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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

LSC Use Only
Number LS-84
Action _____
Date _____

UWUCC Use Only
Number _____
Action _____
Date _____

I. TITLE/AUTHOR OF CHANGE
COURSE/PROGRAM TITLE RS 100 Introduction to Religion
DEPARTMENT Philosophy & Religious Studies
CONTACT PERSON Dr. Kwasi Yirenkyi

II. THIS COURSE IS BEING PROPOSED FOR:
☐ Course Approval Only
☐ Course Approval and Liberal Studies Approval
☒ Liberal Studies Approval only (course previously has been approved by the University Senate)

III. APPROVALS

S. Montgomery
Department Curriculum Committee

S. Montgomery 2-28-89
Department Chairperson
[Signature]
College Dean*

Charles D. Ashm
College Curriculum Committee
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 _____
to UWUCC _____

Semester/Year to be
implemented F. 1189

Date to be published
in Catalog ASAP

Revised 5/88

[Attach remaining parts of
proposal to this form.]

I. Catalog Description

RS 100 Introduction to Religion

3 credits

An introduction to the academic study of religion through an examination of various dimensions of religious expression and traditions. The course will cover such areas as: Problems about definition of religion; approaches to the study of religion; the goals, language and rituals of religion; cases of religious experience; faith, disbelief and alternatives to religion; religion and the socio-cultural context.

II. Course Objectives

1. To introduce students to the academic study of religion through an examination of various dimensions of religious expressions and religious traditions.
2. To provide students with knowledge of basic concepts and approaches that will enable them to recognize the diversity of religious phenomena and to encourage them to begin to use those concepts reflectively.
3. To encourage students to make independent judgments and critically evaluate social issues relating to religion.

III. Typical Course Outline: Actual outlines may vary with instructor but will include some of the following areas:

- A. The Nature and Study of Religion
 1. Approaches to the Study of Religion
 2. Problems of Definition
 3. Issues Concerning the Origins of Religion
 4. The Roots and Cases of Religious Experience
 5. Religious Traditions
- B. The Conceptual Dimension of Religion
 1. God, Scripture, Sacred Stories, Evil and Human Destiny
 2. Symbolism, Conversion, Myth & Rituals
 3. Understanding Religious Knowledge
 4. Arguments for God's Existence
- C. Religion and the Socio-cultural Context
 1. Individual and the Community
 2. Patterns and Varieties of Faith
 3. Religion and Specific Social Issues: hunger, women and minorities, modernization, pluralism, etc.
 4. Disbelief and Alternatives to Religion
 5. The Future of Religion

IV. Evaluation Methods

Actual methods of evaluation will vary from instructor to instructor, but will include some of the following:

Written tests (2 or more and may include essays, true or false, multiple choice, etc.)
 Paper(s)
 Final Examination

- V. Required Reading: All students will read a textbook and at least one book-length primary source. These may vary from instructor to instructor or year to year by the same instructor. Numerous textbooks and primary sources are available on the market. The following are samples of books available:

Textbooks

Monk, Robert C. et. al. 1987. Exploring Religious Meaning. Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Schmidt, Roger. 1988. Exploring Religion. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Smart, Ninian. 1984. The Religious Experience at Mankind, Scribners Publishing Company.

Streng, Frederick J. 1985. Understanding Religious Life. Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Primary Sources

Durkheim, Emile. 1969. The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. New York: Free Press.

Eliade, Mircea. 1959. The Sacred and The Profane. Trans. by Williard Trask. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

James, William. 1958. The Varieties of Religious Experience. New York: Mentor Books.

Otto, Rudolf. 1958. The Idea of the Holy. Trans. by John W. Harvey. New York: Oxford University Press.

van der Leeuw, Gerardus. Religion in Essence and Manifestation. 2 Vols. Trans. by J.E. Turner. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

van Gennep, Arnold. 1960. The Rites of Passage. Trans. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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? Check 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. Are you requesting regular or provisional approval for this course?

- ☒ Regular ☐ Provisional (limitations apply, see instructions)

C. During the transition from General Education to Liberal Studies, should this course be listed as an approved substitute for a current General Education course, thus allowing it to meet any remaining General Education needs? ☒ yes ☐ no

If so, which General Education course(s)? RS 100 Introduction to Religion

Liberal Studies Form -- 2

PART II. WHICH LIBERAL STUDIES GOALS WILL YOUR COURSE MEET? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

All Liberal Studies courses must contribute to at least one of these goals; most will meet more than one. As you check them off, please indicate whether you consider them to be primary or secondary goals of the course. [For example, a history course might assume "historical consciousness" and "acquiring a body of knowledge" as its primary goals, but it might also enhance inquiry skills or literacy or library skills.] Keep in mind that no single course is expected to shoulder all by itself the responsibility for meeting these goals; our work is supported and enhanced by that of our colleagues teaching other courses.

	Primary	Secondary
A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking:		
1. Inquiry, abstract logical thinking, critical analysis, synthesis, decision making, and other aspects of the critical process.	_____	_____X
2. Literacy--writing, reading, speaking, listening	_____	_____X
3. Understanding numerical data	_____	_____
4. Historical consciousness	_____	_____X
5. Scientific inquiry	_____	_____X
6. Values (ethical mode of thinking or application of ethical perception)	_____X	_____
7. Aesthetic mode of thinking	_____	_____X
B. Acquiring a Body of Knowledge or Understanding Essential to an Educated Person	_____X	_____
C. Understanding the Physical Nature of Human Beings	_____	_____
D. Certain Collateral Skills:		
1. Use of the library	_____	_____X
2. Use of computing technology	_____	_____

PART III. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR LIBERAL STUDIES? Please attach answers to these questions.

- A. If this is a multiple-section, multiple-instructor course, there should be a basic equivalency (though not necessarily uniformity) among the sections in such things as objectives, content, assignments, and evaluation. Note: this should not be interpreted to mean that all professors must make the same assignments or teach the same way; departments are encouraged to develop their courses to allow the flexibility which contributes to imaginative, committed teaching and capitalizes on the strengths of individual faculty.

What are the strategies that your department will use to assure that basic equivalency exists? Examples might be the establishment of departmental guidelines, assignment of responsibility to a coordinating committee, exchange and discussion of individual instructor syllabi, periodic meetings among instructors, etc.

See explanations.

- B. Liberal Studies courses must include the perspectives and contributions of ethnic and racial minorities and of women wherever appropriate to the subject matter. If your attached syllabus does not make explicit that the course meets this criterion, please append an explanation of how it will.

See explanations.

- C. Liberal Studies courses must require the reading and use by students of at least one, but preferably more, substantial works of fiction or nonfiction (as distinguished from textbooks, anthologies, workbooks, or manuals). Your attached syllabus must make explicit that the course meets this criterion.

[The only exception is for courses whose primary purpose is the development of higher level quantitative skills: such courses are encouraged to include such reading, but are not expected to do so at the expense of other course objectives. If you are exercising this exception, please justify here.]

See explanations.

- D. If this is an introductory course intended for a general student audience, it should be designed to reflect the reality that it may well be the only formal college instruction these students will have in that discipline, instead of being designed as the first course in a major sequence. That is, it should introduce the discipline to students rather than introduce students into the discipline. If this is such an introductory course, how is it different from what is provided for beginning majors?

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D

Liberal Studies Form — 4

E. The Liberal Studies Criteria indicate six ways in which all courses should contribute to students' abilities. To which of the six will your course contribute? Check all that apply and attach an explanation.

- ☒ 1. Confront the major ethical issues which pertain to the subject matter; realize that although "suspended judgment" is a necessity of intellectual inquiry, one cannot live forever in suspension; and make ethical choices and take responsibility for them.
- ☒ 2. Define and analyze problems, frame questions, evaluate available solutions, and make choices
- ☒ 3. Communicate knowledge and exchange ideas by various forms of expression, in most cases writing and speaking.
- ☒ 4. Recognize creativity and engage in creative thinking.
- ☒ 5. Continue learning even after the completion of their formal education.
- ☒ 6. Recognize relationships between what is being studied and current issues, thoughts, institutions, and/or events.

PART IV. DOES YOUR COURSE MEET THE CRITERIA FOR THE CURRICULUM CATEGORY IN WHICH IT IS TO BE LISTED?

Each curriculum category has its own set of specific criteria in addition to those generally applicable. The LSC provides copies of these criteria arranged in a convenient, check-list format which you can mark off appropriately and include with your proposal. The attached syllabus should indicate how your course meets each criterion you check. If it does not do so explicitly, please attach an explanation.

CHECK LIST -- HUMANITIES: RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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 coverages 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.

Religious Studies Criteria which the course must meet:

- ☒ Introduces students to the study of religion as a means to understanding Western culture and, therefore, to understanding themselves.
- ☒ Provide a balanced, critical, nonsectarian examination of religion.
- ☒ Emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion.
- ☒ Investigate the nature of religion and the forms of its expression, or the foundational roots and development of one or more Western religious tradition(s) over a significant time span.
- ☒ Investigate relationships with non-Western traditions and cultures where appropriate.
- ☒ Give due attention to the religious involvement and perspectives of women and minorities.
- ☒ Acquaint students with religious texts and documents as appropriate, and encourage the development of independent judgment and critical evaluation of moral issues raised by these texts and by religious thinkers.

Liberal Studies Course Approval Form: Explanations

RS 100 Introduction to Religion

Part I Please refer to the items checked.

Part II Liberal Studies Goals

A. Intellectual Skills and Modes of Thinking

1. The course raises questions that evoke encounter and insight. Students will develop skills of critical thinking and decision making as they discuss existential questions raised in religion by religious and nonreligious people, by the literate and the illiterate.
2. Students will develop literacy skills of writing, reading, speaking and listening through their required reading, class discussion and papers.
3. This is not very relevant to this course.
4. Most of the issues raised in the course have both historical and contemporary relevance.
5. The approach to this course is critical and nonsectarian, therefore, it emphasizes the social scientific inquiry.
6. A major component of this course is the critical examination of the value system of societies as they deal with questions of ethics -- What the individual or the group regard as good or bad. Students will grow in their ability to make their own responsible moral decisions and to respect others.
7. Through rituals, symbols and tapes students learn to appreciate this aesthetic mode of thinking in religion.

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

The issues explored in the course will lead to deeper understanding of and a greater appreciation for the enduring questions faced by humanity. Students will also learn to appreciate the religious commitments, attitudes, and behaviors of others.

Part III General Criteria

- A. This is a course generally taught by all the instructors of the religious studies segment of the department and therefore they will meet at least once a semester to discuss the content of the course and how well it is fulfilling the Liberal Studies criteria, and finally bring it to the department. Problems that may arise in future will be brought for discussion.

B. Perspectives and Contributions of Ethnic and Racial Minorities and of Women

This course includes the perspectives of blacks, native Indians, other racial minorities and women. Specific topics include the black church and women and religion.

C. Required Readings:

See syllabus. Students will read, in addition to a textbook, at least one book-length primary source.

- D. Our core courses are for both majors and non-majors and is therefore designed to cover broad areas of religion rather than a narrow focus on any particular aspect of religion.

E. Six Ways of Contributing to Students' Abilities

1. The course raises a variety of moral issues which encourage students to make objective ethical choices or decisions for themselves and to respect the choices of others in a pluralistic society. See Part II A above.
2. The discussion on the approaches to the study of religion (see syllabus) and subsequent topics will enable students to define and analyze problems objectively. See E1 above and Part II A6.
3. See Part II B.
4. By examining the lives of many religious thinkers who analyzed and grappled with some of the moral and social problems of their time, students learn to examine issues of their own time and learn to be creative thinkers and decision makers on the basis of the knowledge they have acquired.

- (11)
5. The central concepts involved in the analysis of religion and the moral issues raised in class are existential and perennial questions students will continue to explore throughout their lives.
 6. Religion shapes the lives and values of most people in society. Students will learn that a person's basic commitments express what the individual values most. Students will be able to link what they learn in class to what happens in the real world as issues are frequently raised and discussed.

Part IV Knowledge Area Criteria

The syllabus, along with the above explanations have amply demonstrated that the first three criteria are met

The fourth criterion is not directly relevant in this course.

Religious Studies Criteria Which the Course Must Meet.

A close examination of the explanations reveal that the course meets the seven criteria stated with a minor exception. First, our course on Christianity emphasizes the foundational roots and development of the religious tradition more than this course. Second, the non-Western religious traditions are also emphasized in another course. Those areas are discussed in this course but not heavily emphasized.

LIBERAL STUDIES

Director's Office: 353 Sutton Hall

Secretary's Office and Mailing Address: 223 Sutton Hall

Telephone: 357-5715

April 3, 1989

SUBJECT: Religious Studies Courses

TO: Joel Mlecko, Thomas Schaub, Kwasi Yirenkyi

FROM: Liberal Studies Committee

At our March 30 meeting, we approved RS 250 Understanding the Bible and RS 290 Christianity as Humanities courses. We approved RS 100 Introduction to Religion with the following changes:

(1) III-A to be revised to read: " . . . therefore they will all meet at least once a semester to discuss the content of the course and how well it is fulfilling the Liberal Studies criteria, and finally"

(2) III-C will read: "See syllabus. Students will read, in addition a textbook, at least one book-length primary source."

(3) In the Syllabus, Section V will read:

"Required Reading: All students will read a textbook and at least one book-length primary source. These may vary from instructor to instructor or year to year by the same instructor. Numerous textbooks and primary sources are available on the market. The following are samples of books available:

Textbooks

(list follows)

Primary Sources

(list follows)

From our discussions, we assume these changes are acceptable to you. If we do not hear otherwise, we will change the copy in our file and trust that you have done the same with yours.