

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 1111S

Date of Senate Approval 01/20/11

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 4: Change course description for MLA 500

Effective Date: Fall 2011

1. **Delete:** On page 209, course description for **MLA 500, Human Condition:**

This course includes guided scholarly research. Explores the historical evolution of concepts central to the development of civilization and of the human personality, including freedom and authority, aesthetic sensibility, a sense of self and of social relationships, and mastery over the physical environment. Must be taken during the first fall semester after admission to the program.

**Add:** On page 209, in place of deleted entry:

An introduction to interdisciplinary studies at the graduate level. This gateway seminar for the Master of Liberal Arts Program offers an opportunity to examine topics that address our fundamental human nature from a multitude of perspectives—intimate and immediate as well as analytical and more removed. Students will develop scholarly research, writing, and analytical thinking skills. Must be taken as part of the first 9 hours of coursework in the MLA program. Exceptions must be approved by the director. Fall and Spring.

**Impact Statement:**

This change clarifies the course description; it will not affect any major, minor, or university requirements. The proposed change involves no additional funding or staffing.

**Rationale:**

This change, suggested by core faculty and by MLA students who participated in developing the program's new *Handbook for Students*, has the unanimous approval of the Graduate Council. The current description is more appropriate to the way the course was taught in the past (by the former director, a History professor). Current MLA faculty and students realize that the proposed new description more accurately conveys the nature of the course--both past and present--and its content, as it is taught by a number of professors from different disciplines. An understanding of "interdisciplinary studies at the graduate level" is essential to this "gateway" course.

We are changing the stipulation for when students must take the course for several reasons: (1) Students whom we judge able should be permitted to take other courses first—those that

particularly attract them to the program, or that will be of particular help to them in working toward their thesis. Oftentimes, specific topics are not repeated—sometimes ever; and we want students to be able to take these when they're available. (2) We now offer skills workshops to help students with writing, public presentations, and research—all topics that we formerly depended upon MLA 500 to introduce them to. MLA 500 gives them a more thorough dosage of these things—but we believe they can wait to take it as their second or third course in the program. (3) We are now more careful in screening applicants to the program, and in orienting new faculty. (4) Each MLA student now has an advisor. (5) If MLA 500 is full, we do not want to over-enroll it.