Feedback Report

UCA Core Council Assessment sub-committee

January 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 as an informational item. If you have questions, concerns, or comments please direct those to, Jake Held (jmheld@uca.edu)

**Course Prefix and Number: MUS 1340**

**Course Title: Introduction to Music Literature**

**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 syllabus did not have the required Core language.

**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.)

MUS 1340 is categorized under Goal C (Creative Works) 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, this course 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.

The committee was provided merely with a single syllabus on which to base our evaluation. With such scant evidence it was impossible to garner a full appreciation or understanding of the course content as a whole, and thus impossible to adjudicate how well, if at all, the course aligns to the Diversity rubric under which it is placed.

What we did notice was that the syllabus did not at all indicate a commitment to the diversity competency which is supposed to be constitutive of the course content insofar as this course is a lower division Core diversity course. This may be the result of the unique place that 1340 plays in the Core. Or rather, the unique way in which it finds itself placed in the UCA Core. It is my understanding that 1340 finds itself in the Core as a result of a previous understanding reading the relationship between MUS 2300, 1340 and the general education program at UCA. When UCA’s general education program had a “Fine Arts” category, under which MUS 2300 was placed, 1340 was allowed to satisfy this requirement for music majors, the rationale being that as music majors they would get a fine arts education through their regular course of study and thus should not be required to take an additional music course, such as MUS 2300. A similar argument/arrangement was made for Art students as well.

However, with the reorganization of UCA’s general education program, and the new learning outcomes affiliated with the reorganization, MUS 1340 finds itself in an odd position. MUS 2300 now meets a diversity requirement, not simply a fine arts requirement, and thus 1340, in order to meet the same requirement, will have to also meet the diversity requirement. Thus, it is time, we believe, to reevaluate 1340’s place within the UCA Core.

The options before us, therefore, are: 1) Remove MUS 1340 from the LD Core Diversity in Creative Works category, or 2) Provide an assurance argument demonstrating proper alignment with UCA Core Diversity outcomes.

If you wish to pursue the first option, you would simply need to fill out the requisite curriculum form (U2-I), located here: <https://uca.edu/panda/curriculum-development-process-guide/cdpg-forms/>, indicating your program’s intention to remove the course from the LD Core. If you wish to provide an assurance argument for 1340, thus securing its place in the LD Core please follow the process below:

Specific recommendations:

1. Greater that 50% of course content needs to explicitly align to the outcomes under Diversity (Goal C – Creative Works). 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. Revise the course materials (syllabus) to demonstrate how the course aligns to and addresses the Core outcomes under which it assesses.
3. Course assignments needs to align to Core outcomes, and specifically prompt and require that students engage in activities that assist in developing these competencies.
4. 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 Laura Niswonger. 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 MUS 1340, 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 May 15, 2020, MUS 1340 will be placed on probationary status for Fall 2020. If no progress is made in rectifying matters by the close of Fall 2020, MUS 1340 will be removed from the LD Core beginning Spring 2021.

I am happy to assist in anyway that may be of service. So if you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 450-5307 or jmheld@uca.edu