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MEMORANDUM

TO: GEC

FROM: The Liberal Studies Department
Vivienne Bennett, Chair

SUBJECT: Proposed Changes to UDGE CC and DD

DATE: March 15, 2012

The Liberal Studies Department has reviewed and discussed the proposed changes to UDGE CC and DD. We would like to affirm our strong support for improving how issues of diversity and globalization are infused across the CSUSM curriculum. However, we do not agree with the approach presented by the GEC involving the elimination of the CC and DD categories as currently defined and their replacement with 'Diversity' and 'Global' categories. Our reasons are as follows:

1. The definition of "global" and "diversity": The GELOs provided by the GEC for 'Diversity' and 'Global' are narrower and more prescriptive than the criteria currently used for certifying CC and DD courses. No rationale is provided for such a narrowing of GELOs.
2. The very prescribed GELOs for "Diversity" and "Global" suggest that many current CC and DD courses will not be re-certified as UDGE, leading to a sudden decrease in UDGE course availability. Yet there is no analysis of the impact of this on student graduation timelines and on department FTES, both of which would be severely affected if there is a large shift regarding which courses and how many courses are certified for UDGE.
3. The course content of many existing CC and DD courses will have to be significantly revised in order to seek recertification as either Global or Diversity courses. Either that, or the courses will have to be eliminated from the curriculum. Extensive changes in course content and in courses offered has an impact on program integrity for those interdisciplinary programs that are allowed to incorporate UDGE into program requirements.
4. Interdisciplinarity as an explicit criteria will be lost. The current description of UDGE DD is fully and explicitly about interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary course content. This means that all DD courses are inherently interdisciplinary. While the GELOs for Diversity and Global include some interdisciplinary learning outcomes – such as #2 for Diversity – most of the proposed GELOs can be taught from the vantage point of one discipline. The proposed GELOs remove the essential

interdisciplinarity of UUDGE DD, which we think is central to the development of students' critical thinking skills. [Robbing UUDGE DD of its interdisciplinarity at this time, when CHABSS is working hard on increasing and supporting interdisciplinary studies, seems especially misguided.]

5. Distributed Study: We are concerned that under the proposed plan, many students would take both their Diversity and Global courses in the Social Sciences and would never have a UUDGE Humanities course. There are already more global and diversity courses in the CSUSM catalog from the social sciences than from the humanities. How would we achieve a balance of Social Science and Humanities content for students? UUDGE should ensure that students are exposed to both upper division Social Sciences and Humanities.

6. If existing CC and DD courses are de-certified and new courses are developed for the new 'Diversity' and 'Global' categories, this could shift teaching assignments in departments (among TT, among PT, and between TT and PT faculty). An analysis of this should accompany the proposed changes.

7. Some of the proposed GELOs themselves are confusing and we do not understand them:

- Diversity GELO #4 – how will faculty other than Linguists manage to carry out this GELO? Developing the knowledge in order to be able “to communicate and act respectfully across linguistic borders” is the terrain of entire Linguistics courses. How will non-Linguists address this in their UUDGE classes?
- Global, 'Must-Do GELOs.' bullet 2: what does the 'dynamics of global transitions' mean? We do not understand this concept.
- Global, 'Must-Do 2 of 4', bullet 1: what is meant by 'global forces'? Again, we do not understand this concept. (There really is no such thing as a true global force since the world is still made up of sovereign nations, and no trend or pattern occurs equally across all nations. The word 'global' is a proxy concept.)
- Global, 'Must-Do 2 of 4', bullet 3: what does it mean?

Conclusion: Criteria 6 of the existing UUDGE DD certification form already provides the requirement that courses explore two of the following: gender, ethnicity, class, regional identities, and/or global identities. If GEC's evaluation is that diversity and global issues are not being adequately integrated into our curriculum (eg., that DD and CC courses are not doing a good enough job with this), then let's do a better job of applying the current CC and DD criteria, or let's revise the wording and requirements for CC and DD to more strongly emphasize the diversity and global learning outcomes, all the while maintaining the interdisciplinary critical thinking skills set forth in the current requirements. The existing DD requirements provide us with a strong leg to stand on to demand the deepening of the diversity and global content of DD courses. The BB, CC, and DD courses can be retitled so that instead of letters, the requirements have meaningful thematic names that speak to the required content.

Let's not engage in a complete redesign of UUDGE when the need for that has not been demonstrated, and when the current UUDGE rubric provides us with the themes that the GEC wants to emphasize. Recertifying UUDGE according to two radically narrower themes is a massive job with potentially extensive ramifications on progress to graduation, departmental course offerings, FTES across departments, and on the curricular pathway for some ID programs.



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Memorandum

To: Sharon Elise, Chair, GEC

From: Michael McDuffie, Chair, Philosophy

Date: March 14, 2012

RE: Request for feedback on proposed changes to UDGE

I write on behalf of the faculty in Philosophy, now that we have had a chance to consider the proposed changes to the upper division General Education curriculum. Thanks for the invitation to respond to the proposal. As a department, we are pleased that the GEC is advancing the campus conversation of how best to establish the themes of diversity and global awareness more securely in our GE curriculum. These themes are well represented in our cluster of currently recognized CC courses, both directly and indirectly, consistent with the current standards for CC courses. We are confident that our commitment to the themes and underlying values of diversity and global awareness is already manifest in our curriculum. Thus, we trust that our criticism of the proposal in question will not be taken as resistance to the pedagogical goals that animate the proposal. We are all in agreement regarding the pedagogical and ethical value of these learning outcomes.

Therefore, it pains us to report that we are strongly opposed to the current proposal, at least as we understand it. We have a number of serious concerns, regarding both the specific outcomes proposed, as well as the very idea of eliminating CC and DD courses in favor of a thematic approach. The proposed changes would (it appears to us) gravely affect our department's (and many others') ability to offer the same diverse range of courses that the current CC/DD structure has made possible. The proposed Diversity and Global outcomes could only result in certification of a *much* narrower range of courses, in both subject matters and acceptable methods of study, than are currently certified for CC and DD credit. Thus, many courses that we are now able to offer, in Philosophy and other disciplines, solely because they provide UDGE credit, could no longer be offered. Without UDGE credit, they would not garner sufficient enrollment to survive. (Philosophy does not yet offer a major, so our courses are unusually dependent upon their CC status, in order to attract enrollment.) However, this impact would not affect only the Philosophy curriculum. In many majors, a rich variety of upper division electives can be offered to students, only because those courses carry both CC or DD credit for non-majors, even as they also serve as electives for the major. If a narrower range of courses is certified for UDGE, then a narrower range of courses can serve such double duty. The result would be a less representative and intellectually diverse curriculum for majors and non-majors alike, across multiple departments and disciplines.

We believe that the proposed outcomes are indeed narrowly drawn, and would recognize a limited range of courses, employing limited methods of study directed to limited subject matters. The latest draft of the Diversity outcomes now limits the field of study to the United States, and the Global

outcomes appear to limit the range of study to contemporary issues of globalization and global awareness. And to our reading, there seems to us to be a lack of sensitivity to the methods of study and approaches employed by humanistic disciplines, as well; the implicit framework of study appears to us to have its orientations more in social scientific methodologies and concerns. Thus, we are far from confident that the current range of CC courses that we offer in Philosophy (never mind other departments) would survive the change to the proposed outcomes. A handful of our courses should pass muster, we believe. However, it is not clear to us at all how our regular offerings in Ancient Greek Philosophy, or the History of Modern Philosophy, or (ironically enough) even our Non-Western Philosophy course could be recertified under the proposed Diversity or Global rubrics. (These courses don't *directly* address issues of diversity in the U.S., and they aren't *directly* attuned to contemporary issues of globalization either.) So it would appear that they would lose UDGE certification, and we could no longer offer them. (And I can name the lecturers who teach some of these courses, and who would lose work as a result of the courses no longer being offered.)

For the Philosophy Department, the decertification of such courses is a very serious and very disturbing prospect. The three courses just listed make up the core of our Minor. If we can no longer offer them, then the Philosophy Minor as we have conceived it, built it, and offered it for ten years, would no longer exist. Further, our strategy for supporting a Major in the next few years, by offering courses that would serve both UDGE and the Major, would be immediately jeopardized. Please understand how our ability to offer the Philosophy curriculum is so closely tied to the existence of a dedicated UDGE course requirement in the Arts and Humanities. In this dependency, we are perhaps unique on campus, but only as a matter of degree. The Arts and Humanities, on a campus like ours, exist on a lifeline that is sustained to a great extent by a dedicated share of GE enrollment at both the lower and upper division. If the designated UDGE course in the Arts and Humanities is eliminated, then all our programs will be impoverished.

Perhaps we do not understand the proposal, but it appears to us that there is no requirement of distributed study across the three divisions now represented in BB, CC, and DD curricula. All we have seen are the proposed outcomes, with no information on how the curriculum would be implemented, restricted, or regulated, so forgive us if we have misunderstood the GEC's intent. We take it that CC and DD courses would no longer exist, and in their place students would take one Diversity course (from any department?) and one Global course (from any department?). If this is the entire scheme, then there is nothing to ensure the sort of distribution of study across divisions required by relevant policies and expressed in our current UDGE approach. (There is also no stipulation that a given course couldn't be designed so as to carry both designations---Global *and* Diversity.) A student majoring in Psychology or Biology could apparently take her Diversity course in Sociology and her Global course in Political Science (or Sociology again?) and never set foot in an Arts or Humanities classroom as an upper division student. (Or a LTWR major could take both courses from Arts and Humanities departments and never be exposed to upper division social or behavioral sciences.)

We assume that the GEC would not have such an outcome in mind, so we also assume that we are missing some information that might have made it easier to evaluate the proposal from all angles. Based on what we have seen, though, we are opposed to this plan, inasmuch as it would appear to eliminate a dedicated upper division requirement in the Arts and Humanities---and we would be opposed to *any* such plan, as a matter of principle. In order to offer a well-rounded curriculum in the Arts and Humanities, dedicated GE course requirements are indispensable.

We understand that new student learning outcomes are needed for UDGE, and we would be happy to help craft a set of outcomes geared to the Arts and Humanities, in which the themes of diversity and global awareness would take leading roles. And we are not at all opposed to a change of nomenclature from the graceless "CC" to something more compelling; but we are unlikely to be swayed from our opposition to any scheme that would eliminate a dedicated UDGE requirement in the Arts and Humanities. Please, dear colleagues on the GEC: Please let us keep our lifeline on this campus.

Consider the progress made by the GEC over the past couple of years in the area of LDGE SLO's. We think that the process by which we arrived at A₃ and C₁/C₂ outcomes was productive, collegial, and thoroughly consultative. We in Philosophy would like to see a similar conversation over what we now call "CC." We believe that, if given the chance, we in the Arts and Humanities departments could articulate student learning outcomes that would work for us and serve the very goals desired---that would more directly gear into themes of diversity and global awareness, that better express our concerns and frameworks of study and expression as artists and humanists, and that allow us to highlight these themes as we already have. Our hope is that a less disruptive and more intellectually inclusive approach to these goals might be devised, allowing us across departments to sustain the rich curricula that we have worked so hard to build. Our commitment in Philosophy to intellectual pluralism has guided us in developing a wide variety of courses; we fear that this pluralism (also an important curricular value) would wither across the curricula, if the proposed changes to UDGE were adopted.

Thanks for considering our concerns. We look forward to the committee's response.

