

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM

REQUEST FOR “AREA D: SOCIAL SCIENCES” DESIGNATION

**TO:** Amy Parsons, Chair, Curriculum Committee  
**FROM:** Sarah Senk, Chair, General Education Committee  
**DATE:** March 2, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Curriculum Change Request: Revision to LAW 315 – Admiralty Law

Proposed Course Subject: LAW 315  
Proposed Course Title: Admiralty Law  
Submitted by: Nipoli Kamdar (via Dan Weinstock)  
Date Submitted: February 21, 2020

**GE COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

*In the space provided, please include the following information: when the committee met, who was in attendance, who was absent (and for what reason), a record of the vote/ decision, and a brief summary of the committee discussion (including justifications for decisions and dissenting opinions):*

The General Education Committee met on Friday, February 28, 2020 to review a Curriculum Change Request to change the course hours for LAW 315 from 2 to 3 units and to determine whether the course should be designated as an upper-division Area D General Education course.

In attendance were voting committee members Sarah Senk (Chair), Katherine Luce, Elizabeth McNie (via remote connection), Tom Oppenheim, Joshua Shackman, Aparna Sinha, and Mike Strange. Katherine Sammler, Julie Simons, Cynthia Trevisan, as well as non-voting members Graham Benton and Julia Odom were unable to attend due to conflicts. (The meeting was originally scheduled on Thursday, February 27, but was rescheduled after an All-Hands meeting to discuss the university budget was scheduled at the same time.)

**After reviewing the Curriculum Change Request, the General Education Committee voted 7-0 (with three absences) to designate LAW 315 as an Upper-Division Area D Social Sciences course.** However, the committee requests that the MT department create a clear plan for assessment given that the “course goals” on the CCR form did not include any *measurable* learning outcomes.

When reviewing courses, the GE Committee considers how well a course accords with the description of the subject area in EO1100, and whether or not the course will require that students satisfy the Cal Maritime General Education Learning Outcomes:

EO1100 Description of Area D	GE Committee Discussion Notes
<p>“Area D requires 12 semester units or 18 quarter units dealing with human social, political and economic institutions and behavior, and their historical background. Students shall complete courses from at least two different disciplines, and one upper-division Area D course is required. Campuses shall not exceed these unit requirements. Students learn from courses in multiple Area D disciplines that human social, political and economic institutions and behavior are inextricably interwoven. Through fulfillment of the Area D requirement, students will develop an understanding of problems and issues from the respective disciplinary perspectives and will examine issues in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts. Students will explore the principles, methodologies, value systems and ethics employed in social scientific inquiry. Courses that emphasize skills development and professional preparation are excluded from Area D.”</p>	<p><b>Revised course description clearly indicates the course will “focus on patterns of behavior and social dynamics.” Course goals and textbook appear to include historical and social contexts, “international aspects of maritime law.”</b></p> <p><b>Area D representative notes that LAW 315 is currently a 2-unit class that does not meet Area D, but believes the new 3-unit course does, particularly because there’s precedent inasmuch as the Environmental Law class meets the requirement. Law seems to qualify as a “social institution” and the course focuses on “admiralty practice, international standards, and the historical context of admiralty.”</b></p> <p><b>IBL representative notes one possible point of contention because the GE Area D description specifically precludes classes that “emphasize skills development and professional preparation,” but noted that existing Area D courses emphasize professional preparation, too.</b></p>

Cal Maritime GE Learning Outcomes: Area D	GE Committee Discussion Notes
<p>GELO 10: Identify and explain the links between human social, political and economic institutions and behavior.</p>	<p><b>While the existing “goals” and “competencies” on the Course CCR are not phrased in a way that indicated <i>measurable</i> outcomes, the primary focus of the course description is “the roles of people, society, and organizations in the formation of admiralty law.” The course appears to meet this outcome.</b></p>
<p>GELO 11: Analyze social problems and issues in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.</p>	<p><b>Course deals with “issues in admiralty law” in national and international context [see “Course Goals”]. The course appears to meet this outcome.</b></p>
<p>GELO 12: Explore the principles, methodologies, value systems and ethics employed in social scientific inquiry.</p>	<p><b>No comment. [Chair’s note: EO1100 doesn’t mention law specifically. We should probably work with campus social scientists to revise this outcome to clarify what the “principles of social scientific inquiry” are.]</b></p>