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?

Central to **SPAN 202** is the study of how members of another historical-cultural-linguistic background, specifically Hispanic/Spanish-speaking culture(s), express themselves, and how the Spanish language affects the expression of Hispanic culture. As students study the Spanish language with the objective of language acquisition, they explore expression through explicit and implicit comparisons and contrasts with their own language. Literary and cultural readings put students in contact with different aesthetic and intellectual perspectives on creativity and history, as well as themes universal to the human condition (love, death, family, religion, ethnicity, geography, identity...).

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**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):**

In pursuit of active skill competence, students must speak and write in Spanish, creating and expressing themselves in the language which they are working to acquire. Students read literary texts, they read descriptions of aspects of Hispanic culture, they are exposed to visual realia, and they listen to authentic and varied audio material. Students comprehend and analyze these literary and cultural forms in terms of both content and style. Inquiry into the context surrounding these texts, and synthesis of “reading” offer implicit opportunities for critical thinking because always implied is a comparison and contrast with the student’s own linguistic and cultural experience.

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

Students receive instruction in guided writing, and they write formal compositions expressing their ideas relative to pertinent cultural topics. With daily oral participation, students frequently must express their thoughts relative to literary and artistic texts, current events, customs, world views, etc. Their writing and speaking are evaluated as to content, style and formal correctness.
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Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Students learn to use the Spanish language and to understand Hispanic culture through the study of the language and literary/cultural texts. The achievement of objectives of language and cultural competence prepares students to more effectively engage the glocal community. Glocal -- > “global” in the sense of world Hispanism, and “local” in the sense that their own local communities and state, Texas, are increasing Hispanic.

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

While some of the literary and cultural texts studied provide insights into and opportunities for discussion of personal responsibility, the conduct of the course relates more directly to personal responsibility objectives. Though tutorial help and online translators are available to them, students must make the proper ethical choice of presenting their own work to express their opinions and in order to satisfy course requirements. While it may be tempting for them to offer others’ words and expressions as their own, the consequences for doing so negatively impact their adherence to scholarly ethics as well their ability to achieve course and Core objectives.

The conduct of the course indexes personal responsibility by bringing students’ to an understanding of how to use sources ethically while composing a oral arguments or written compositions in answer to formally posed questions about literary or cultural themes; the course involves practice individually and in teams and group discussion about sources for language and literary ideas and issues. The assessment of personal responsibility can be assessed in assignments in which students ethically cite others’ work in presentations and/or written compositions.

The normal conduct of the course includes periodic (approximately 5 times per semester) short in-class quizzes, which are graded immediately following testing. As students grade their own quizzes, they receive immediate feedback and there are opportunities for discussion. Grading their own work offers students an opportunity for ethical decision-making, and while it may be tempting for students to give themselves an inflated grade, the consequences for doing so negatively impact their adherence to scholarly ethics as well their ability to achieve course and Core objectives.

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