APPLICANT: David Panisnicke E-MAIL: panisnic@hawaii.edu

COURSE ALPHA and NUMBER: REL 210

COURSE TITLE: Understanding Christianity

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF SECTIONS: Fall 1 Spring 1 (Note: 1 professor teaches all sections)

Is this request for a: □ New Course □ Modified Course ✗ Existing Course

□ Re-designation

Is this request for a: □ Certification ✗ Re-Certification. Date of last certification: 2001

DIVERSIFICATION AREA DESIGNATION SOUGHT:

□ DA (Arts) □ DP (Physical Sciences)
□ DB (Biological Sciences) □ DS (Social Sciences)
✗ DH (Humanities) □ DY (Laboratory)
□ DL (Literature and Language)

What percentage of the CONTENT of this course focuses on this diversification area? 75%
What percentage of CLASS MEETINGS focuses on this diversification area? 75%

1. Please explain how the course SLOs align with the diversification area's hallmarks.

DH Hallmark 1: Uses the terminology of historical, philosophical, language or religious studies.

SLO 2: Accurately identify important names, date and events in the history of Christianity. This is consistent with the requirement to use historical terminology and the identification of important thinkers is associated with the presentation and explanation of important concepts, beliefs and practices in the Christian tradition.

SLO 3: Identify patterns of cause and effect to explain the changing and evolving teachings of Christianity. This SLO addresses the historical process of cause and effect and applies it to this development of Christianity. It also uses philosophical (theological) and religious terminology in explaining how historical circumstances has long and short term consequences for adapting
existing Christian beliefs and practices to changing environmental (historical, cultural) complexities.

DH Hallmark 2: Involves texts, artifacts, processes, theories or issues of concern in these studies.

SLO 4: Identify similarities and especially differences within the major branches of Christianity, Christian sects and denominations invariably employ and certainly emphasize the use of different texts. While their scriptures are the same (except Mormons), the writings of important Christian thinkers are often at the core of sectarian and denominational differences. Understanding these writings requires explaining religious theories and various issues of concern.

SLO 5: Compare and contrast liberal and conservative Christian responses to Church/State, ethical and scientific issues. This SLO is specifically addressed in the last third of the course. As "issues of concern," Church/State relations, ethics and scientific challenges are the major external pressures facing Christianity today. Christian responses to these pressures vary widely and are often formulated based on differing Interpretations (theories) of scripture.

DH Hallmark 3: Demonstrates inquiry that involves the method of study, reflection, evidence gathering, and argumentation that are employed in these studies.

SLO 1: Critically explain contemporary scholarly challenges in understanding the origins of Christianity. The operative word here is "critical." The importance of an academic approach is emphasized throughout the course. Hermeneutics, the study of interpretations, and exegesis, drawing out the meaning of a text, are emphasized. The historical origins of Christianity are elusive and present difficult challenges for modern scholarship. The course is candid about what we know and how we know it; candid about what we do not know or cannot know and why this is the case. Where there are pronounced scholarly disagreements, these are discussed and sometimes debated in class. Jesus Studies and New Testament Studies occupy an important place in the beginning of the course.

Explanatory notes. The hallmarks (three for each designation) are posted on the HCC Intranet. In the text-box below, (a) re-state the hallmarks for the diversification designation you are seeking; (b) for each hallmark provide the course SLO(s) that meet each hallmark (statement of the SLOs and their numbers, e.g., SLO#1, should match what is given in the curriculum action form or course syllabus; and (c) explain how the SLO(s) meet each hallmark.

2. Explain assessment strategies you plan to use (or have used, in the case of recertification) to measure the degree to which students exit the course with the expected SLOs. If there are multiple sections of the course, please discuss how assessment will be carried through all sections.

Each section of the course tests by essay exams. The essays are structured so that specific SLOs are imbedded in the essays. Examples: SLO 1: Discuss the distinction between "the historical Jesus" and "the Christ of faith." SLO 2: Discuss Constantine's influence on Christianity. SLO 3: Discuss the "internal pressures" and "external pressures" which challenged Christianity at the end of the first century. SLO 4: Compare and contrast Catholic and Protestant views of authority and how this affects belief and practice. SLO 5: Compare and contrast liberal and conservative Christian positions on abortion and homosexuality. Explain their respective arguments. Also, see attachment of proposal for assessing SLOs.
Explanatory notes. For this question, provide a clear connection between the course SLOs (e.g.,
understand research methodology) with assessment strategies (e.g., quizzes, final project). For multiple
sections of the same course, provide a plan for coordinating and assessing these SLOs across sections.

3. How have you used the assessment findings to modify or improve this course?

The attachment on assessing SLOs explains how the findings are used to improve the course. One
professor teaches this course. Also, the importance of student success in the class is self-evident
in this regard.

Explanatory notes. If this is a new course, enter “N/A” as an answer. Courses being re-certified should
include a summary of how assessment strategies and measures (Question #2) were used to modify or
improve the course. Again, if multiple sections of the course are offered, provide an explanation for
review of assessment across sections.

Reminder: If this is an application for an EXISTING or MODIFIED course, please attach a copy
of your course syllabus that includes information described in the instruction part of this form. If
this is a new course proposal, please attach a copy of the Curriculum Action Proposal for a new
course.

DIVERSIFICATION BOARD DECISION:

☑ Approved
   Re-Certification Due: Fall 2016

☐ Not approved
   If not approved, reasons for disapproval:

Diversification Chair Signature: [Signature] Date: 9/7/11
COURSE DESCRIPTION: History of ideas concentrating on those events, persons, and issues which have had the greatest impact on the evolution of Christianity.

I. HISTORY

1. Introduction: Methodology
   a. What is History?
   b. The Importance of Context.
   c. The Importance of Perspective.

2. The Foundations: Judaism and Jesus of Nazareth
   a. Jewish Apocalypticism.
   c. The Historical Jesus.

3. Early Interpretations: The Christ of Faith
   a. James, John, and Peter: Jewish-Palestinian Christianity.
   b. Paul: Hellenistic Christianity.
   c. Christology and Soteriology.

4. Proto-Institutionalization
   a. Greece and Rome.
   b. The Mystery Religions.
   c. Hierarchical Structure.

5. The Patristic Period: (100 - 400 ad)
   b. Constantine and the Imperial Church.
   c. Imperial Theology: From Nicaea to Chalcedon.
   d. The Monastic Reaction.

6. Augustine (354 - 430 ad)
   a. The Confessions.
   b. The City of God.
   c. Vs. the Donatists.
   d. Vs. Pelagias
7. The Rise of the Papacy
   a. The Gothic Wars.
   b. Leo the Great and Gregory the Great.
   c. The Germanization of Christianity.
   d. Charlemagne.

8. The Protestant Reformation
   a. Proto-Protestant Movements: Catherites and Waldensians.
   b. Reform and Nationalism: John Wyclif and Jan Hus.
   c. Martin Luther.
   d. The Radical Reformers: Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin.

9. The Enlightenment
   a. From the Reformation to the Enlightenment.
   c. The Rise of Biblical Criticism.

II. THEMES

1. Christianity and Politics
   a. Brief Historical Overview.
   b. Democracy and Christianity.
   d. Contemporary Issues.

2. Christianity in the United States
   b. The Great Awakening.
   c. Fundamentalism and the Protest Against Modernity.
   d. Liberal Mainline Christianity.
   e. Contemporary Issues.

3. Christianity and Science
   a. The Ultimate Challenge.
   b. Conflicting Cosmologies and a Crisis in Values.
   c. Evolution.
   d. The Principle of Uncertainty.
TEXT: Paul Laughlin, Remedial Christianity.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. There will be three exams, each of equal worth and each covering about one-third of the course. Exams will be essay.
2. Writing Intensive students will receive a separate handout.

Prerequisites and General Education Core: Recommended Prep: Placement in Eng. 22/60. Rel. 210 fulfills a general education requirement for the A.S., A.A.S., and A.T.S. degrees in (d) Understanding and appreciating world cultures and values. Rel. 210 fulfills a general education requirement for the A.A. degree in Arts, Humanities, and Literature in Group 2: Humanities (AHL2).

Student Learning Opportunities: Upon completion of the course a student should be able to:

1. Critically explain contemporary scholarly challenges in understanding the origins of the Christian religion.
2. Accurately identify important names, dates, and events in the history of Christianity.
3. Identify patterns of cause and effect to explain the changing and evolving teachings of Christianity.
4. Identify similarities and especially differences within the major branches of Christianity.
5. Compare and contrast contemporary liberal and conservative Christian responses to Church/State, ethical, and scientific issues.

(WI) specific SLO’s:

1. Identify in writing, a writer’s implied as well as literal meaning.
2. Summarize, analyze, and evaluate written works.
3. Gather and evaluate information purposefully from electronic and print sources.
4. Use writing to discover, develop, and support ideas.
5. Produce writing whose form, organization, syntax, style and tone are appropriate for a given audience, subject and purpose.
6. Write research papers that support or purport a thesis, integrate expert opinions from various sources and documents.
7. Revise, edit, and proofread for correctness, clarity and effectiveness.
8. Develop a personal voice in written communication.

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RATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

A Proposal
by
Fumiko Takasugi and David Panisnick

The most curious part of the thing was, that the trees and other things around them never changed their places at all: however fast they went they never seemed to pass anything. "I wonder if all the things move along with us?" thought poor puzzled Alice. And the Queen seemed to guess her thoughts, for she cried, "Faster! Don't try to talk!"

Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking-Glass

INTRODUCTION:

Years ago, when we were first alerted to the necessity of developing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for our courses, we were also advised that we would eventually have to demonstrate that we were delivering on the promise, that we were actually teaching what we were claiming to teach as "contracted" in the SLOs.

Now, we may be wrong about this, and we are certainly open to correction, but it seems that between then and now, the mandate, or at least the language of the mandate, has become subsumed into the assessment conundrum. In other words, there is a difference between demonstrating that SLOs are being taught, and how well they are being taught. The first question seeks to extract information, as for instance in whether some SLOs are being taught more than others. This we think can be quantitatively measured. The second, the assessment question, which proposes to measure quality of instruction, has been beleaguered by much criticism and faculty debate. For example, how can an instructor's effectiveness in teaching SLOs be evaluated without accounting for the student's role in their own learning through motivation and work ethic? Does all of the responsibility fall on the instructor if the outcomes are not met? How much?

We are proposing a method by which to measure which SLOs in any given course and class are being taught more, less, or not at all, specifically in relation to each other. We are not claiming to be able to demonstrate how well the SLOs are being taught.

THE PROCESS:

1. The form (Fig. 1) is completed at or near the end of the semester by the students in the class and the instructor.
2. The form (Fig. 1) simply consists of all SLOs for the course listed and each accompanied by a box in which to insert a numerical value.
3. The SLOs are to be ranked according to the perceptions of how much the SLO had indeed been addressed/communicated during the course.
4. Assume five SLOs. Each SLO is ranked utilizing each number 1 through 5. 1 indicates the SLO having been most impressed upon the students, 5 the least. (Fig. 2)
5. The class ranking is then tabulated. (Fig. 3) Assume 20 students in a class. The best possible score a single SLO could receive would be 20 (1 x 20). The worst possible score would be 100 (5 x 20).
6. The instructor is then able to compare his or her own ranking with the overall class ranking.

7. The degree to which the class ranking is consistent with the instructor's ranking indicates how well the instructor is in touch with which SLOs are being communicated and which SLOs require attention.

8. If the student rankings show a high degree of inconsistency with the instructor's ranking, then there is a "dissonance factor" which needs to be addressed. (Fig. 4)

9. For those courses having more than seven SLOs, it might be better to create separate groupings for ranking purposes (e.g., eight SLOs, two groups of four). Or, an instructor might limit the number of SLOs to be rated.

10. Final tabulations will include four categories:
   a. % of students who completely agree: rated (1).
   b. % of students who strongly agree: rated (1) + (2).
   c. % of students who completely disagree: rated (5).
   d. % of students who strongly disagree: rated (5) + (4).

VALUE OF THE RANKING SYSTEM:

1. We are actually measuring what we claim to measure.

2. Any instructor who participates in the exercise should be motivated to start thinking or continue thinking about communicating SLOs.

3. Strengths and weaknesses. The exercise should provide a fairly accurate snapshot of which SLOs are "getting through" in comparison to those SLOs which are being neglected.

4. Reality check. What is the degree of dissonance between the instructor's and the classes' perception of learning SLOs? This is worth knowing.

5. Over a number of semesters, the process could constructively result in changing or re-shaping SLOs.

6. The process lends itself to Program analysis.

7. Administering and completing ranking forms should take two minutes at most. Elegant when considered in terms of amount and value of feedback.

8. The main advantage of the rating system over an assessment is that it renders null the bane of student assessments which are heavily influenced by anticipation of final grade and personal likeability of the instructor, neither of which have anything to do with quality teaching; and, neither of which can have any influence on the ranking.

AFTERTHOUGHTS:

1. It is possible that some SLOs are effectively communicated in spite of an instructor's efforts, perhaps because of the structure of the course or the instructor's approach to the discipline. This would be good to know.

2. Some SLOs might receive poor scores because they are too ambitious or too abstractly phrased (students don't know what they mean). This would be good to know.

3. College instructors, like everyone else, tend to view their own performance as comparatively superior. This is partly due to an absence of familiarity with what other instructors are actually doing. Where we have more than one instructor in a discipline, our rating system should provide a motivation for intra-discipline dialogue, especially when instructors show significant discrepancies in regard to specific SLOs.

4. Where there are multiple sections of the same course taught by the same instructor, a strong similarity in results would signal a greater approximation to objectivity.
5. Program review. The rating system, when administered over several semesters, should show improvement in teaching specific SLOs. This has relevance for accreditation.

6. Generally, the rating system could be referred to as an assessment. Some may see institutional value in this. However, we think the distinction between the two as expressed in the introduction is relevant.

7. There are a number of options for administering the rating system:

   a. Along with other evaluations: class, W, E, in 7-620.
   b. In class, manually. The simplicity of the system would allow for the instructor to choose a day toward the end of the semester when more, rather than less students are in class.

8. If the Division supports the rating system, we should discuss whether it should be voluntary.

9. The rating system does not require the protective shield of secrecy demanded of other evaluations.

10. Alice and the Red Queen. For those who believe in and or strive for excellence, our rating system might seem counter-intuitive at best or counter-productive at worst. Even the most monumental effort to resuscitate a (5) into a (1), will only consign another SLO into a (5). Progress is always relative and guarantees another defeat. And so, the SLO rating system will not be of any use for those instructors who are already teaching all SLOs excellently.