

UC 11298 115

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED MAR 23 2011

Undergraduate Council AD

New Course Course Change

Core Category: Humanities Effective Fall 2011

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council

New Course Course Change


Effective Fall 2011

RECEIVED MAR 09 2011

1. Department: ENGL College: CLASS
2. Faculty Contact Person: Barry Wood Telephone: 281-821-9691 (home) Email: bwood@uh.edu
3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
ENGL / 2340 / Cosmic Narratives
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.):
ENGL / 2340 / COSMIC NARRATIVES
 - SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 24.0101.00.01 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0
4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course? Yes No
If Yes, please complete:
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
____ / ____ / ____
 - Course ID: _____ Effective Date (currently active row): _____
6. Authorized Degree Program(s): BA, English
 - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department? Yes No
 - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments? Yes No
 - Can the course be repeated for credit? Yes No (if yes, include in course description)
7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)
8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title
____ / ____ / ____
 - Course ID: _____ Effective Date (currently active row): _____
9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)
Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304. Description (30 words max.): Narrative history of the Universe from its beginnings to the present emphasizing relevance of cosmic narratives to the human situation.
10. Dean's Signature: _____ Date: 3/10/11
Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman



U N I V E R S I T Y *of* H O U S T O N
REQUEST for MODIFICATION to a CORE CURRICULUM COURSE

Originating Department/College: English / CLASS
 Person making request: Barry Wood Telephone: 281-821-9691
 E-mail: bwood@uh.edu
 Dean's signature:  Date: March 9, 2011

I. General Information:

Course number and title: ENGL 2340 COSMIC NARRATIVES

II. Category of Core for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual/Performing Arts Critical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual/Performing Arts Experiential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO) | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American History | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Behavioral Sciences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing in the Disciplines (IDO) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanities | |

III. Briefly state the specific changes being made to the course and/or its catalog description, with an explanation of why such changes are needed.

A. Proposed change

This course exists as ILAS 2360 COSMIC NARRATIVES. It was approved in 2010 to satisfy the 3-hour Humanities requirement of the UH Core. No change to the existing, approved ILAS 2360 is requested.

This request is for approval of ENGL 2340 COSMIC NARRATIVES as a cross listing for this course.

B. Rationale for change

This request is made to add visibility to the course. As ILAS alone, the course was not visible enough for the UH undergraduate population. An ENGL cross listing should correct this problem.

IV. Please attach a syllabus that clearly reflects that the Exemplary Educational Objectives are being met. If these objectives have changed from those originally tied to the course, briefly describe the change(s).



ENGL 2340

Fall 2011
TTh 10-11:30

COSMIC NARRATIVES

Course Syllabus

Barry Wood

bwood@uh.edu

ENGL 2340 is to be double listed with **ILAS 2360: Cosmic Narratives**. (ILAS = interdisciplinary liberal arts and social sciences.) ILAS 2360 was approved in 2010 as a course that will satisfy the three-hour Humanities requirement of the UH Core Curriculum; it also earned a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) grant in 2010 for its development, but appears to require a second listing in a recognized department in order to attract sufficient enrollment. As ENGL 2340, the course will comply with sophomore English writing requirements.

Catalog Description: Narrative history of the Universe from its beginnings to the present emphasizing relevance of cosmic narratives to the human situation.

Preface: Drawing on the humanities, the course uses narrative as an organizing format for the presentation of the sciences, specifically those that provide a continuous history of the past of the Universe, Earth, and human life. Drawing on the humanities and social sciences, the course adopts a narrative organization of knowledge as both cognitively and pedagogically effective for presenting scientific knowledge.

Required Books (Additional readings—essays, chapters from books, etc.—may be assigned):

Bill Bryson, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* (2003)
 Jane Goodall, *In the Shadow of Man* (1971)
 Donald Johanson, *Lucy: The Beginnings of Humankind* (1981)
 Barbara C. Sproul, *Primal Myths: Creation Myths Around the World* (1979)
 Hesiod, *Theogony* (8th c. BCE)
 Misia Landau, *Narratives of Human Evolution* (Yale, 1991)

Learning through Discovery: An intercollegiate mentoring plan between CLASS and NSM (endorsed by deans and chairmen in both colleges) requires that students locate a mentor outside their major and college for the preparation of at least one essay. Separate mentoring guidelines will be available for students and mentors.

Acquaintance with Discovery: Each semester, we will invite one or more guests from the sciences to report on a major discovery. These will draw on our own faculty in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics but may include an outside speaker.

Ten Cosmic Narratives from the Sciences:

The Narrative of Origins: the Big Bang (physics); parallel myths of origins (literature)
 Galactic Formation (astronomy; physics)
 Stellar Evolution (astrophysics); parallel constellation myths (literature)
 Evolution of the Elements in the Stars (nucleosynthesis)
 Planetary Formation (physics; geology); parallel myths of Earth origins (literature)
 Earth History and Plate Tectonics (geosciences);
 Chemical Evolution (chemistry: physical and organic)
 Emergence and Development of Life (molecular and cell biology)
 Development of Primates and Hominids (anthropology); parallel myths of human origins (literature)
 Worldwide Human Migration: peopling the world (archeology; genetics); parallel migration myths (literature)

Course Requirements and Grading:

40 points: five postings to the course blackboard on specific topics based on readings from the assigned texts.
 40 points: tests (probably three) and occasional quizzes

- 20 points: based on a visit to the Museum of Natural Science and written response to assigned observational topics: fossils, prehistoric skeletons, life forms, mineral origins, etc.
- 100 points: based on essays totaling 3000 words with at least one done with advice from a mentor.

200 points total. Divide by 2 to get a percentage. Convert to a letter grade.

Learning Outcomes:

- (1) Students will acquire a coherent history of the Universe from its beginnings to the present as currently understood within the major sciences.
- (2) Students will acquire basic science literacy: an understanding of the general structure of the Universe, the history of Earth, the rise of life, and the emergence of modern humans.
- (3) Students will understand the narrative organization of knowledge, its cognitive origins, its application in the humanities, and its extension to the presentation of scientific knowledge.
- (4) **Students will become aware of the scope, variety, and aesthetic features of cosmic narratives in myth and literature prior to the new cosmic narratives that have emerged with modern science.**
- (5) **Students will understand prescientific cosmic narratives (from Sproul's Primal Myths and Hesiod's Theogony) as expressions of human values within their relevant historical and social contexts.**
- (6) Students will demonstrate research ability, **critical thinking**, and competence in communicating their discoveries through logical, objective, coherent, and properly documented research essays that address **issues of both the humanities and sciences**.
- (7) Students will demonstrate responsible and ethical principles in their conduct and presentation of research.

Policies:

- (1) Readings: Students are expected to complete the reading of all assigned texts.
- (2) Attendance: Prompt arrival at class and regular attendance is expected.
- (3) Deadlines: Deadlines are set to spread assignments evenly throughout the course, and thus to assure that work can be completed without undue stress toward the end of the course.
- (4) Cell Phones: Cell phones should be turned off. No texting permitted during class.
- (5) Laptops: These are permitted for taking notes. Reading/writing e-mail not permitted.
- (6) Academic Honesty: Honesty in tests, course postings, and research essays is expected according to standards set out in (a) accepted styles (MLA, APA) for responsible presentation of research, and (b) the University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy.
- (7) Incompletes: Incompletes are subject to university policy: they are granted only for students who have completed all required work with passing grades through the first 10-12 weeks of the course but have encountered sudden, unavoidable personal or medical problems that make completion of the course in a timely manner impossible. Documentation supporting claims of crises is required. Incompletes will not be granted as an extension of time to complete assignments beyond the date when grades are due.
- (8) Withdrawals: Withdrawals should occur only after careful review of the overall situation of the student since they are subject to Texas Coordinating Board rules limiting withdrawals to six (6) during an academic career.