

LSC Use Only

Number:

Action:

Date:

162
Approved
5-2-91

UWUCC Use Only

Number:

Action:

Date:

91-19

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

I. Title/Author of Change

Course/Program Title: HI 214 Themes in American History

Suggested 20 Character Course Title: _____

Department: History

Contact Person: Dr. W. Wayne Smith

II. If a course, is it being Proposed for:

X Course Revision/Approval Only
____ Course Revision/Approval and Liberal Studies Approval
____ Liberal Studies Approval Only (course previously has been
approved by the University Senate)

III. Approvals

Merle Rife
Department Curriculum Committee

Paul Z. Belman
Department Chairperson

Richard Jordan
College Curriculum Committee

College Dean *

Charles D. Smith
Director of Liberal Studies
(where applicable)

Provost (where applicable)

*College Dean must consult with Provost before approving curriculum changes. Approval by College Dean indicates that the proposed change is consistent with long range planning documents, that all requests for resources made as part of the proposal can be met, and that the proposal has the support of the university administration.

IV. Timetable

Date Submitted
to LSC: _____

Semester to be
implemented: _____

Date to be
published
in Catalog: _____

to UWUCC: _____

THEMES IN AMERICAN HISTORY (HI 214)

3 credits

Prerequisites:History195

Open only to non-history majors, this course is designed to give students an appreciation of the basic themes and issues in the making of American society. Students will examine themes such as the fruition of democracy, the American Dream, slavery and freedom, the tensions between liberty and order, and the role of the United States in a world setting.

I. Catalog Description

His 214 Themes in American History 3 credits
3 lecture hours

Prerequisites: History 195

Open only to non-history majors, this course is designed to give students an appreciation of the basic themes and issues in the making of American society. Students will examine themes such as the fruition of democracy, the American Dream, slavery and freedom, the tensions between liberty and order, and the role of the United States in a world setting.

II. Course Objectives

1. The course will give students an appreciation for the use of history in analyzing contemporary issues.
2. The course will offer students an appreciation of the richness and diversity of American cultures.
3. The course will help students to understand the broad issues and deep problems with which Americans have had to contend in the shaping of American society.
4. The course will offer the students an opportunity to hone their analytical skills through historical inquiry and reasoning.
5. The course will enhance the students' appreciation of the variety of sources used in the creation of history.

III. Detailed Course Outline:

1. Who are the Americans? (2 weeks)
 - (a) De Crevecoeur' "What Is an American?": The Mix of the Colonial Past
 - (b) Dunghill or Land of Opportunity?: Servants, Slaves, and Prisoners
 - (c) Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?: Nativism and Ethnicity
 - (d) Immigration as a factor in contemporary America
2. Republic or Democracy? (3 weeks)
 - (a) What did the Founding Fathers want to create?
 - (b) What factors propelled America towards democracy?
 - (c) What was the impact of democracy on American life and politics?
 - (d) How has the democratic society expanded to offer more rights and liberties for women and racial minorities?

3. How have slavery and race shaped American society? (3 weeks)

(a) Why did slavery originate and prove to be so firmly entrenched?

(b) Why did the system come under attack?

(c) How did emancipation change the life of Afro-Americans?

(d) Why did rigid segregation emerge as a racial pattern in American life?

(e) Why did an assault on segregation emerge in mid-twentieth century America?

(f) How has the racial patterns of American society changed in the late twentieth century?

4. How real was the American Dream? (3 weeks)

(a) How did Ben Franklin helped to define the American Dream?

(b) The Horatio Alger Story: Myth or Reality?

(c) How did the Great Depression and the New Deal affect the concept of the American Dream?

(d) Was post World War II America the "happy days"?

(e) Why are we suffering from downward mobility today?

5. What is the role of the United States in a world setting? (3 weeks)

(a) Isolationism or Imperialism?

(b) How did the Cold War affect our role in the world and our society at home?

(c) Vietnam: A Problem in determining national interests?

(d) Pax Americana or New World Order in the post Cold War Era?

IV Evaluation Methods

Students will write a brief paper on each book assigned in each segment of the course addressing the principle question of the book. Students will read do some free reading, write a short paper, and confer with the professor about their reading. Students will take a mid-semester and final exam. Both exams will be essay in nature. The written exams will account for 50% of the grade, the written paper from the free reading will account for 25% of the grade, and the brief papers on each book will account for 25% of the grade.

V Required textbooks

The course is intended to be an enrichment course. Rather than reading a tedious, single, encyclopedic textbook students will read an assortment of books. The professor will choose books that were written for the general public rather than the professional scholar. The criteria used to select books are literary merit and provocative ideas.

Examples of probable selections might include:

Bernard Bailyn, The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction, Knopf, 1985.

John Bodnar, The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America, 1985.

Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition

Sara Evans, Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left. Vintage Books, 1979.

John Blassingame, The Slave Community. Oxford University Press, 1979

Russell Baker, Growing Up, 1984.

Theodore White, In Search of History, 1982.

Besides the supplementary books, students will have an opportunity to read excerpts of fundametal testments of American history such as Federalist #10, De Tocqueville's Democracy in America, Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", and Thoreau's "Essay on Civil Disobedience."

VI No special resources are necessary.

COURSE ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Details of the Course

A1.

This course is designed to fulfill several academic needs at IUP. It will be submitted for acceptance as an elective in the Liberal Studies program. It can serve also as an elective for Education social science concentrates who are outside the history concentrate. The clientele which this course is designed to serve are students who are non-history majors but wish to take a course in American history.

A2.

Since this is a new course offering, it does not affect the existing curriculum of courses which the History Department now offers.

A3.

The course is novel in that it is designed only for non-history majors. Unlike traditional history courses, this course is novel in that its substructure is composed of "themes" or broad concepts rather than chronology.

A4.

This course has never been offered at IUP.

A5.

It is not to be a dual-level course.

A6.

This course is not offered for variable credit.

A7.

I taught a similar course when I was a visiting professor at Janus Pannoninus University in Pecs, Hungary. Those students were not Americans nor history majors, and I found that experience beneficial in developing this present proposal. Penn State offers a similar course for non-history majors.

A8.

This course is not a requirement nor a recommendation by a professional society, accrediting authority, law, or other external agency.

Section B: Interdisciplinary Implications

B1.

This course will be taught by one professor.

B2.

There are not nor will there be any additional or corollary

courses needed with this course.

B3.

Since this course will focus on the discipline of history it does not infringe upon any courses offered by other departments.

B4.

Yes.

Section C: Implementation

C1.

- a. Faculty---no new faculty will be needed.
- b. Space--adequate space is available.
- c. Equipment--no special or new equipment is necessary.
- d. Laboratory Supplies and other Consumable Goods--none are needed
- e. Library Materials--adequate resources exist.
- f. Travel Funds--none are needed for this course.

C2.

No.

C3.

The department will offer this course every semester.

C4.

Since this is a new course, one cannot predict how many sections will be needed. The chairman will schedule one or two sections initially and see what the demand is.

C5.

To foster class discussion and group participation the class size should be limited to 30-40 students.

C6.

No.

C7.

No.

Section D: Miscellaneous

None.

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B3.

Since this course will focus on the discipline of history it does not infringe upon any courses offered by other departments.

B4.

Yes.

Section C: Implementation

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- e. Library Materials--adequate resources exist.
- f. Travel Funds--none are needed for this course.

C2.

No.

C3.

The department will offer this course every semester.

C4.

Since this is a new course, one cannot predict how many sections will be needed. The chairman will schedule one or two sections initially and see what the demand is.

C5.

To foster class discussion and group participation the class size should be limited to 30-40 students.

C6.

No.

C7.

No.

Section D: Miscellaneous

None.

Liberal Studies Course Approval Form

About this form: Use this form only if you wish to have a course included for Liberal Studies credit. The form is intended to assist you in developing your course to meet the University's Criteria for Liberal Studies and to arrange your proposal in a standard order for consideration by the LSC and the UWUCC. If you have questions, contact the Liberal Studies Office, 353 Sutton Hall; telephone 357-5715.

Do not use this form for technical, professional or pre-professional courses or for remedial courses, none of which is eligible for Liberal Studies. Do not use this form for sections of the synthesis course or for writing-intensive sections; different forms will be available for those.

PART I. BASIC INFORMATION

- A. For which category(ies) are you proposing the course? List all that apply.

LEARNING SKILLS

- ☐ First English Composition Course
- ☐ Second English Composition Course
- ☐ Mathematics

KNOWLEDGE AREAS

- ☐ Humanities: History
- ☐ Humanities: Philosophy/Religious Studies
- ☐ Humanities: Literature
- ☐ Fine Arts
- ☐ Natural Sciences: Laboratory Course
- ☐ Natural Sciences: Non-laboratory Course
- ☐ Social Sciences
- ☐ Health and Wellness
- ☐ Non-Western Cultures
- ☒ Liberal Studies Elective

- B. During the transition from General Education to Liberal Studies, should this course be listed as an approved substitute for current General Education course, thus allowing it to meet any remaining General Education needs?

If so, which General Education course(s)?

PART II. WHICH LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS WILL YOUR COURSE MEET?

LIBERAL STUDIES COURSE APPROVAL FORM

HI 214 Themes in American History

Part I Basic Information

A. Liberal Studies Elective

B. This course will not serve as a substitute for current General Education courses.

Part II Liberal Studies Goals

A1. Primary. The very nature of historical study emphasize critical thinking. This course is founded on the inquiry approach and will strongly encourage students to critically analyze different interpretations and pieces of evidence. The essay examinations will require students to synthesize the material they have studied.

A2. Primary. The students will read at least six books, and write papers based on their reading and reflection. Much of the course will be conducted in a discussion manner which will require students to verbally articulate their thoughts.

A3. n/a

A4. Primary. Historical consciousness is the premise of any history course.

A5. Primary. Scientific inquiry is the fundamental approach of solid, analytical history. Students will learn that the historian adheres to the scientific method by first asking questions, then examining the evidence, and offering an hypothesis.

A6. Secondary. While not intended to impose or introduce values, a history course cannot escape the ethical mode of thinking. As we study slavery and racial issues in the American past, for example, we cannot avoid the injustices which many Americans have had to suffer.

A7. n/a

B. Acquiring a Body of Knowledge Essential to an Educated Person

Primary. Course objective #3 emphasizes the content area of this course. An assumption of the course is that educated people cannot analyze present concerns or problems without an understanding of the roots of the problems or how society has previously dealt with similar problems. A premise on which this course was developed was that educated Americans need to have an understanding of their nation's history and its principles in order to be responsible citizens.

C. n/a

D. Certain collateral skills

1. Use of the library.

Students will choose some reading from the library holdings at IUP but the course will not emphasize the development of library skills.

2. Computer Technology. n/a

III General Criteria for Liberal Studies

A. The history department does not anticipate that enrollment in this course will demand multiple instructors for this course. The department has decided that I shall be the instructor for the course. Should student demand exceed my capabilities to teach the course, the chairman will assign another instructor to teach sections. At that time close cooperation between the instructors for the course, e.g. periodic meetings among the instructors will occur.

B. The course will emphasize the diversity of American cultures. The first theme "Who are the Americans" is a study of the ethnic patterns that comprise American society. A special section on slavery and race will direct students' attention to the racial problems in American society. In the section on the fruition of democracy especial attention will be directed to women's struggle for equality.

C. The required reading for this course is entirely substantial works of history, biography or autobiography.

D. The raison d'etre of this course is to introduce the general student to history. While students may gain a greater appreciation for the methods of historical inquiry, the course is primarily content oriented. The assumption of the course is that this may be the only opportunity for these students to take a history course in college. For that reason, the course will be a general survey of themes in the American past.

CHECK LIST — LIBERAL STUDIES ELECTIVES

Knowledge Area Criteria which the course must meet:

- ☒ Treat concepts, themes and events in sufficient depth to enable students to appreciate the complexity, history and current implications of what is being studied; and not be merely cursory coverage of lists of topics.
- ☒ Suggest the major intellectual questions/problems which interest practitioners of a discipline and explore critically the important theories and principles presented by the discipline.
- ☒ Allow students to understand and apply the methods of inquiry and vocabulary commonly used in the discipline.
- ☒ Encourage students to use and enhance, wherever possible, the composition and mathematics skills built in the Skill Areas of Liberal Studies.

Liberal Studies Elective Criteria which the course must meet:

- ☒ Meet the "General Criteria Which Apply to All Liberal Studies Courses."
- ☒ Not be a technical, professional or pre-professional course.

Explanation: Appropriate courses are to be characterized by learning in its broad, liberal sense rather than in the sense of technique or preprofessional proficiency.. For instance, assuming it met all the other criteria for Liberal Studies, a course in "Theater History" might be appropriate, while one in "The Craft of Set Construction" probably would not; or, a course in "Modern American Poetry" might be appropriate, while one in "New Techniques for Teaching Writing in Secondary Schools" probably would not; or, a course on "Mass Media and American Society" might be appropriate, while one in "Television Production Skills" probably would not; or, a course in "Human Anatomy" might be appropriate, while one in "Strategies for Biological Field Work" probably would not; or, a course in "Intermediate French" might be appropriate, while one in "Practical Methods for Professional Translators" probably would not.