

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, EAST BAY

Designation Code: 2009-10 CIC 34
Date Submitted: June 30, 2010

TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum
SUBJECT: Application of Course for GE Area c4
PURPOSE: For Action by the Academic Senate

ACTION

REQUESTED: That the Academic Senate approve the application of the following course for General Education (G.E.) for Area C4 for the 04-12 and earlier catalogs.

HIST 3414 The Civil War and Reconstruction

BACKGROUND

INFORMATION:

This course was approved by the G.E. Subcommittee on May 10, 2010.

CIC unanimously approved this course for the G.E. area indicated above at its meeting on May 17, 2010.

All supporting documents (i.e., course syllabus, GE approval form) for this course is available for review on the 5/17/10 CIC Sharepoint meeting workspace. The web link for this workspace is:

<https://sharepoint.csueastbay.edu/sites/AcademicSenate/CIC%20Meeting1/Lists/Calendar/DispForm.aspx?ID=100.1.75&Source=https%3A%2F%2Fsharepoint%2Ecsueastbay%2Eedu%2Fsites%2FAcademicSenate%2FCIC%2520Meeting1%2FLists%2FCalendar%2Fcalendar%2Easpx%3FCalendarDate%3D5%252F30%252F2010>

Application for General Education Credit for Upper Division Humanities Course (Area C4)

Course title: The Civil War and Reconstruction Course number: History 3414

Courses approved for general education credit must provide students with explicit instruction in the approved student learning outcomes. Please be as specific as possible, pointing to topics, readings, assignments, activities and assessments that illustrate how the course meets the requirements. Attach the course syllabus and any assignments and/or assessments needed to support your explanations.

Please use this template as a guide to address ALL of the following learning outcomes.

Upper-division humanities courses emphasize an advanced writing component and include significant oral communication or manual communication (sign language) and advanced critical thinking skills. Upper-division general education should enable students to master the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) listed for lower-division general education humanities.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

In this course, students will engage in two research projects, the first to understand the nature of human agency and political power as we try to answer the question, “Who freed the slaves?” and the second project to examine the question, “Was the Civil War a ‘total war’?”, in order to examine the Civil War in a comparative context. In both research projects, students will examine primary source evidence from multiple perspectives and will gain experience in using appropriate methodologies for interrogating evidence and interpretations.

In the History 3414 research projects, debates, and book reviews, students will explore several crucial questions with broad implications for all human inquiries: How can we perceive the experience of others? How do researchers develop empathy for their subjects of study (even if we do not “side” with them)? How do researchers attempt objectivity? Students’ readings, discussions, and debates should also bring students to a more “objective” understanding of the profound crises over national identity confronting Americans in the 1860s.

2. Students will demonstrate in their oral and written work an understanding of the cultural endeavors and legacies of human civilization.

At its most fundamental level, this course is about the meaning of American citizenship and its dramatic redefinition during the Civil War and the period known as Reconstruction. The redefinition of citizenship is the most lasting political as well as cultural legacy of this relatively short period in American history. The key events covered in this class—secession, the Civil War, wartime emancipation, the passage

of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution during Reconstruction, and the rise of political terrorism following the demise of Reconstruction—left a deep imprint on American history and continue to shape our lives today.

Besides studying the rise of a newly powerful federal government committed, at least on paper, to the civil rights of all Americans, this course will consider the deep consequences of secession, emancipation, and the enduring power of racial ideologies. Students will prepare three essays (two position papers and a book review) addressing the meanings of these events in American history. Students will also orally debate fundamental questions about political power, human agency, and civil rights as they attempt to answer whether slaves or Abraham Lincoln brought about emancipation and the degree to which the American Civil War presaged modern conflicts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Students will come away from this course with insights into the meaning and history behind the Civil War's extraordinary bloodshed, emancipation, and the Reconstruction amendments to the Constitution. They will also read and explore the meaning of several of Lincoln's seminal writings and speeches defining the meaning of the Civil War and American citizenship, including the Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural Address.

3. Students will demonstrate their ability to discuss, deliberate, and write about opposing viewpoints in an insightful and logical manner, to present an opposing side fairly, and to criticize the argument rather than attacking the person.

Students will participate in two debates, one on the question of "Who freed the slaves?" and one on the violence of the Civil War. In both of these contexts, students will discuss, deliberate, offer logical and persuasive arguments, and present positions without using personal attack.

In their book review, students will write critical reviews that fairly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the author's work. These will refrain from personal attack as well. I will work to inculcate the standards for exchange and debate used in both civil society and professional contexts.

4. Students will demonstrate their developing intellectual curiosity and a habit of lifelong learning, through choice of research topics, the number and quality of questions asked in class, the application of course concepts or themes to lived experiences or world events, or through other similar means.

I believe that the debates will stimulate students to a habit of lifelong learning by giving them choices about how to present evidence and arguments in a meaningful context. In addition, all of the events covered in this class connect deeply to our lived experiences in that they define our rights as American citizens today and shape our sense of national as well as regional and racial identities. As students

experience the challenges of the present, they will remember the contests and struggles of the past. I hope that they may make informed decisions in their own lives and communities because of their knowledge of the past gleaned from this course.

5. Students will demonstrate the potential for participating in and contributing to a democratic society as an informed, engaged, and reflective citizen.

Here again, I believe that the debates on emancipation and the use of violence to forge national identity will prod students to consider their roles in a democratic society committed to civil liberties. The other readings in this course will provide an important backdrop to those debates and will raise issues of their own about national identity, citizenship, and majoritarian democracy.