalism and philosophy, the nature of literacy in the Ancient World, Greek and Roman attitudes towards slavery and gender, political structures in the ancient world, the interaction between Christianity and paganism in the Roman Empire, and the ongoing scholarly debate on the nature of the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

This course enhances critical thinking by requiring students to analyze and engage with ancient primary sources in a variety of genres including the Socratic dialogue (Plato’s Euthyphro), Greek tragedy (Philoctetes), and early Christian polemic (Tertullian’s On Spectacles), and secondary sources dealing with social, political, cultural, and military history. An important component of this course is introducing students to the methods of scholars who study the Classical world. Student development in this area is evaluated through written examinations.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

This course enhances communications skills by asking students to summarize and explain the importance of assigned readings in class discussions and to investigate, defend, and critique the beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans on a variety of issues. The iconography of the ancient Greeks and Romans, as both an artistic and a political medium, will be closely considered, as will the visual impact of performances and spectacles and the role they played in ancient society. Development of student interpretation and communication skills and is evaluated through class discussion and written examinations.
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Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

This course enhances social responsibility by asking students to consider the views of the ancient Greeks and Romans on topics such as war, ethnicity, slavery, violence, gender, religion, and social welfare, to consider how and why the belief systems of the ancient world differ from our own, and to examine why views that are considered abhorrent today were so prevalent in the ancient world. Students engage these issues in course readings and other materials, lecture and discussion, and written exams.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making):

This course gives students the opportunity to reflect on topics conducive to the promotion of personal responsibility, including but not limited to: how we form and defend ethical judgments, the degree to which persuasive speaking serves the interests of society, how different cultures define the responsibilities of the individual to his/her community differently, and how the study of ancient cultures and their alien belief systems puts our own beliefs in sharper perspective. Students show their active engagement with these topics through course discussion and written exams.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.