



## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

### General Education Governing Committee

#### Approved Minutes

March 23, 2020

#### **NO PHYSICAL OR SYNCHRONOUS MEETING (See email for instructions)**

Please notify [Tiffini.Travis@csulb.edu](mailto:Tiffini.Travis@csulb.edu), AND [Colleen.Dunagan@csulb.edu](mailto:Colleen.Dunagan@csulb.edu) if you cannot connect to Beachboard.

- I. Approval of Minutes: GEGC Minutes from 3-9-2020 posted on BeachBoard
  - A. MSP
  
- II. Announcements/Discussions
  - A. Following courses were approved in virtual GE Exec: CE 490, CEM 490
  
- III. Current Business:
  - A. HIST 390: Environmental Evolution of Asia
    - i. Course GEAR and SCO
    - ii. New to GE
    - iii. Request for UD B (Life Sciences)
    - iv. Comments via Discussion Board:
      1. Use other measurable action verbs in SLO3 and SLO5, and in SCO, curriculum justification is for B2 without lab. However, in GEAR form, GE Justification is for B in scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning. Please clarify.
      2. They need to fix the prerequisites, right? I am not a scientist nor a historian. I would appreciate some guidance from my CNSM colleagues about whether or not there is rigorous enough science to qualify as a category B. It seems that the person that wrote this document has the requisite knowledge, but can that be assumed for every professor who might teach the course? SCO 1: "see" needs to be replaced. Suggestion: "describe". SLO 2: strange grammar at the beginning. Perhaps "Inquire about and analyze...". SLO 4 seems ponderous to me. Perhaps all they need is the second sentence?
      3. I agree. If the course doesn't fit B2, then perhaps D3 (it meet all the criteria). I also agree with concerns regarding the SLOs. I don't think the class is supposed to be a lab.
      4. I agree with the above. The course seems to fit D3 and not B2.
      5. Ok. I agree with others. Moreover, I am a historian trained at Berkeley in environmental history. I have worked in science labs. I have graduate training in demography. I have taught some of the books that Dr. Li has listed in her bibliography; I saw a very preliminary version of this course and advised her that I didn't think it was really a B-2 course. While I think history courses can qualify as B-2 courses, this isn't one. The most glaring error is a conceptual one: Historians and scientists have quite different methods of dealing with evidence. Historians do not start out with a hypothesis, we do not believe in replicability studies (those are unoriginal at best, plagiarism at worst). We do not test hypotheses. If the evidence we collect does not confirm or reject our research question (our version of a scientific hypothesis), we simply change our research question. The assignments and activities as proposed has mixed two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world, using "cause and

consequence" (which is a historical thinking heuristic process designed for middle school students in Canada) and applying it to the "scientific method." Historians do not do the scientific method. Period. Beyond this fundamental conceptual error, there are squishy SLOs that don't mean much, and an overly ambitious curriculum. Can students gain an understanding of science by taking an environmental history course? Yes, but I don't think they'd get much out of this one. I'd strongly recommend that this one go back to the drawing board. Institution should provide ways for cross-disciplinary collaboration in these types of courses. Perhaps instructor can workshop her proposal with a CNSM peer?

6. I agree with those observations. This class seems a better fit as an upper-division D3. If they want to have it as B2, then a significant rewrite (and reformulation) of the course is required.
7. As noted by others, the presented material is not a course for area B2. If they want to pursue this path, then I like the idea that they need to partner with someone in CNSM Life Sciences to discuss how this course can be developed as a true 'Life Sciences' course.
8. I agree with the previous comments. As noted by others, the presented material is not a course for area B2. If they want to pursue this path, then I like the idea that they need to partner with someone in CNSM Life Sciences to discuss how this course can be developed as a true 'Life Sciences' course.
9. I would recommend a minor revision for D3 status, or a major redesign for B2. I second the idea of working with someone from CSNM for a redesign for B2, if that is the direction this goes.
10. When I look at the SLOs, they don't look like the course DOES much life science, even if they address things that relate to the life sciences. For example, DESCRIBING the pattern of the changing environment (SLO1) doesn't seem like enough to qualify something as an upper division life science course. Shouldn't an upper division life science course be testing some hypotheses regarding the changing environment--or at least digging into data to evaluate the validity of the conclusions drawn by those who have tested such hypotheses? Also, wouldn't such a course need a component where students learn a specific method for making such evaluations? The other SLOs have similar weaknesses. SLO2 could qualify, but it seems to me that would depend upon the way the course covers the impact of science and technology on living systems. Does it just describe the overall unfolding changes or is it digging into the way that natural systems respond (biologically or ecologically) to the things that are being done to them. SLO5 could be promising, but whether it covers enough science depend upon the project chosen by each individual student, and it's not clear that the course offers sufficient training in an appropriate method to be confident that many students would be doing suitable projects to qualify as life sciences.
11. **SUMMARY of requested amendments:**
  - a. Need to fix the prerequisites?
  - b. SCO 1: "see" needs to be replaced. Suggestion: "describe". SLO 2: strange grammar at the beginning. Use other measurable action verbs in SLO3 and SLO5. SLO 4 seems ponderous to me. Perhaps all they need is the second sentence?
  - c. Is rigorous enough science to qualify as a category B? Explanation of concern: While history courses can qualify as B-2 courses, the scientific component is not clear. Historians and scientists have quite different

methods of dealing with evidence. Historians do not do the scientific method. Shouldn't an upper division life science course be testing some hypotheses regarding the changing environment--or at least digging into data to evaluate the validity of the conclusions drawn by those who have tested such hypotheses? Also, wouldn't such a course need a component where students learn a specific method for making such evaluations? SLO2 could qualify, but it seems that would depend upon the way the course covers the impact of science and technology on living systems. Does it just describe the overall unfolding changes or is it digging into the way that natural systems respond (biologically or ecologically) to the things that are being done to them. SLO5 could be promising, but whether it covers enough science depend upon the project chosen by each individual student, and it's not clear that the course offers sufficient training in an appropriate method to be confident that many students would be doing suitable projects to qualify as life sciences.

- d. In the SCO, the curriculum justification is for B2 without lab; however, in GEAR form, GE Justification is for B in scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning. Please clarify.
- e. If the course doesn't fit B2, then perhaps D3 (it meets all the criteria).

**B. CE 406 and CE 406H: Project Cost-Benefit Analysis**

- i. Course GE Form
- ii. Continuing GE (Category F, Integrative Learning)
- iii. Request for UD D (Social and Behavioral Sciences and History)
- iv. Comments via Discussion Board:

- 1. I think this looks very good generally. SLO 2: Something more active than “identify” is preferable. SLO 3: Perhaps “Distinguish between and describe...”? 10 SLOs is a lot to assess in one semester. Perhaps this could be simplified or some currently SLOs combined?
- 2. I am concerned with the limited discussion on the human social impact. It is mentioned for one week of the course outline, but it is mentioned with other topics. Similarly, SLO #6 reads as though the social component is a tag on. This course reads like a business/economics class. I assume the political aspect is closely tied to the economic factors for many of the topics.
- 3. I agree that the revised form listing SLOs needs to be cleaned up. Also, I'll agree to let this one go, but I wish there was guidance from someone to tell programs don't just toss in a bunch of stuff -- clearly SLOs 2, 4, 9, & 10 are heavily weighted in weekly course activities, topics, and assignments. That's fine, economics is a social science, but I see a disconnect between how the authors framed the course as encompassing the "social sciences" more broadly when that does not seem to be really what they're doing. It's okay to state that economics is the focus of this course, and thus qualifies as a social science category.
- 4. I agree with the comments above. Because they are teaching basic economics in the first part of the course (thus avoiding to add ECON 100 and ECON 101 (or ECON 300) as pre-requisites), it makes it hard to add in the political economic components that they promise in their description of the course. I agree that the course really sounds like an econ/business class. Econ is clearly part of the social sciences so I feel that it can justify/fulfill the UD Cat D criteria. I think the 10 different SLO's is not realistic. And I agree that the social component is a tag-on. Overall, though, as an Econ/Business class and its intersection with

engineering design, I think that this is generally feasible. Some of the students may tackle some topics in their research paper that might have them waded into the socio-political elements encouraged by the framing of this course, but I am not sure if the course (as designed) would provide them with the tools to do that systematically.

5. Overall looks good and I agree with the suggestions -the better defined language suggested is needed.
6. Agreed - 10 SLOs seems a lot, especially to do all of them in a 2500 word paper. Also agreed that the word choices need refining. It has already been said better than I can, but in the main it all feels rather a lot in order to cover a lot of bases.
7. Agree about the large number of SCOs and the language used. The class looks like a straight economics/applied economics course, and even all the business stuff tackled with strictly econ frameworks/methods. I have no problem with that because Economics is a social science. I think they use the "social" language as dressing just because the language used by the Chancellor/Senate makes people think they have to. But if we accept the basic principle that the discipline of economics qualifies as a social science, then I think this class meets the category requirement.
8. **SUMMARY of requested amendments:**
  - a. SLO 2: Something more active than “identify” is preferable. SLO 3: Perhaps “Distinguish between and describe...”? 10 SLOs is a lot to assess in one semester. Perhaps this could be simplified or some currently SLOs combined?
  - b. The 10 different SLO's is not realistic – is this an accreditation requirement.
  - c. The discipline of economics qualifies as a social science; however, there is a limited discussion on the human social impact. It is mentioned for one week of the course outline, but it is mentioned with other topics. Similarly, SLO #6 reads as though the social component is a tag on. This course reads like a business/economics class. I assume the political aspect is closely tied to the economic factors for many of the topics. Because they are teaching basic economics in the first part of the course (thus avoiding to add ECON 100 and ECON 101 (or ECON 300) as pre-requisites), it makes it hard to add in the political economic components that they promise in their description of the course. Can this be clarified?

#### IV. Future Business

- A. Election of the Executive Committee for 2020-21.
- B. Review of GEOG 304 and GEOG 318 for April 27 meeting.

#### V. Adjournment

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### GEGC Meeting Dates AS-119 (Anatol Center)

**Spring 2019**  
April 27