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?

English 335, Literature of the Sea, is a thematic survey of how the sea has been used in literature (chiefly American and British) in various eras. The course focuses on fictional (novels, short stories, plays and/or poems) and one non-fictional account in which the sea plays a major role as background, setting, image, symbol, and the like. The course reveals how our interaction with the sea reflect ideas, values, and beliefs that affect human experience. The course helps students develop an appreciation for what the study of literature of different societies and eras can teach us about ourselves and our shared humanity.

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):

Critical Thinking Skills (CTS): The course will enhance critical thinking skills through reading and class discussion of key ideas in various literary treatments of the sea. The evaluation of critical thinking skills will be based on written work and class participation. Essay exams and an out-of-class essay will be designed to allow students to demonstrate their ability to evaluate and synthesize key ideas from the assigned reading. Classroom discussion and journal entries will focus on helping students better understand the nuances and complexities of literary works about the sea.

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

Communication Skills (CS): The course will enhance communication skills through small and large group discussion and writing about sea-related ideas, issues, questions, and themes. Material from this course will include written texts and such visual representations as paintings, photographs, or films. The course will help students learn how to develop a greater understanding of the meaning of the sea as setting and symbol. The evaluation of communication skills will be based on class participation in discussion and on written exams, essays, and journal entries.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):
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Social Responsibility (SR): The course will enhance social responsibility by providing students with a cross-cultural understanding of how history and broad social forces have shaped literary uses of the sea. The evaluation of social responsibility will be based upon written assignments throughout the semester, including journal entries on each class day's reading, two essay exams, and a researched out-of-class essay that deal with their understanding of the way differing histories, cultures and philosophical outlooks shape the developments of a literary tradition based on the sea.

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

Personal Responsibility (PR): The course will enhance personal responsibility through engagement with moral issues that arise in class readings. Students will be given the opportunity to reflect upon personal responsibility through such sea-related topics as interpersonal relationships on board a ship, the interrelated roles of leadership and loyalty, consequences of action and inaction, ethical uses of the sea, and voyages of quest. The evaluation of personal responsibility will be based upon how well students explore these topics through group discussion, writing assignments, and exams. Students will be expected to use sources ethically to support their interpretations.

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