Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum
Department of Performance Studies
THAR 155 History of Western Dress
Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Areas: Language, Philosophy, and Culture; Creative Arts; American History

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information): Students will demonstrate their understanding of course material through quizzes and tests given over the semester. (p. 2 Assessments) Students use critical thinking skills when analyzing motivations for dress as a cultural tool, and dress as a window into the conscience of a specific society.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication): Students will regularly engage in in-class discussions over course material. Effective written communication is critical to the Production Review Paper, graded based on the following criteria: writing – organization, clear communication of ideas and meaning; mechanics – grammar and punctuation; correct use of course concepts and vocabulary; and citation of sources. (p. 2 Production Review Paper) Visual identification of historic forms of dress is critical to success in the course. Tests include a visual component in which students identify time period and region, as well as specific components of historically important garments.

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 incorporated into the course through class discussion facilitated by the Think Pair Share technique, as well as group activities, which enable students to develop their own ideas and to consider diverse points of view from their peers.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision making): Western dress is and has historically been influenced by political conflict, cross-cultural contact, economic events and trade, technology, and media of communication. In conjunction with the study of such topics as Roman conquests, the Crusades, European colonialism and imperialism, and the Industrial Revolution, students consider how dress has been a reflection of culture in the past. Students explore ethical decision-making by reflecting on how their personal choices in dress reflect current culture and result in consequences for the global community.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities): Students will further their appreciation for theatre as a collaborative means of both global and communal expression by attending a live theatre production over and submitting a production review. The production requirement aids in the discovery of dress as an art form and an integral part of the performing arts. Class discussion covers appropriate audience behavior and etiquette in order to effectively engage in the performance. (p. 4 Production Response) Students are challenged to develop intercultural competence through the recognition that the meanings of dress vary from society to society and over time.
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?

This course explores the social, psychological, and cultural aspects of dress and appearance, including the relationship of dress to physical and social environments, aesthetic and personal expression, and cultural ideals and values. Dress cannot be isolated from the political, economic and social surroundings of the time. This course therefore has sociological and psychological overtones as we seek to understand why humans began to adorn themselves, and continue to do so.

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.

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

Students will manage all assignments outside of class in a timely fashion in preparation for exams, quizzes, and discussions. (p. 4 Assignments and Grading; p. 4-5 Attendance Policy) Students consider their personal choices in dress as a reflection of their culture and make connections between their choices and consequences for the global community.

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