

To: Senate executive committee
Re: Motion to Amend Senate Bill 1112-15
Introduced by: Jennifer Greiman
Date: 20 April 2012

Whereas, the study of U.S. Diversity and Pluralism has long been one of the separate and discrete “knowledge areas, perspectives, and competencies considered by the University to be central to the intellectual development of every undergraduate,” as stated in the General Education Rationale;

Whereas the University at Albany’s existing General Education Curriculum contains a requirement in U.S. Diversity and Pluralism, which carefully and explicitly defines both terms, establishing clear and effective learning objectives for teaching these courses across multiple disciplines;

Whereas Senate Bill 1112-15, “Revision to the General Education Program,” removes this requirement, reducing what was a separate and essential knowledge area to an example of one approach among many within another category;

Whereas the Board of Trustees Amendments to the General Education Requirement (January 19, 2010) states that candidates for a baccalaureate degree must complete “an academically rigorous and comprehensive core General Education curriculum of *no fewer than 30 credit hours, including but not limited to* at least three credit hours of each course” in mathematics and basic communication, and three credits each in at least five of eight academic areas;

Whereas Board of Trustees Amendments to the General Education Requirement (January 19, 2010) recognizes that the faculty of each institution will retain the responsibility for “*establishing the specific course requirements and content of a General Education curriculum of the best practices in American higher education,*” and encourages individual campuses “to allow faculty to develop more than one than one curriculum which meets the General Education Requirement;”

Whereas the University Faculty Senate has approved Senate Bill 1112-15 which stipulates the minimum number of credits for the General Education Requirement Program, but does not indicate a maximum number of credits;

Whereas the Universities at Stony Brook, Binghamton, and Buffalo either require separate courses in U.S. diversity and / or pluralism, or

require that the requirement in U.S. History enable students to develop knowledge of U.S. diversity;

I move to amend the previously adopted bill, Senate Bill 1112-15, by adding a three-credit requirement in U.S. Diversity and Pluralism as one of the SUNY Flex Categories - Required at UAlbany, using the language of the existing requirement including its learning objectives:

U.S. Diversity and Pluralism courses enable students to demonstrate: knowledge and understanding of the diversity and pluralism of U.S. society with respect to race, ethnicity, and gender, as well as class, sexual orientation, and/or religion; knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural influences that shape the perspectives of various social groups as well as students' own points of view; knowledge and understanding of the contributions of various social groups to U.S. society; knowledge and understanding of the sources and manifestations of controversy or conflict arising from U.S. diversity and pluralism.