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?

HIST 304: Mexican-American Frontier to 1848 provides students with a survey of Chicano (Mexican-American) history from pre-Columbian times to 1848 (the time of the Mexican American War). The course's main goal is to give students a better understanding of the history of Mexican Americans within the broader scope of American history and society. The class is structured chronologically and explores broader historical themes related to Mexican American history such as ethno-racial formation, conquest and colonization, gender relations, environmental exploitation, cultural and identity formation, as well as labor relations.

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, discuss and connect course lecture and reading materials, including maps and material culture, complete a primary source analytical essay and a book review to craft written essays on topics such as religion in the early Mesoamerican period, the status of women in New Spain and the establishment of the Texas borderlands. Student learning will be evaluated through class discussion, a book review, a short analytical essay, a midterm and a final exam.

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 evaluate and synthesize lecture and reading materials (including material artifacts such as Kiva dolls and maps), to discuss their relationships, and to write responses to essay questions about topics such as mestizaje in the Texas borderlands, early Mexicano life and society and anglo immigration to the Southwestern United States. Student learning will be evaluated through class discussion, a book review, a short analytical essay, a midterm and a final exam.

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 develop a foundation for understanding racial and political dynamics in the Southwestern United States by focusing on the political, social, legal and economic history of this area under Spanish and then Mexican colonial rule. Student learning will be evaluated through class discussion, a book review, a short analytical essay, a midterm and a final exam.

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 (in discussion, an analytical review and essay exams) how the blending of Spanish and European cultures contributed to new religious, political, legal and economic forms in the Southwestern United States. Students will be asked to consider how such syncretism shapes contemporary culture and politics in Texas. Student learning will be evaluated through class discussion, a book review, a short analytical essay, a midterm and a final exam.

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