Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

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

Foundational Component Area: American History

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for American History. Courses in this category focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States, with the option of including Texas History for a portion of this component area. Courses involve the interaction of individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

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?

Course: HIST 301/AFST 301: Blacks in the United States, 1877 to the present addresses the foundational component area of American History by considering the experiences of people of African descent in the United States from Reconstruction (1877) to the present day. Through an analysis of significant events, individuals and issues, it considers how African Americans - former slaves, freedmen and their progeny - contributed to the economic, social and political position for after centuries of chattel slavery and continued racial discrimination. It considers such topics as the political ideologies of black leaders, disenfranchisement, lynching, the quest for equality in the 1950s and 1960s, the global Black Power and global Black Consciousness movements of the 1970s and 1980s, affirmative action and the establishment of the EEOC.

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 develops the core objective of critical thinking by asking students to interpret and connect lecture material; analyze, discuss and craft written arguments based on course readings; and evaluate visual images. They will do so based on material that concerns, for example, the struggle to secure the vote, the quest for economic equality in the 1950s and 1960s, and Supreme Court cases related to affirmative action initiatives. Student learning will be evaluated through discussion, quizzes and essay exams.

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

This course develops the core objective of communication by asking students to analyze and discuss lecture and reading material (including political cartoons) and to craft written responses to essay questions about topics such as how African Americans, former slaves and freedmen and their progeny, worked to improve their economic, social and political position in American society and their role in the global Black Power and global Black Consciousness movements of the 1970s and 1980s and the establishment of the US EEOC. Student learning will be evaluated through discussion, quizzes and essay exams.

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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This course will address social responsibility by requiring students to identify (in lectures and reading materials) how shifting cultural, economic and political contexts in the northern and southern United States influenced African Americans’ access to things like the vote, office holding, home ownership and educational opportunities. Students also will be asked to consider how these changes shaped and were shaped by the changing geopolitical context and in particular decolonization in Africa. Student learning will be evaluated through discussion, quizzes and essay exams.

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

This course will address personal responsibility by requiring students to recognize (in lectures and reading materials) and articulate (through quizzes and essay exams) how the decisions made by and about people of African descent influenced political structures and economic opportunities for African Americans in different regions. In discussion, students will be asked to reflect on how Supreme Court decisions—like those establishing integrated education and equal protection under the law—influence their own lives. Student learning will be evaluated through discussion, quizzes and essay exams.

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