Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum
Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Creative Arts. Courses in this category focus on appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.

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?

ENDS 115—Design Communication Foundations is a course that examines tools and methods to analyze creative artifacts in the built environment and to appreciate the art of architecture. Through lectures, students will gain knowledge about (1) how architectural forms and spaces can be designed based upon and transformed from simple geometries, (2) how people’s perceptions of creative design works are influenced by cultural and environmental factors, and (3) how basic criteria can be employed to understand and evaluate the art of architecture. Through demonstrations and exercises, students will be introduced to a series of design graphic tools and the universal design drawing system. Through projects, students will develop the skills to use design graphics to communicate with others (laypeople, clients, designers and professors), generate creative and innovative ideas, critically analyze architectural works, and interpret their own design projects. Project reviews will enable students to verbally communicate their design intents while receiving feedback from reviewers.

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):

Students will develop critical thinking skills in lectures, in-class exercise and projects.
- Students will learn how to initiate creative thinking by exploring and transforming simple geometric forms.
- Students will use sketch, diagrams and other graphic tools to explore innovative ways to design.
- Students will investigate correlations between visual preference and graphic characteristics such as complexity, contrast and composition, and apply the findings to class projects.
- Students will use design graphics to synthesize architectural information (e.g., dimensions, scale and proportion), analyze relationships—both visual and physical—between and among different components, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a design work.

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

Students will develop visual, oral and written communication skills from in-class exercise, projects and reviews.
- Students will learn freehand sketch skills to express design ideas.
- Students will use the universal drawing system (i.e., plan, section, elevation, isometric and perspective) to prepare documents to present innovative design products.
- Students will learn to employ diagrams, symbols and other visual tools to communicate and analyze a design work.
- Students will be able to select and deploy physical media in service of conceptual goals and communication needs.
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- Students will present their work verbally during project reviews.
- Students will orally critique others’ work during in-class exercise and reviews.
- Students will write project statements and descriptions to introduce innovative concepts and ideas for projects.
- Students will include a brief written biography and project descriptions for a portfolio documenting their work.

Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):

Teamwork will be assessed on in-class exercises and projects
- Students will form study teams (3-5 students per team) and develop graphic skills together. Students will discuss and critique each other’s work, and learn from teammates.
- Students will become aware that differences in architectural form and space are related to the point of view of the design team. Design must be negotiated; ideas should be shared in the team to inspire innovative design.
- In a major project (e.g., Architectural Analysis), three or four students will work as a team to measure large-scale architectural elements/space and create a set of design and analysis drawings. Teamwork accounts for 10% of the project grade. Peer and self evaluations will be conducted to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of teamwork.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Students will learn social responsibility from lectures and projects.
- Student will realize how architecture is influenced by culture on regional, national and global levels. (For example, the Chinese’s selection of building site and orientation based upon Fengshui theories).
- Students will understand how design work should be culturally appropriate to specific populations, in terms of color, pattern and form.
- Students will learn the importance of universal visual graphics (e.g., signage) so as to be understandable by people speaking different languages.
- Students will comprehend that the art of architecture is for everybody. It is designer’s civic responsibility to make architecture accessible and enjoyable to diverse groups of people.
- Students will have the ability to use and switch between the metric and the imperial drawing systems.
- Students will use the universal drawing system (e.g., plan, section, elevation, isometric and perspective) that are widely adopted in the world to present design works.

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