Texas A&M University  
**Core Curriculum**  
*Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum*

**Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts**

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Creative Arts. Courses in this category focus on appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.

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

**MUSC 221 Guitar Heroes:**

This course addresses the Creative Arts Foundational Component Area in the following ways:
- It creates and develops both writing and oral skills that focus on the appreciation and analysis of musical works of art.
- It allows students to make interpretative observations based on both subjective and objective parameters using adequate learned musical vocabulary.
- It enables critical, creative and innovative communication through listening, reflection, discussions, writing and group assignments where a musical composition is the central focus. The course assignments promote creative, critical and innovative thinking as students explore the ways in which musical components relate to feeling, historical significances, symbolism and aesthetics.

**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):

- This portion of the course objectives is fulfilled through the weekly listening assignments, exams, concert reports and class/blog participation. Students will need to apply critical thinking and inquiry in order to link the musical, social, historical and aesthetic factors affecting the musical discourse of the works discussed in class (Page 2). Each exam will allow students to provide a synthesis of the information learned throughout the semester. Analysis of musical works will be both objective and subjective (Concert reports, listening assignments and blog/class participations) giving each student a unique opportunity to craft, evaluate and connect abstract musical concepts creatively.

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

- Learning about the terminology of music and ways to effectively communicate musical concepts within a piece of music, are integral parts of the course. The blog and class participation aspects of the curriculum encourage, develop and train students to effectively communicate their ideas within the context of a newly learned musical vocabulary. Weekly assignments will focus on one or two new musical concepts. Class discussions will give students the opportunity to orally communicate, explain and develop ideas about the newly learned material. Students will use terminology that is relevant to the musical work. In addition, the writing component of concert reports, listening assignments and blog entries, allow students to interpret musical concepts and express their findings through a written medium. Furthermore, group projects,
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presentations, discussions and demonstrations take advantage of visual, aural, oral and motor skillsets to both absorb and communicate musical ideas (e.g. understanding, explaining and reproducing rhythms).

Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):

- Teamwork is encouraged via a group project where students also have a chance to present their findings in class at the end of the semester. This activity provides an opportunity to collaborate with others, consider different points of view, work towards a common goal, use critical thinking and inquiry, be creative and learn about musical works using visual, oral and written mediums.

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

- The course studies musical compositions from different cultures that expose students to different points of view where they exercise skills in making observations and commentary that are sensitive to the given cultural context and values. In order to understand a particular style/genre/style of music, students learn how it developed from a particular culture and the specific cultural components that are involved in this development. Through this process, students expand their worldview. For example, lectures on Flamenco culture and Cante Hondo present students with a form of performance that grew from such diverse sources as Spanish and Arabic musical elements. In order for students to effectively communicate and formulate ideas and critique a flamenco performance, it is imperative that they understand that the raspy and hoarse character of a flamenco singer is derived from a fusion of Arabic, Jewish and Gregorian chant traditions that all combine to evoke emotion. As a student learns how these influences come together in this style, they learn about other cultures, how they work together and contribute to a world community.

- Additionally, in concert attendance, students exercise what they have learned about appropriate etiquette specific to each form of performance: what is expected in some contexts of cultural performance is considered disrespectful or insulting in others. This course presents students a unique opportunity to learn about social, intercultural competence and the ability to effectively and respectfully engage in discussions about other cultures through the study the guitar, its music and personalities. Beyond its social, cultural, economic and geographical boundaries, the guitar is an excellent medium to understand different cultures and build bridges between communities.

- These aspects of the course are evaluated through group/listening activities, participation in class discussions, contributions to blog discussions, and concert reports (all of which are graded).

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