

General Education Committee Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2018

Committee members attending: Amy Sayward, Dovie Kimmins, Deana Raffo, Justin Gardner, Karen Reed, Virginia Hemby, Teresa Davis, Phil Loubere, Mike Boyle, Zaf Khan

Ex-officio members attending: Susan Myers-Shirk, Karen Petersen

Business:

- **Call to order.** Meeting was called to order at 2:35 PM by Amy Sayward.
- **Approval of Minutes.** Meeting minutes from the February 9, 2018 meeting were approved: moved by Virginia Hemby, seconded by Phil Loubere. The minutes carried unanimously with no changes. Meeting minutes from the March 23, 2018 Assessment subcommittee meeting were approved: moved by Deana Raffo, seconded by Teresa Davis. The minutes carried unanimously with no changes.
- **Consideration of two proposals.** At the February 9, 2018 meeting, the committee considered two proposals for possible addition to the General Education curriculum: LEAD 2000 and ABAS 2010. Subsequent to the meeting, these proposals were made available to the university community for feedback; seven emailed comments were received in response (see Appendices). Amy Sayward reminded the committee of the following procedures: a two-thirds majority vote was required for the proposals to pass. If they passed, the proposals would move to Amy Sayward, and then up to Peter Cunningham. Proposals no longer go to TBR.
 - While most of the emails contained generally positive comments, two emails cited specific concerns regarding the proposals. The departments of Psychology as well as Sociology/Anthropology strongly opposed the addition of both LEAD 2000 and ABAS 2010 to the Gen Ed curriculum. Each department cited the language stipulated in the General Education Course Proposal document for Social/Behavioral Sciences to justify their assertion that these courses do not come from a Social/Behavioral Sciences discipline, nor do they draw from the perspectives and/or methods of the field.
 - Discussion ensued between committee members regarding the interpretation of this language in the General Education requirements. Amy Sayward explained that in the past, the committee has allowed classes outside of the specified categories (“anthropology, economics, geography, psychology, political science, and sociology”) to be included as part of the General Education curriculum. Justin Gardner stated that it was important to recognize this precedent when voting on the proposals. Teresa Davis questioned whether the committee should allow a substantial number of classes outside of the social sciences discipline to satisfy the Gen Ed requirement for that category. Amy Sayward stated that the committee will need a clear rationale for its decision so as to be consistent regarding this issue in the future. Virginia Hemby stated

that the question is “Do these classes fit here [in the Social/Behavior Sciences category]?” Justin Gardner replied that no, the question is: do these course descriptions explain how they are meeting the Gen Ed requirements? Some members of the committee expressed concern that the proposals did not fulfill four or more of the seven learning outcomes, as required by the course proposal document. The committee discussed possibly clarifying the specifications of the Gen Ed Course Justification form in the future, however members noted that making any change would be problematic from a procedural point of view.

- Justin Gardner motioned to vote on the ABAS 2010 course; Mike Boyle seconded. No additional discussion was undertaken.
 - Susan Myers-Shirk clarified the voting: a “Yes” response indicated that the member believed that ABAS 2010 should be added to the Gen Ed curriculum. Ten voting members were present, therefore seven votes were needed to pass. Members voted: there were 5 “Yes” votes and 5 “No” votes; therefore ABAS 2010 was not approved for addition to the curriculum.
 - Justin Gardner motioned to vote on the LEAD 2000 course; Mike Boyle seconded. No additional discussion was undertaken.
 - The members voted on the LEAD 2000 proposal: there were 7 “No” votes and 3 “Yes” votes; therefore LEAD 2000 was not approved for addition to the curriculum.
 - Susan Myers-Shirk stated that for next year, the committee members should consider possible changes to the definitions of these departmental categories as well as the accompanying course proposal documents. The committee members discussed several concerns with this idea: Amy Sayward noted the timing, stating that the entire General Education curriculum will be possibly undergoing a redesign. Justin Gardner questioned whether the committee had the authority to make such a change to the course proposal documents, stating that MTSU policy may limit the committee’s ability to make these changes.
- ***New business.*** Amy Sayward and Phil Loubere have completed their service to the committee and will not be returning in the fall; they were thanked for their service. Virginia Hemby will chair the committee when it resumes in Fall 2018.

APPENDICES

(Emailed feedback from the MTSU community in response to the proposals)

Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:14:09 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: Fw: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, LEAD 2000, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category
Date: Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 2:24:08 PM Central Daylight Time
From: Ron Bombardi
To: Susan Myers-Shirk
Attachments: image002.png, image001.png

Dear Susan,

Since I find that I am indeed unable to enter comments on the proposal referenced below through the Curriculog portal, I am responding via email, as instructed. One concern I have is as follows.

Apropos the Course Justification provided, with attention to the subsection concerning "relation to departmental curricula," we read:

"Introduction to Leadership Studies covers basic leadership concepts that will fill a void in current leadership-oriented courses that are offered as upper-division courses, including the core theories course required in the Leadership Studies minor. ... However, as a lower-division course, this course will not be offered as a part of the minor."

Taken together, these two sentences would seem to be at odds with each other: if LEAD 2000 will fill a void that turns up in the current Leadership Studies minor, then shouldn't it be offered as part of the minor, rather than being explicitly excluded therefrom?

Thanks for considering this concern, Susan.

Sincerely,
Ron

Ron Bombardi, Professor & Chair
Department of Philosophy
Middle Tennessee State University
Tel: 615-898-2049

From: Academic Affairs
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 10:49 AM
To: Faculty
Cc: deanscabinet; chairs; Susan Myers-Shirk; Peter Cunningham
Subject: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, LEAD 2000, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category


Dear Colleagues,


The University General Education is currently reviewing a proposal for a new course to be added to the Social and Behavioral Sciences category, LEAD 2000 Introduction to Leadership Studies. In

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accordance with committee policy, the proposal is now available for university review and comment prior to final consideration by the general education committee.

You can access the proposal by going to Curriculog. Type or cut and paste **mtsu.curriculog.com** into your browser and log in using your FSA credentials. Then, click on this link (opens in a new window): <https://mtsu.curriculog.com/proposal:392/form>.

Before commenting, please make sure that in addition to reviewing the proposal online, you download and read any attached files. You can view and download the attached files by clicking on the files icon . The files attached to the LEAD 2000 proposal include an assessment plan, a syllabus template, and a general education course proposal form. Please also review the learning outcomes for the social and behavioral sciences category. You can find those by clicking on this link (opens in a new window): https://www.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/docs/General_Education_Learning_Outcomes_for_website.pdf

You should be able to enter any comments directly into Curriculog by clicking on the “discussion” icon , then clicking on “add comment.” If you find you are unable to enter comments, you can email your comments directly to Susan.Myers-Shirk@mtsu.edu.

Last day to comment: Wednesday April 4, 2018 by 5:00 pm.

Sincerely,
Susan Myers-Shirk

Learn more about the procedure for approving a general education course by clicking on this link (opens in a new window): https://www.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/submit.php

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Susan Myers-Shirk
University General Education Director
Professor, Department of History
Middle Tennessee State University
Office: Peck Hall 282
Phone: 615-898-2386

Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:11:29 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: ABAS 2010

Date: Monday, March 26, 2018 at 11:35:27 AM Central Daylight Time

From: Andrew Brower

To: Susan Myers-Shirk

Hi Susan,

This course looks like a fine addition to our curriculum. My only comment is that the syllabus seems very human-centric. I would like to see a bit more attention paid to conservation and "nature" - desertification of the Sahel, deforestation of tropical biomes for production of ethanol or palm oil, fishing out the oceans, stuff like that. I also note that the issue of GMOs is not obviously included in the list of topics. Perhaps ABAS already has another course that addresses the latter. Nevertheless, it seems like a potentially important Gen Ed topic, to provide students a rigorous scientific basis for whatever beliefs they may hold on these matters.

Andy Brower

Professor Andrew V. Z. Brower
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Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:15:16 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: FW: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, LEAD 2000, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category
Date: Friday, March 16, 2018 at 1:49:05 PM Central Daylight Time
From: Steven Estes
To: Susan Myers-Shirk
Category: LEAD 2000
Attachments: LWP-111-ROTC-Leader-Development.pdf, image001.png, image002.png

Hellos Susan – I hope this finds you well.

I have no specific feedback on the course – looks pretty standard and in good shape for the proposal. I'd be interested in teaching it. Attached is a recent article I published with two ROTC colleagues on leader development. I've also guest lectured with Deanna Raffo, Earl Thomas, and David Foote in their ILE class.

I'm not sure how I would fit the course into my schedule, but if I meet your specifications and the course is approved then we could discuss. In any case best wishes – looks like a good course.

Steve

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Steven Estes
Professor of Kinesiology
Fellow #12, National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education

Leisure and Sport Management Program Coordinator
AMG 207, Campus Box 96
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Email: Steven.Estes@mtsu.edu
Phone: 615.898.2906
Fax: 615.898.5020


From: Academic Affairs <Academic.Affairs@mtsu.edu>
Date: Friday, March 16, 2018 at 10:50 AM
To: Faculty <faculty@mtsu.edu>
Cc: deanscabinet <deanscabinet@mtsu.edu>, chairs <chairs@mtsu.edu>, Susan Myers-Shirk <Susan.Myers-Shirk@mtsu.edu>, Peter Cunningham <Peter.Cunningham@mtsu.edu>
Subject: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, LEAD 2000, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category


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Dear Colleagues,

The University General Education is currently reviewing a proposal for a new course to be added to the Social and Behavioral Sciences category, LEAD 2000 Introduction to Leadership Studies. In accordance with committee policy, the proposal is now available for university review and comment prior to final consideration by the general education committee.

You can access the proposal by going to Curriculog. Type or cut and paste **mtsu.curriculog.com** into your browser and log in using your FSA credentials. Then, click on this link (opens in a new window): <https://mtsu.curriculog.com/proposal:892/form>.

Before commenting, please make sure that in addition to reviewing the proposal online, you download and read any attached files. You can view and download the attached files by clicking on the files icon . The files attached to the LEAD 2000 proposal include an assessment plan, a syllabus template, and a general education course proposal form. Please also review the learning outcomes for the social and behavioral sciences category. You can find those by clicking on this link (opens in a new window): https://www.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/docs/General_Education_Learning_Outcomes_for_website.pdf

You should be able to enter any comments directly into Curriculog by clicking on the “discussion” icon , then clicking on “add comment.” If you find you are unable to enter comments, you can email your comments directly to Susan.Myers-Shirk@mtsu.edu.

Last day to comment: Wednesday April 4, 2018 by 5:00 pm.

Sincerely,
Susan Myers-Shirk

Learn more about the procedure for approving a general education course by clicking on this link (opens in a new window): https://www.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/submit.php

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Susan Myers-Shirk
University General Education Director
Professor, Department of History
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Office: Peck Hall 282
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Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:16:45 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: FW: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, ABAS 2010, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category
Date: Monday, April 2, 2018 at 8:28:18 AM Central Daylight Time
From: Academic Affairs
To: Susan Myers-Shirk

From: Louis Haas
Sent: Tuesday, March 27, 2018 8:08 AM
To: Academic Affairs <Academic.Affairs@mtsu.edu>
Subject: RE: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, ABAS 2010, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category

Dear Susan,

OK, had to tweak the login a couple different ways. Course looks good and useful, and certainly fulfills the GenEd requirement for Social and Behavioral Sciences.

louie

From: Academic Affairs
Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018 10:37 AM
To: Faculty <faculty@mtsu.edu>; deanscabinet <deanscabinet@mtsu.edu>; chairs <chairs@mtsu.edu>
Cc: Susan Myers-Shirk <Susan.Myers-Shirk@mtsu.edu>
Subject: FOR YOUR REVIEW & COMMENTS: New course, ABAS 2010, proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category

Dear Colleagues,

The University General Education is currently reviewing a proposal for a new course to be added to the Social and Behavioral Sciences category, ABAS 2010 World Food & Society. In accordance with committee policy, the proposal is now available for university review and comment prior to final consideration by the general education committee.

You can access the proposal by going to Curriculog. Type or cut and paste mtsu.curriculog.com into your browser and log in using your FSA credentials. Then, click on this link (opens in a new window): <https://mtsu.curriculog.com/proposal:887/form>.

Please email your comments directly to Susan.Myers-Shirk@mtsu.edu.

Last day to comment: Wednesday April 4, 2018 by 5:00 pm.

Sincerely,
Susan Myers-Shirk

Learn more about the procedure for approving a general education course by clicking on this link (opens in a new window): https://www.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/submit.php

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Susan Myers-Shirk
University General Education Director
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Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:13:09 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: LEAD 2000

Date: Friday, March 16, 2018 at 12:11:37 PM Central Daylight Time

From: Mary Hoffschwelle

To: Susan Myers-Shirk

Category: LEAD 2000

Dear Susan,

Sorry, I couldn't see an add comment option but my only comment is this: I'm very glad that the proposal includes designating this course as an MT Engage course and look forward to working with the faculty teaching it to support their efforts in integrative learning, reflection, and ePortfolio.

Thanks!

Mary

Dr. Mary S. Hoffschwelle
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mtengage@mtsu.edu

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Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:17:31 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: Psychology Response to Gen Ed Proposals.
Date: Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 11:53:44 AM Central Daylight Time
From: Greg Schmidt
To: Susan Myers-Shirk
CC: PsyDept-L, Harold Whiteside, Brandon Wallace
Attachments: Psychology Response to Gen Ed proposals 2018.docx

Hi Susan,

Thank you for inviting comment on the two General Education course proposals in the Social/Behavioral Sciences area: LEAD2000 and ABAS2010. The Psychology Department is strongly opposed to approving these courses. Our concerns are outlined below and in the attached memo.

Our primary concern is that neither course proposal meets the letter or spirit of the Social/Behavior Science requirements:

TBR GOAL: The goal of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement is (a) to develop in the student an understanding of self and the world by examining the content and processes used by social and behavioral sciences to discover, describe, explain, and predict human behavior and social systems; (b) to enhance knowledge of social and cultural institutions and the values of this society and other societies and cultures in the world; and (c) to understand the interdependent nature of the individual, family, and society in shaping human behavior and determining quality of life. For the purposes of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement, courses will be expected from areas such as anthropology, economics, geography, psychology, political science, and sociology. One course in health/wellness may be included in this category.

- 1) Neither course meets the area requirement for Social/Behavioral Science disciplines: **anthropology, economics, geography, psychology, political science, and sociology.**
- 2) LEAD2000 is proposed by the Management Department and ABAS2010 by Agribusiness and Agriscience Department.
- 3) An examination of Section C in both assessment plans indicates that they are not drawing on the social/behavioral sciences to address learning outcomes as stipulated by the guidelines.
- 4) For this reason, neither class introduces students to the major theoretical, empirical, and ethical foundations of the Social/Behavioral Sciences to meet the General Education requirements for this area.

Opposition specific to LEAD2000: Course appears to have a strong personal development emphasis.

From course description "...an emphasis is placed on exploring leadership in relation to personal development..."

This is very similar to Psy1420 – Psychology of Adjustment, which is not considered suitable for a General Education course.

Only 20% of the grade is based on content knowledge or critical thinking (i.e., Quizzes/Tests), whereas 35% of grade is based on personal development-type activities (e.g., Team-based learning activities, Service Project Paper/Presentation).

Opposition specific to ABAS2010: NFS3100 (Food and Culture in the United States) is taught in Human Sciences, but it is not considered relevant for a General Education course because it does not draw on the theoretical, empirical, and ethical traditions of these disciplines.

Changing the inclusion criteria for each requirement (e.g., Communication, History) should not be done on an *ad hoc* basis, which would be result if LEAD2000 and ABAS2010 are added. Allowing these

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courses into the Social/Behavioral Science category opens the door to other *ad hoc* additions (e.g., courses in Science and Pseudoscience or Philosophy of Science could be offered in the Natural Sciences area). Rather, there should be a planned change, involving discussion by stakeholders and the university faculty, which would allow all interested departments to develop and propose new General Education courses.

Best,

Greg W. Schmidt, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department Chair
Psychology
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Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 12:10:44 PM Central Daylight Time

Subject: ABAS 2010 and LEAD 3000 proposed for General Education Curriculum/Social and Behavioral Sciences Category
Date: Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at 12:21:27 PM Central Daylight Time
From: Brandon Wallace
To: Susan Myers-Shirk
CC: Dawn McCormack
Attachments: image001.jpg

After discussing the LEAD 3000 and ABAS 2010 General Education Proposals with department faculty, we as a department strongly oppose the approval of these courses as Social/Behavioral Science General Education courses. Neither course as proposed meets the basic goals of the Social/Behavioral Science area as stipulated below. Management and ABAS are not social or behavioral sciences and the goal of this area is to expose students to the perspectives and methods social/behavioral science disciplines. In fact, the goal clearly stipulates (in red below) the disciplines which typically offer courses that would meet the expectations of this general education area. While both courses may be important course offerings, they simply do not expose students the perspectives and methods of the social and behavioral sciences as do courses from listed disciplines. Thank you for considering our concerns.

Brandon

J. Brandon Wallace, Ph.D.
Director of Aging Studies and Professor and Chair
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro TN, 37132
Voice: 615-898-2509



GOAL: The goal of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement is (a) to develop in the student an understanding of self and the world by examining the content and processes used by social and behavioral sciences to discover, describe, explain, and predict human behavior and social systems; (b) to enhance knowledge of social and cultural institutions and the values of this society and other societies and cultures in the world; and (c) to understand the interdependent nature of the individual, family, and society in shaping human behavior and determining quality of life. For the purposes of the Social/Behavioral Sciences requirement, courses will be expected from areas such as anthropology, economics, geography, psychology, political science, and sociology. One course in health/wellness may be included in this category.

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