GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

GE-015-256

New GE course proposal:

Interdisciplinary General Education 3700 – Apocalypse! The End of the World Across Time and Culture
New GE Area 5B

General Education Committee	Date: 2/11/2026
Executive Committee Received and Forwarded	Date: 2/18/2026
Academic Senate	Date: 2/25/2026 <u>First Reading</u>

Background

A cross-cultural investigation of end-of-the-world narratives as depicted in art, literature, film, music, video games, comic books, and other media. Focus is on representations of apocalyptic and environmental destruction, interpreting the meanings of various disasters as well as personal and global annihilation (e.g., epidemics, nuclear catastrophe). Examine how these narratives function as thought experiments, reflecting contemporary concerns through imagined catastrophic futures, and exploring themes such as powerlessness, resilience, and societal collapse. Analyze apocalyptic traditions and beliefs about the End, including figures such as the Antichrist or False Prophet, messianic expectations, cycles of destruction, and millenarian ideologies. Explore the influence of millennialism on cultural interpretation, contemporary millennial movements (such as the Millerites, Aum Shinrikyo, and LDS), and modern expressions of apocalyptic belief. Particular attention is paid to the adaptability of apocalyptic language and its capacity to frame historical events, mobilize populations, and inspire both acceptance and resistance. Analyze how apocalyptic scenarios divide humanity into categories of the saved and the condemned, and how these divisions inform views on war, genocide, famine, epidemics, and natural disasters. Ethical questions posed by these narratives are critically examined, including the sociopolitical origins and functions of apocalyptic discourse in public life.

1. Analyze cross-cultural representations of apocalypse and destruction across diverse media (e.g., literature, film, visual art, video games, and music) using appropriate theoretical frameworks.
2. Evaluate how apocalyptic narratives reflect and critique contemporary social, political, and environmental anxieties.
3. Compare and contrast religious, philosophical, and secular traditions of apocalyptic thought across global contexts.
4. Interpret the symbolic and ethical dimensions of end-of-the-world scenarios, including themes of salvation, condemnation, and human responsibility.
5. Assess the sociopolitical functions of apocalyptic discourse in mobilizing belief, legitimizing power, or inspiring resistance.
6. Synthesize interdisciplinary perspectives (religious studies, media studies, cultural theory, and environmental humanities) to formulate original arguments about apocalyptic representation.

This course is distinguished by its active, student-centered pedagogy common to all IGE sections. Rather than relying on lecture, it employs a discussion-based and collaborative learning model in which faculty and students function as co-learners. Each class emphasizes dialogue, critical inquiry, and shared meaning-making through engagement with texts, films, and other cultural materials.
Across all sections, the course integrates interdisciplinary humanities content (drawing from literature, philosophy, history, religion, and the arts) to explore how human beings express meaning and confront ethical, cultural, and social questions. Students develop key academic and civic skills that align with IGE's shared program Learning Outcomes, including critical thinking, effective communication, information literacy, intercultural understanding, and articulation of values. Common assignments focus on reading, discussion, and reflective or analytical writing rather than exams, emphasizing collaboration, self-directed learning, and the application of ideas. These shared methods and expectations define the course's distinct identity within the curriculum and ensure consistent educational outcomes across all offerings.

Course serves as an option in the Global Humanities curricumum.
IGE Program Outcomes Supported By

IGE Program Outcomes Supported By	Course Outcomes	Nature of Alignment
Effective Communication	CLO 6	Students communicate complex interdisciplinary insights through research papers, discussions, and presentations.
Critical Thinking	CLOs 1, 2, 5	The course develops advanced analytical and evaluative skills through interpretation of diverse apocalyptic media.
Historical, Social, and Multicultural Understanding	CLOs 2, 3, 5	Students explore global and historical variations of apocalyptic belief, connecting them to modern contexts.
Understanding and Appreciation of Aesthetic Experiences	CLOs 1, 4	Students analyze the artistic and emotional dimensions of apocalyptic expression.
Articulation of Values	CLOs 2, 4, 5	The course invites ethical reflection on human responsibility, belief, and social action.
Information Literacy	CLOs 1, 6	Students conduct research using academic sources and synthesize information to support interpretive claims.
Integrative Learning	CLOs 3, 6	The course integrates methods and perspectives from multiple disciplines to analyze apocalyptic narratives in cultural context.

The following sections describe how IGE 3700: Apocalypse! The End of the World Across Time and Cultures fulfills the General Education Area 3C (Arts and Humanities) requirements and aligns with the University's General Education Learning Outcomes. The course engages students in humanistic and artistic inquiry through the study of apocalyptic narratives across global cultures and historical periods, emphasizing the interpretive, creative, and ethical dimensions of the arts and humanities.

Assessment in IGE 3700 measures student achievement of the University GE Student Learning Outcomes through analytical, creative, and collaborative assignments that engage multiple cultural traditions and artistic media. The course fulfills GE Area 3C (Arts and Humanities) by advancing the following GE

Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking**
   Students analyze apocalyptic narratives across cultures to identify how societies imagine destruction and renewal. Through close reading and discussion of cornerstone texts (e.g., The Book of Revelation, *The Bhagavad Gita*, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, and modern films such as *Children of Men* and *Mad Max: Fury Road*) students evaluate the social, political, and ethical purposes of apocalyptic storytelling. Writing assignments and the final creative film project assess students' ability to synthesize ideas, challenge assumptions, and apply interpretive frameworks from the humanities.
2. **Information Literacy**
   Students learn to locate, evaluate, and ethically incorporate sources from theology, philosophy,

literature, film studies, and cultural history. Guided research activities teach how to distinguish between primary texts, scholarly analyses, and popular representations of apocalypse. Information literacy is assessed through annotated bibliographies, research reflections, and integration of evidence in the *Student Film Project and Write-Up*, ensuring responsible and critical use of information.

3. **Intercultural Engagement**
   IGE 3700 explores end-of-the-world narratives from diverse global contexts including Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, African, and Indigenous traditions. Students compare how apocalyptic imagery reflects differing cosmologies, moral systems, and ideas of justice or redemption. Class discussions, presentations, and creative projects emphasize empathy and respect for cross-cultural perspectives while examining shared human concerns about mortality, time, and moral responsibility.

4. **Written and Oral Communication**
   Students articulate complex ideas about apocalyptic imagination through essays, reflective journals, and collaborative creative projects. These assignments cultivate clear written communication, effective storytelling, and persuasive analysis appropriate to humanities discourse. Oral communication develops through presentations, peer workshops, and group production meetings. Rubrics evaluate clarity, organization, and the integration of evidence and disciplinary vocabulary.

Together, these outcomes ensure that IGE 3700 promotes critical and creative engagement with the arts and humanities while fulfilling the expectations of GE Area 3C.

Summary Statement

Through sustained engagement with global apocalyptic texts and creative interpretation, IGE 3700 fulfills the **GE Area 3C** rubric by fostering (1) critical thinking about artistic and ethical meaning, (2) information literacy in the use of humanistic evidence, (3) intercultural engagement with global perspectives, and (4) effective written and oral communication. Assignments such as the Student Film Project and Write-Up embody the arts-and-humanities emphasis of Area 3C by uniting scholarly analysis with aesthetic creation, allowing students to experience the humanities as both an intellectual and expressive practice.

Resources Consulted

IGE provided both an ECO and example syllabus for the course, uploaded to Curriculog.

On November 26, 2025, General Education Committee sent out a solicitation email to the following constituencies:

- Department chairs
- Deans and associate deans

We asked to provide input via online survey to ensure that new GE course proposals aligned with the existing GE policy, including learning outcomes and concerns surrounding expertise. Responses were collected through mid-December. GE Committee received **no responses** about this course.

Discussion

GE Committee received this referral on November 13, 2025. This course is being evaluated to ensure compliance with CPP's General Education Policy (GE-001-245), passed by the Senate in 2024.

This course is applying for **GE Area 3C: Upper Division Arts and Humanities**. In addition to meeting the core subject matter requirements for this area, new courses must include the learning outcomes **Critical Thinking** and **Information Literacy**, along with meaningful assessment of those outcomes in both the ECO and the syllabus. For this upper-division GE, departments must also include either **Intercultural Engagement** or **Civic Literacy**, and one of the following: **Written Communication**, **Oral Communication**, or **Quantitative Literacy**.

This course meets the requirements of GE Area 3C by centering the study of artistic and literary representations of apocalypse as expressions of human imagination, moral reflection, and cultural meaning. Through cross-cultural and historical analysis of texts and media, students engage both intellectually and affectively with aesthetic works while situating them within broader global traditions that connect past belief systems to contemporary social concerns.

The proposal meets the requisite elements of the subject matter in this area. The committee felt that this was a strong proposal that also adequately addressed learning outcomes. Because departments are responsible for generating assessable artifacts, the Committee recommends that the department consider retaining Written Communication over Oral Communication. Also, GE Committee recommends the department include the identified GE SLOs in the sample syllabus, in addition to the full text of the GE Meaning and Purpose Statement (GEMPS).

Recommendation

On February 11, 2026, the GE Committee voted 11-0-0-0 (Conditional Accept – Revise and Resubmit – Reject – Abstain) to **conditionally accept** this proposal. Two members were absent.

Conditional acceptance indicates that the required revisions are limited to relatively minor editorial changes. Given the volume of new proposals under review and the limited timeline for committee action, the GE Committee is utilizing this layered review process to allow timely advancement of proposals while ensuring that required revisions are completed.

The proposal has been returned to the Department Chair on Curriculog for the requested revisions, with a deadline of March 2, 2026. The proposal's originator has also been notified. Upon confirmation that the revisions have been satisfactorily addressed, the course should move forward as approved.

If the requested revisions are not submitted by the deadline, the GE Committee's recommendation will be withdrawn. Accordingly, the GE Committee would recommend that the Academic Senate not approve the course at that time and defer action pending confirmation until the required revisions have been completed.