Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures

APPROVED (1 September 2006)

2005-06 Annual Report of the Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures

In fulfilling its charge as established by Regulation 300 of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, the Committee on Educational Policy’s Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures (AmCult) carried out the following activities. The chair of AmCult during 2005-06 was Professor Jeffrey Romm.

I. Finished Business

• The Subcommittee reviewed 53 cases during the 2005-06 academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Approved</th>
<th>Denied</th>
<th>Pended</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

• The Subcommittee regularly invited Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Christina Maslach to support efforts to maintain sustaining levels of funding for the American Cultures program amidst severe budget cuts and to discuss the overall direction of the American Cultures (AC) curriculum on campus.

• The Subcommittee and Senate Staff continued to work closely with the staff of the AC Center in order to support and facilitate effective faculty outreach and the establishment of new AC courses both on- and off-campus. As AmCult Chair, Professor Romm acted as moderator for the first in a series of AC “Spotlight” roundtables discussing the relationship between American Cultures and globalism. The Subcommittee heartily supported the AC Center’s creation of this series and looks forward to providing any future assistance/support possible.

• The Subcommittee identified several issues and held discussions on these topics in the hopes of developing priorities for the AC curriculum on campus, examining the role of AC in the UC Berkeley – Community College relationship, and providing some guidance to Dr. Robinson in her faculty outreach/development as the AC Center Coordinator:
  o Whiteness Studies;
Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures

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- “Groupness” and Cultural Formation;
- Integration, Incorporation, and Comparison;
- Migrating AC into the Core Curriculum of Campus Majors;
- Targeting On-Campus Faculty Outreach;
- Targeting Off-Campus Faculty Outreach; and
- The AC Subcommittee’s Role in Guiding and Supporting the AC Center’s Agenda.

- The Subcommittee revised its student petition process (removing the need for an explanatory letter from the student) and adopted a new petition form that is used in place of the cover sheet that was previously required. (See Attached)

- The Subcommittee reaffirmed its position that AmCult does not review petitions that do not involve the review of course materials – that is, petitions to waive the American Cultures Breadth Requirement. Such petitions are to be directly submitted to the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI).

- The Subcommittee also reaffirmed its position that, if a course is approved (via petition) as a substitution for AC credit for one student and another student subsequently petitions the same course (same term, same instructor, and same syllabus), AmCult will receive these petitions pro forma but will forward them directly to COCI for official approval.

- The Subcommittee provided comments to the Divisional Council (DIVCO) regarding the proposed UCAAD Statement on Diversity. (12/05/2005)

- The Subcommittee finalized a new draft of the Guidelines for the Review and Approval of AC Courses, per the comments and questions of DIVCO in spring 2005, and submitted the final draft to DIVCO (02/02/2006). Guidelines were endorsed by DIVCO on 04/03/2006. (See Attached)

II. Unfinished Business

- The Subcommittee received three course syllabi (as part of the standing review of new instructors for existing AC courses), which presented concerns. As this was a question of faculty outreach and development, the Subcommittee asked Dr. Robinson to offer assistance to the instructors in addressing the Subcommittee’s concerns. A subset of the membership (Professors Romm, Seyer-Ochi, and Thomas) will act on behalf of the Subcommittee during the summer recess in making a final decision in these cases and any others that urgently arise before the next Subcommittee comes into session for 2006 – 2007.

- With regard to the review of new instructors for existing AC courses, the Subcommittee intends to pursue a general practice – in cases where the review presents concerns, and the Subcommittee does not want to endorse a new instructor’s syllabus – of forwarding its concerns directly to the department chair’s attention and reminding the chair of his/her ultimate responsibility for ensuring the consistency of new instructors’ preparedness to meet the standards for American Cultures courses.
APPENDIX A: NEW STUDENT PETITION FORM

PETITION TO SUBSTITUTE A COURSE FOR “AC” CREDIT

Submit this completed form and all supporting materials to:

BERKELEY DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
320 STEPHENS HALL

ALL PETITIONS MUST INCLUDE:
INCOMPLETE PETITIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

1. This form:

2. A copy of the syllabus - including a course description, lecture & discussion topics, and a complete list & description of course assignments (please add these items if they are missing from the syllabus) - from the semester in which you took the course; and

3. A letter from the instructor describing how the course meets the UC Berkeley AC Requirement.
(For questions regarding the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures, instructors may visit the American Cultures Center's website at americancultures.berkeley.edu/instructor_guidelines.html.)

If you are unable to obtain a letter from the course instructor you must submit:

a. A brief (100 words maximum) statement explaining why you were unable to obtain a letter from the instructor;

b. A list of all the course assignments; and

c. A sample of the work you turned in during the course. (This sample should be a completed assignment of at least 2 pages.)

1. STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: ___________________________________________ SID: __________________________

Email: ___________________________________________ Transfer Student: ( ) YES ( ) NO

Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________

2. COURSE INFORMATION

School: ( ) UC Berkeley ( ) Other: ____________________________

Course: ___________________________________________ Units: __________

Course Title: ___________________________________________

When: ____________________________________________

Instructor's Name: __________________________________________

Instructor's Email: __________________________________________

Revised 4/31/2006
APPENDIX B: APPROVED AC COURSE GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVING COURSES TO FULFILL THE BREADTH REQUIREMENT IN AMERICAN CULTURES

* * *

Drafted by the AC Subcommittee, 2003-2004

Endorsed by the Committee on Educational Policy, 25 February 2004

Revised by the AC Subcommittee, Fall 2005

Reviewed by the Committee on Educational Policy, 8 March 2006

Endorsed by the Divisional Council, 3 April 2006

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In 1989, the Special Committee on Education and Ethnicity recommended the establishment of an American Cultures Breadth Requirement for all undergraduates at the University of California, Berkeley. The report of the Committee, known as the Simmons Report, proposed that “a wide variety of disciplines establish courses that focus on major themes in United States history, society, and culture and that address the major conceptual issues relevant to understanding ethnicity, culture, race, and pluralism in the American context. Such courses should provide the intellectual tools to understand better one’s own particular cultural identity and those of others in their terms. They should take substantial account of those racial minority groups such as African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Chicanos/Latinos that have not only been excluded from the mainstream of American society, but continue to be underrepresented in our mainstream curriculum.”

In response to the Simmons Report, the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate passed Regulation 300, which established the requirement, set forth guidelines for courses that would satisfy it, and created the Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures¹ to facilitate, assess, and approve course proposals based on those guidelines. In order to encourage courses that engage students in ways that prepare them to live in and contribute to a multicultural society, the Subcommittee interprets the guidelines, and approves courses, based on the following:

A. Does the course address theoretical and analytical issues relevant to understanding race, culture, and ethnicity?

What may be considered to be of theoretical and analytical relevance to the understanding of race, culture, and ethnicity varies across disciplines and even within them. The Subcommittee

¹ Berkeley Division Regulation 300 established that the AC Subcommittee would be comprised of seven faculty members and two undergraduate students, and would function as a subcommittee of the Berkeley Division’s Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). The AC Subcommittee Chair serves as an ex-officio member of CEP.
does not apply a fixed standard for determining relevance, and is interested in promoting new approaches that diversify the study of these topics. For example, we welcome courses that analyze how class, gender, or the cultures of science (or of different professions) intersect with questions of race and ethnicity; and we are receptive to courses that fulfill the intent of the requirement within limits set by disciplinary norms.

B. Is the course integrative and comparative within the larger context of American society, history, culture, economy, or environment?

Courses should focus on groups within the U.S. or in relation to the U.S. The Subcommittee welcomes comparative international frameworks and the study of historical formations relevant to the issues of race and ethnicity in the U.S.

Courses must integrate the groups within a well-reasoned conceptual, thematic, or historical framework. The Subcommittee recognizes the difficulty of defining criteria that apply across the board to courses in different disciplines and that use different perspectives. It intends to be flexible when considering each proposal.

C. Does the course take substantial account of groups drawn from at least three of the following: African Americans, indigenous peoples of the United States, Asian Americans, Chicanos/Latinos, and European Americans?

Since the inception of the requirement in 1989, new research has revealed ever-growing complexity within and among these groups and has demonstrated the heterogeneity of American society. In order to ensure that the vitality of cutting-edge research continues to benefit American Cultures courses, the Subcommittee interprets this guideline as follows:

American Cultures courses must consider racial/cultural groups drawn from at least three of the named major groups. Instructors may focus on particular subgroups within the major groups; focus on a combination of subgroups and major groups; or go outside the named groups, when guidelines A and B are best served by doing so, to address other racial/ethnic groups that have been excluded historically from the mainstream of society and curriculum.

Other Policies

1. Courses must be three or more units.

2. Courses devoted to development of general skills—e.g., 1A or 1B reading and composition courses—are not eligible for American Cultures approval.

3. When an approved course is offered in sections that use different material, the Subcommittee must approve each section.

4. When the instructor of an approved course changes, the new instructor must submit his or her version of the course for Subcommittee review.

Approval Procedure
**APPROVED (1 September 2006)**

Faculty members submit a course proposal for approval of an American Cultures course to the Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures. Send the proposal and all supporting material to the Subcommittee on the Breadth Requirement in American Cultures at 320 Stephens Hall #5842. The Subcommittee will notify you in writing about the action it takes on the proposal. Please call the Senate staff to the subcommittee at (510) 642-4340 for advice or facilitation.

**Proposal**

A proposal for course approval includes a **syllabus** and a **cover letter** explaining how the course satisfies the requirement.

The **syllabus** should be complete, detailed, and as final as possible. It should include an informative course description, a determinate reading list (specifying author and title), and a schedule of assignments for the whole semester.

In the **cover letter**, describe your course, being sure to address the requirement’s criteria described above. Explain how your selected groups are integrated into the topic of the course, or how the course topic frames your conceptualization and presentation of the groups. You may help the Subcommittee by explaining how specific readings relate to the intent of the course, especially if the content of these readings is unclear from their titles alone.

In cases where the Subcommittee has questions about a course proposal, the Subcommittee will work with the instructor on revisions. The Subcommittee encourages you to seek information from the staff of the American Cultures Center in drafting your course proposal. Please call Victoria Robinson at (510) 642-2264, send email to americancultures@berkeley.edu, or visit the Center at 120 Wheeler Hall.

These guidelines can be found online on the American Cultures Center’s website, http://americancultures.berkeley.edu, and the Subcommittee’s Senate website, http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/committees/amcult/amcult.html.

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The American Cultures Breadth Requirement offers a special opportunity for innovation in teaching and research at Berkeley. It has the potential to include the full range of campus academic endeavors and to provide exciting opportunities for cross-fertilization among fields. Workshops and periodic seminars for American Cultures instructors bring faculty into vitalizing discussions that participants view as unique experiences in campus life. Please consider participation, and thank you for supporting the American Cultures Breadth Requirement.