Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations (TCT)

This document is meant as a guiding tool for faculty proposing courses and for committees reviewing course proposals. It offers a blueprint for best practices for creating GE courses and highlights the aspects of the course that will be considered in review. Course developers can use this document as a potential tool for backward design in creating a new course or revising an existing course for the GE. Reviewers will use this document to provide feedback about the perceived degree of development of connections between course content, assignments, and the GE Theme.

A course proposal includes two main elements: the student-facing syllabus and the submission document that is read only by reviewers. The syllabus should clearly describe the connections between the GE Theme, course content, and assignments. The GE goals and expected learning outcomes (ELOs) should be listed, with a brief statement explaining why and how the course provides students with the tools to achieve these outcomes. The course submission document should point to these connections and explain and link the course's specific approach to the GE Theme via its activities and assignments.

Key elements of a TCT GE theme proposal are:

1. A brief, student-friendly explanatory paragraph in the syllabus immediately following the required listing of the GE category goals and ELOS that details the key aspect of culture, primary impetus(es)of societal change, and/or integral societal institutions that the course will explore and the way that transformations of these have impacted various aspects of the larger society and its subcultures.
2. A list of topics, questions, readings, and/or assignment descriptions linked to Traditions, Cultures, and Transformation.[1]
3. Assignments that assess student attainment of the Theme ELOs that, in the aggregate, have weight that makes them integral to passing the course[2].

Proposals without these elements will be sent back for revision. Revision requests may be broad suggestions for reconsideration, requests for explanation, or specific points of content or format (with these latter often characterized as "contingencies"). Courses that meet the three key elements but do not meet the guidelines laid out in the rubric below might also receive requests for revisions that must be resolved before final approval.

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[1] Common practices include listing a focal topic for each week, module, or session of the course. Descriptions/full citations of readings should be included. Descriptions assignments can be helpful.

[2] For example, if the final exam is the only assignment where the students demonstrate their mastery of a specific ELO and has a weight of 10% of the overall grade, a student can receive a good grade (possibly A-) without showing mastery of that ELO.

TCT Rubric

Course Review Rubric: Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations

Expectations are in bold on the left-hand column. The other cells of each row provide a qualitative assessment of the ways in which the course proposal materials address that expectation. The perceived strength of the alignment between course materials and the expectation increases from left to right.

	Not Met	Emerging		Met
Critical and logical thinking about the topic or ideas embedded in _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ is a primary focus of the course.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe opportunities for critical and logical thinking, but not specifically about concepts within _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_.	Course materials address concepts within _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ in limited, narrow, or introductory ways	Course materials address concepts within _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ using varied content and highlighting open areas of inquiry, diverse interpretations, and innovative perspectives.
"Advanced Study" of _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe advanced, in-depth study, but concepts of _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ are not the primary emphasis of the course or of the advanced elements within it.	Course materials introduce concepts of _Traditions, Cultures, & Transformations_ in an introductory way, relying mostly on sources that are syntheses or reviews of original writings, research, or creative work.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to engage with _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ through critique and review of original writings, creative works, research findings or other primary materials in addition to secondary materials.
Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to identify and describe their experiences with concepts relevant to _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations._	Course materials describe opportunities for students to synthesize disciplinary or other approaches to concepts related to _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_, but these are not connected to student's own experiences.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to identify and describe their experiences and academic approaches for understanding concepts relevant to _Traditions, Cultures & Transformations_ and provide opportunities for synthesis and comparison across approaches, experiences, and concepts.

TCT Rubric

	Not Met	Emerging		Met
Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work related to concepts embodied by *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations*.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe opportunities for reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, but these do not focus on *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations*.	Course materials describe opportunities for reflection, self-assessment, or creative work related to *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations* but these are only minimally part of the grades and structure of the course.	Course materials describe multiple opportunities for reflection, self-assessment, and/or creative work on *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations* that are integral to the course and its assessment strategies.
Student reflections build on students' prior experiences and understandings of the concepts of *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations* by revisiting these in new and challenging contexts.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe opportunities for engaging with prior experiences or understandings of concepts embedded in *Traditions, Cultures & Transformations* but do not connect these to new contexts.	Course materials describe opportunities for engaging with prior experiences or understandings of traditions and culture but do not consider how these change or transform.	Course materials provide opportunities for engaging with prior experiences or understandings of concepts of traditions and culture and how these change or transform, and engages with ways these prior understandings can be revisited or extended into new contexts.
Describe the influence of an aspect of culture (e.g., religious belief, gender roles, institutional organization, technology, epistemology, philosophy, scientific discovery, etc.) on at least one specific historical or contemporary issue.	Not evident in materials provided.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to explore changes in society or culture, but these are not framed through the lens of a specific aspect of the culture.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to explore the influence of culture on a historical or contemporary issue, but the emphasis is broad or diffuse, without specific causal or conceptual links between the cultural idea and the focal issue.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to explore the specific connections between some aspect of culture and the impact, framing, or trajectory of a historical or contemporary issue.

TCT Rubric

	Not Met	Emerging		Met
Analyze the impact of a "big" idea or technological advancement in creating a major and long-lasting change in the focal culture or society.	Materials provided do not allow this to be assessed.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to learn about a big idea or advancement but don't tie this specifically to long lasting cultural change.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to learn long lasting cultural change(s), but these are not tied explicitly to a key technological innovation or key idea.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to describe, analyze and critique interpretations of the impact of a key idea or technology on long-lasting societal or cultural changes
Examine the interactions among dominant and sub-cultures within the focal culture.	Materials provided do not allow this to be assessed.	Course materials do not describe how students will explore the breadth of perspectives or approaches within the focal culture.	Course materials do not describe how students will analyze the interactions among the diverse perspectives or approaches within the focal culture.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to identify and categorize diverse approaches to the focal culture or idea **and** identify ways in which students will explore connections and differences between these approaches.

TCT Rubric

	Not Met	Emerging		Met
Explore changes and continuities over time within this culture or society.	Materials provided do not allow this to be assessed.	Course materials do not describe opportunities for students to explore the change in culture over time.	Course materials do not describe opportunities for students to explore continuities across time in aspects of the focal culture.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to explore **and** analyze continuities and change across time in the focal culture.
For the focal culture, recognize and explain differences, similarities, and disparities among institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, and/or individuals.	Materials provided do not allow this to be assessed.	Course materials identify very few or narrow opportunities for students to learn about differences, similarities, and disparities within and among the facets of the focal culture.	Course materials describe opportunities through which students learn to recognize the facets of culture, but do not include clear venues for developing explanations and deeper understanding.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to identify and evaluate multiple possible explanations for differences, similarities, and disparities among <u>multiple</u> facets of culture (institutions, organizations, cultures, societies, individuals).
Explain ways in which categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender and perceptions of difference impact individual outcomes and broader societal issues within the focal culture.	Materials provided do not allow this to be assessed.	Course materials do not describe opportunities for students to learn about categories of social identity within the focal culture or in relation to the focal idea.	Course materials do describe opportunities for students to learn about categories of social identity within the focal culture or in relation to the focal idea, but do not connect these to individual outcomes or broader issues within that culture.	Course materials describe opportunities for students to learn about categories of social identity within the focal culture or in relation to the focal idea.