

Motion: Topics Courses Approved for Multicultural Credit

The term “Topics Course” describes a set of courses that deal with different aspects of a broad subject. An example is GER 258: German Culture and Thought. Such courses are a valuable part of the curriculum because they give students access to the full range of faculty expertise in particular disciplinary areas. There is the potential for difficulty, however, when these courses are asked to contribute very specific elements of a student’s education – such as fulfillment of the Multicultural requirement. Since it is only the general topic that is initially approved for Multicultural credit, variations among individual courses may mean that some of them fit the Multicultural course criteria better than others. Moreover, a faculty member newly assigned to a Topics Course may be unaware of its Multicultural designation.

For these reasons, departments offering Topics Courses that count toward the Multicultural requirement will be responsible for ensuring that each of the individual courses meets the specific criteria for the Multicultural category in which the set of courses is offered. Departments will provide the Registrar’s Office with an expanded course description for each of the individual courses and will meet the Registrar’s deadline for posting the descriptions before the registration period opens. The Undergraduate Council will establish a subcommittee to review these course descriptions periodically and report its findings to the Committee on Courses. If the UGC and the COC find that a particular course does not meet the Multicultural course criteria, students will not lose the Multicultural credit for which they registered, but the UGC subcommittee will work with the department to eliminate inconsistency for the future. If all sections of the Topics Course cannot be designed to meet the criteria, it may be preferable to the department to remove the Multicultural designation.