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?

MUSC 201: Music is considered within its cultural context, exploring both parallel and conflicting movements in the visual and literary arts, the composer’s own situation, political movements, technological changes, and other events which have an affect on the creation, performance and reception of the particular compositions selected for study in a given semester. The interchange of ideas and styles from other cultures has been a staple of European culture from the days of the crusades (the Arabic oud becomes the ubiquitous Renaissance lute; shawms as predecessor of oboes and bassoons), and these influences are noted throughout the course.

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 is addressed through group projects and concert reports. The group project/presentation consists of researching a topic of the group’s choice and presenting it to the class (p. 2). Concert reports (p. 7) require the student to observe, analyze and comment upon such factors as the surroundings in which the concert take place, audience makeup and reaction, performer/audience interaction, analysis of the music itself, and synthesis of the experience as a whole. Students unable to participate in a group project may complete other projects (p. 8), including essays, creative writing, analysis of music in a movie, etc.

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

Communication is of vital importance in a successful group project (p. 2), as each group member is to speak to the class as part of the presentation, in addition to the communication necessary to conduct the research as a group. Effective use of visual aids and video clips is addressed encouraged. Concert reports (p. 7) are to be written in prose form, covering the aspects mentioned under Critical Thinking. Several of the alternate projects (p. 8) require personal interaction and communication (interviews, surveys).

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

Attendance at several concerts is a requirement of the course. These may include “classical” concerts, music of other cultures, popular styles and staged musical works. Students are expected to behave respectfully at the concert and
observe the conventions of the particular genre. Although it is not the focus of Music 201, some musics of other
world cultures are studied, and part of the discussion is the social context of performances within that culture, the
regard in which creators and practitioners are held, and various customs/taboos (such as removing one’s shoes and
not stepping over the instruments in an Indonesian gamelan).

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

Assigned readings, class discussions, projects, and exams address ethical decision-making in the lives of
musicians. This includes:

- Personal dilemmas facing composers and musicians throughout history in the face of political events, for
  example the appropriation of music and musicians for political reasons (Wagner’s music in Nazi Germany);
satisfying the needs of patrons and employers despite one’s own proclivities and preferences (Catholic
William Byrd finding it necessary to write Protestant church music); Soviet composers’ “Drawer Music” —
music written for their own emotional or intellectual expression that was not in styles approved by Soviet
authorities, and hence had to be hidden away from public view.
- Evolving issues surrounding intellectual property that reach back to the 18th century and greatly impact
modern musicians, including the advent of recording technology and the internet, copyright laws, theft of
intellectual property and royalties, the founding of royalty-collecting organizations like ASCAP, BMI, etc.

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