Feedback Report

UCA Core Council Assessment sub-committee

February 2020

Re: Review of LD Core Diversity Course Offerings

Thank you for providing the information requested by the sub-committee. The assessment sub-committee is diligently reviewing all courses in the Lower Division Core that assess under the Diversity Core Competency in order to assure that our students are receiving a shared, common experience across the university as regards this Core competency. Your participation is greatly appreciated in this endeavor. The sub-committee would like to provide you with this feedback report. If you have questions, concerns, or comments please direct those to, Jake Held (jmheld@uca.edu)

**Course Prefix and Number: ENGL 2370**

**Course Title: Introduction to Fiction**

**Syllabus**: Any syllabus for a course in the UCA Core must include language indicating the courses relative position within the UCA Core. The boilerplate language can be located here: <http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/publications-information/>

The course syllabi had the required UCA Core language included.

**Lower Division Core standards:** Does 50% of the course content directly align to the Core outcomes for the goal under with the course assesses? (NB: This is calculated by considering course objectives, readings, lecture/discussion, and assignments as indicated by the course syllabus and provided work.)

ENGL 2370 is categorized under Goal C (Other) of the Diversity competency. The outcomes for Goal C are:

* **Theory/Criticism/Technique**: The set of concepts/principles used to create or evaluate creative works.
* **Themes and Ideas**: The concepts expressed in the creative work that are representative of diverse cultures/perspectives.
* **Context**: The personal, social, cultural, and historical influences on the creative work.
* **Reflection**: The articulation of a personal response to the experience of a creative work.

The full rubric can be located here: <http://uca.edu/core/assessment/>

As a lower division Core course, these courses ought to provide students with a foundational experience to begin developing the skills indicated by the outcomes under the rubric. In order to provide such an experience it is necessary that students be consistently exposed to these ideas and offered multiple opportunities to develop these skills.

For ENGL 2370, we were provided with materials for two iterations of the course. Each section had merits. However, the committee did not see that either course seemed to fully embrace the diversity outcomes. For example, although Willis’s course description and objectives seem to indicate diversity as a focus, her reading list and assignments failed to demonstrate this. In addition, Davis’s focus on Things Fall Apart was much more intentionally focused on the diversity outcomes, and in fact, she seemed to prompt students to intentionally do so as well. Thus, her course more clearly and intentionally aligned to the diversity outcomes.

In general, given that Intro to Fiction, as a UCA course, falls under the Diversity in Creative Works category of the UCA Core, and thus is intended to align to and promote learning outcomes promoting appreciation of diverse viewpoints, UCA’s intro to fiction should look distinctively different from an intro to fiction course you might see at another university. It should demonstrate a devotion to the diversity outcomes. This is where the committee struggled. Dr. Willis’s course looked like a fascinating intro to fiction, namely, sci-fi, but didn’t look like it took diversity to heart in its course offerings and assignments. Ms. Davis’s came much closer. However, all sections of the course should be as committed and explicit in their engagement with the rubric. .

**Committee Recommendation**: We request an assurance argument for ENGL 2370 from the Department of English demonstrating a firm commitment to the student learning outcomes of the Diversity Goal C rubric. Things to consider:

 Specific recommendations:

1. Greater that 50% of course content needs to explicitly align to the outcomes under Diversity (Goal C – Other). Use the table in Curriculum Attachment A here:<http://uca.edu/core/forms/> as a guide. In addition, provide course materials such as copies of assignments, quizzes, tests, writing assignment prompts, and/or detailed syllabus.
2. Course assignments needs to align to Core outcomes, and specifically prompt and require that students engage in activities that assist in developing these competencies.
3. In order to better understand Core requirements and respond to the sub-committee’s requests it is recommended that the department consult with a member of the sub-committee in regard to this report before, or while, revising its submission. Your college representative on the sub-committee is Zach Smith. Of course, Dr. Held, Assistant Provost for Academic Assessment and General Education, is always readily available as well.

Should you choose to submit revised materials for ENGL 2370, those materials should be collected into a single pdf file and submitted directly to Jacob Held. The course materials will be evaluated by the UCA Core Council curriculum review sub-committee. The sub-committee will review the materials and make a recommendation to the UCA Core Council as to whether or not they are adequate in addressing the concerns noted above. Should the sub-committee affirm that they are adequate and the Core Council affirm that assessment, no further action will be necessary. Should, however, the sub-committee deem the revised materials to be insufficient and the Core Council affirm this evaluation, or the sub-committee deem the materials sufficient yet the UCA Core Council reject this assessment, the Core Council’s decision will be guiding. In the event of either of these previous two outcomes, you will have one semester to revisit the issues and revise the course materials. The same process will then be followed with the subsequent decision of the Core Council being final.

If you should fail to act on this recommendation by July 01, 2020, ENGL 2370 will be placed on probationary status for Fall 2020. If no progress is made in rectifying matters by the close of Fall 2020, ENGL 2370 will be removed from the LD Core beginning Spring 2021.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Jake Held (jmheld@uca.edu)