To Members of the Curriculum Committee:

Following the recommendations of the committee meeting dated 11/13/15 which were never formally reported to my department, I respectfully request the committee to reconsider its conclusions on including both COMM 446, Interpersonal Communication, and THEA 352, Dramatic Literature in the Cultural Diversity category of the new Gen. Ed. Had I been formally notified of the results of that meeting this request would have been more timely. For the lack of clarification provided to the committee initially, I apologize. Hopefully, this material will provide enough insight on the proposed courses to allow the committee to reach a more favorable conclusion. If anyone has any questions I would be happy to meet with the committee in person. Dr. Rao is on sabbatical this semester, but I am confident that I can secure any additional information you might require. Thank you for your time and reconsideration in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

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Interpersonal Communication explores the processes of daily interaction dealing with all aspects of communication situations. Major variables covered in every chapter include sexual differences, gender differences, ethnic differences, racial differences, and issues surrounding sexual orientation. These issues are particularly dominant in the chapters on Emotions, Language, Nonverbal, Relational Dynamics, Defensive Communication, Conflict Resolution, and Perception. The textbook used is Looking Out, Looking In, by Ron Adler and Neil Towne. It is imperative that our 18-22 year olds are made more aware of the diverse nature of those around them, and are schooled in skills needed to cope with those differences. I believe that this class absolutely belongs in the Cultural Diversity category of the Gen. Ed.

There are many times in this group centered, seminar styled class that learners are intentionally made to feel uncomfortable to come to grips with issues that otherwise might be avoided. This has always been my favorite class to teach.
In April 2014, I petitioned Dr. Nutt to include Dramatic Literature in the Cultural Diversity category of the new Gen Ed. I explained that I believe that this class is a perfect fit for helping students develop a better understanding of diversity in our contemporary world. If I had brought my notes with me to our meeting today, I would have said the following:

The last time I taught the class, in Fall 2013, the second half of the class was spent exploring themes of sexuality, race, and class. This semester was very typical in terms of our focus and exploration of diversity in excellent dramatic literature. In the second half of the class, we examined Bruce Norris’ Pulitzer Prize winning Clybourne Park (a response to “A Raisin in the Sun,” which examines issues of race, class, and gentrification), Luis Valdez’ Zoot Suit (examining class and Mexican-American Pachuco culture), Athol Fugard’s masterpiece MASTER HAROLD… and the boys (wrestling with race, gender, and class in South African apartheid culture), August Wilson’s Pulitzer Prize winning Fences (about African-American identity and class struggles), David Henry Hwang’s Pulitzer Prize winning M. Butterfly (exploring gender ambiguity and Orientalist fantasy), Diana Son’s Stop Kiss (studying sexual orientation), Paula Vogel’s Pulitzer Prize winning How I Learned to Drive (examining sexual orientation, pedophilia, and sexual objectification), and Edward Albee’s exploration of social and sexual taboos (such as pedophilia and bestiality) in The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?

While the content of the course may change from semester to semester, as any readings class does, I am committed to fulfilling the mission of this category in the class by exploring diversity in many forms in contemporary dramatic literature. This has been my practice for many years, which is why I believe that the course should be included in Category X, Cultural Diversity, in the Gen Ed.