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.

How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

Geography 202 surveys the inhabitable earth, divided into eleven major regions (North America, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, Russia, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, North Africa and Southwest Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Oceania and Australia). The course uses core geographical themes (human impacts on the environment, demographic change, culture forces such as religion and language, economic development, territoriality, and geopolitics) to organize knowledge about these regions. The argument of the course is that global processes (globalization) have had uneven effects on population, culture, economic development, territory, and geopolitics, leading to a more differentiated world, rather than one that is more homogenous. The course aims to encourage the development of “global citizens,” that is, students who are cognizant of how their actions, as voters and consumers, impact distant people and places, and students who are capable of negotiating cultural and economic difference in workplaces.

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.

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

Students will employ concepts of demography, cultural landscape, economic development, territory, and geopolitics to summarize the world’s major regions. Lectures present these concepts to students; the text reinforces these concepts. We will evaluate student learning through multiple-choice questions (including map identification) and using rubrics for short assignments requiring students to identify such appropriate material.

Students will predict outcomes of global processes on economic and cultural differences globally and within major world regions. Lectures will indicate current events that are appropriate for this sort of critical thinking. We will evaluate student learning by using rubrics for assignments that require students to identify appropriate material as articles in news media outlets, and through multiple-choice exams.

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

Text and lectures for GEOG 202 are strongly map-oriented; that is, maps are critical to describing and analyzing the course’s themes for the world’s major regions. This teaching
Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

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

strategy supports three learning objectives:

Students will describe major patterns of demography, economy, culture, and internal and external political dynamics of the world’s eleven major regions (North America, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, Russia, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Ncrth Africa and Southwest Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Oceania and Australia). We will evaluate student learning through exam questions, which will include map identification tasks.

Students will explain differences and similarities regarding the spatial distribution of trends in demography, economy, culture, and internal and external political dynamics among the world’s major regions. We will evaluate student learning through exam questions, which will include map identification tasks, and short assignments.

Students will interpret spatial representations (maps) of cultural, economic, and political differences within and among major world regions. We will evaluate student learning through identification of such appropriate material as maps published in major news outlets.

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

Students will articulate cultural differences globally and within major world regions in terms of language, religion, and ethnicity based on an understanding of underlying reasons and manifestations in terms of the cultural landscape. Lectures and text present this theme consistently during the semester. We will evaluate student learning through rubrics to grade assignments that require students to identify this theme in appropriate material such as foreign films or other cultural products.

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

Students will apply concepts of demography, economy, culture, and geopolitics to gain deeper understanding of the role of the individual and the nation-state (e.g., United States) in these processes. Lectures and text stress how global inter-connected processes relate to individuals and nation-states. We will evaluate student learning through rubrics to grade assignments that require students to identify and comment on appropriate material such as articles in major news outlets.

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