**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**INTEGRATIVE THINKING: HL 440**

*Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number:** HL 440 Critical Issues in Health  
**Home Department:** School of Health and Human Performance  
**Department Chair Name**: **Dr. (Associate Dean and Director) Mary Jane Tremethick**, X1135, [mtremeth@nmu.edu](mailto:mtremeth@nmu.edu)  
**Expected frequency of Offering of the course**: Winter, but would offer in fall, too, if need indicated  
**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES   
**Overview of course** (please see syllabus attached): Current course dynamic wix <http://phoga7.wix.com/hl440w14>

**A. Overview of the course content**- Course Description: A multidisciplinary approach to the study of health-related issues within our changing society using critical thinking and scientific thinking methodologies. Focuses on education-oriented health literacy competencies (critical thinking, self-directed learning, etc.).   
  
We explore the concept that “most people fight because they don’t know how to argue.” We teach the elements of argument and how to appreciate as many points of view as illuminate arguments on either side of an issue. Also, we discuss how “one must earn the right to agree or disagree with an argument.” Without knowing the argument, what does one know one is agreeing/disagreeing with? The critical thinking method of disciplined inquiry is applied to health issues in this course and students outline the pro and con arguments to various issues and discuss ways to evaluate said arguments (truth, consistency, clarity, etc.). They then research (pro and con sides) of a health issue of their interests, integrate their views with the research, and present their issue to the class through both opinion and creative/expressive pieces. See <http://kaiclark.wix.com/introduction> individual issue for an example of student work.

B. **Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes**

**Critical Thinking Component**: In HL 440, Critical Issues in Health, we study and apply: Missimer’s and Paul’s **critical thinking models;** ethical (Kohlberg; Markulla Center for Ethics) models; and, a student intellectual development (Perry) model. We learn about and apply these models/principles to many health issues in our society using pro/con or debate format in order to assess quality of information, integrate students’ subjective world with an expanded world view, and to evaluate arguments. However, unlike debate which usually involves winning, critical thinking involves looking for truth from as many perspectives as illuminate an issue, and involves sympathetic identification. Health issues include economic, social, intellectual, emotional, environmental, physical, spiritual, etc., issues. We explore such questions as, how do we really KNOW anything? What does it mean for a democracy to be healthy – what principles need to operate and why? How can two intelligent, caring individuals come to completely different conclusions about an issue? etc., and then discuss issues such as: Should businesses have the right to not hire smokers? Should abortion be legal? Should student athletes be paid? Should Syrian Refugees be allowed in the USA? Should the governor be held accountable for the Flint water crisis? Etc. In addition, students are required to do an individual major project where they apply Missimer’s critical thinking model and democratic principles to construct/evaluate arguments on both sides of an issue of their choice (please see an example at <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/>). **Integrative Thinking Component:** Students connect to experience by taking an issue of their choice, important to them in their lives, where they **transfer the models and principles** studied in class to outline the issue of their choice in pro and con argument format, identify major reasons and evidence for each side of the argument, etc. Then, they **integrate** the information found in both sides of the argument into an Opinion piece and then into a creative or expressive piece (music, dance, poetry, painting/design, graph, metaphor, comedian act, etc.) depicting their Opinion piece. Finally they communicate their opinion and expressive pieces to the class. Technology is used and the work is published online. Students then do a reflection piece on whether or not they perceive that NMU mission-central goals were met in class.

C. **Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)** Seniors and juniors.

D. **Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)** This course is required for Management of Health & Fitness and Community Majors.

E. **Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC**In addition to researching a health issue of their choice and wielding critical thinking and other models to outline and evaluate arguments on both sides of the issue, students write an opinion or Opinion or OP-ED piece based on their argument findings to answer the question “what is the right or just thing to think/feel/do about this issue?” This piece is based on their research on pro/con sides of the argument. They then symbolically represent where they fall on the issue (opinion piece) through an expressive or creative piece (such as a song they have written, a dance they have created, poem, etc.). See expressive piece here <http://kaiclark.wix.com/introduction> for example, or here <http://eclenden.wix.com/evaneagleclendening> (click on sound icon). A reflection piece related to whether or not the student thinks s/he has met NMU mission-central goals (critical thinking, self-directed learning, etc.) is also required. This integrates art and design into the class.

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | **Task Type:** Reading/Video responses, tests/exams, and major project assignment. All three assignments will involve knowing critical thinking and ethics models and using them to outline and analyze (evaluate) pro and con sides of real-world critical health issues, where issues can deal with physical, spiritual, political, economic, mental/emotional, intellectual, social, etc., health within the context of the great principles or ideas of a democracy. Quality of data (reasons and evidence) gleaned is addressed. Warranted inference (analysis for truth and consistency) of each pro and con argument as well as evaluating for clarity, depth, logicalness, etc. of each argument is involved.  **Frequency:** Reading/video responses – weekly; Tests and Exams… two tests; two exams; Major Project… constructed over the semester and presented to class and end of semester. **Overall Grading Weight:** Responses (20%); Tests/Exams (40%); Major Project and its publication online and presentation to class (40%) **Expected Proficiency:** 90%  **Rationale:** Reading/video responses focus on analyses of pro and con arguments related to health issues addressed in class either through in-class time or homework. Tests focus on knowing critical thinking and ethics models and applying them to outlining, evaluating and understanding pro and con arguments related to health issues. Students are made aware of the important aspects for the test and are allowed to discuss reading/video assignments before handing them in. The major project is formative – and students have format to follow as well as opportunities to improve their projects before summative grading occurs. Experience suggests that given the aforementioned, 90% of students achieve proficient status within the three grading realms. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | **Task Type:** Major project (individual project) and its presentation **Frequency:** Semester long project **Overall Grading Weight:** 40% grade **Expected Proficiency:** 90% grade **Rationale:** Students work individual using critical thinking/ethics models and the course-generated rubric or framework and former student work as examples. Students are responsible for identifying a critical health issue of their interest (in question form) and placing it in a context, researching reasoning/evidence on each side (pro and con) of the issue, identifying prescriptions, implications and assumptions, and then evaluating the arguments on each side of the issue for truth and consistency, clarity, etc. Students upload this issue and publish it online. They also do a traditional opinion piece based on their findings where they integrate their insights/reasoning with their research results, and come to a conclusion about the issue. They are then asked to symbolically represent their opinion piece through design/art and present their expressive ideas about the opinion piece to the class. As the evaluation format is initially formative (from professor and student feedback), students have opportunities to change their project, opinion piece and expressive piece before summative evaluation occurs. Experience with this format suggests that, 90% of students achieve proficient status for the major project. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | **Task Type:** Reading/Video responses, tests/exams, and major project assignment. All three assignments involve knowing critical thinking and ethics models and using them to outline and analyze (evaluate) pro and con sides of real-world critical health issues, where issues can deal with physical, spiritual, political, economic, mental/emotional, intellectual, social, etc., health within the context of the great principles or ideas of a democracy. Quality of data (reasons and evidence) gleaned is addressed. Warranted inference (analysis for truth and consistency) of each pro and con argument as well as evaluating for clarity, depth, logicalness, etc. of each argument is involved.  **Frequency:** Reading/video responses – weekly; Tests and Exams… two tests; two exams; Major Project… constructed over the semester and presented to class and end of semester. **Overall Grading Weight:** Responses (20%); Tests/Exams (40%); Major Project and its publication online and presentation to class (40%) **Expected Proficiency:** 90%  **Rationale:** All task types focus on students knowing and wielding critical thinking and ethics models to outline and evaluate arguments on each side of a health issue. Experience suggests that given preparation for tests/exams through in-class work and given the formative assessment offered for major projects, 90% of students achieve proficient status within the three grading realms. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
INTEGRATIVE THINKING**

*Attainment of the INTEGRATIVE THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Connections to Experience**  *OR* | Connects academic knowledge to experiences | **Task Type:** Major project (and its publication online and presentation to class). See <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/> for an example **Frequency:** Semester long project  **Overall Grading Weight:** 40% **Expected Proficiency:** 90% **Rationale:** Experience has shown that formative evaluation of project by professor and by other students in class gives students the opportunity to improve on their work to better meet standards for proficiency before summative evaluation occurs. |
| **Connections to Discipline** | Makes connections across disciplines | **Task Type:** Reading/Video responses, tests/exams, and major project assignment. One can speak of physical health, social health, mental/psychological/emotional health, intellectual health, spiritual health, economic health, political health, etc. Health by its nature is multi-disciplinary. Should employers be allowed to not hire smokers? Is our democracy healthy? Is the level of public discourse civil? Is critical thinking the epitome of intellectual health in a democracy? Should planned parenthood be funded by the government? etc. Issues addressed in class, on tests, and in the major project require addressing from many disciplines and their principles, legal/laws, science, etc. **Frequency:** Reading/video responses – weekly; Tests and Exams… two tests; two exams; Major Project… constructed over the semester and presented to class and end of semester. **Overall Grading Weight:** Responses (20%); Tests/Exams (40%); Major Project and its publication online and presentation to class (40%) **Expected Proficiency:** 90% **Rationale:** In class assignments/homework prepare students for tests and for the major project. This, with formative assessment information provided students on their major projects before summative evaluation, provides opportunities for students to be proficient, should they engage the class and act on formative feedback. |
| **Transfer** | Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations | **Task Type:** Reading/Video responses, tests/exams, and major project assignment. Students learn and apply critical thinking and ethics models to a variety of issues in health, including one of their choice in the major project.  **Frequency:** Reading/video responses – weekly; Tests and Exams… two tests; two exams; Major Project… constructed over the semester and presented to class and end of semester. **Overall Grading Weight:** Responses (20%); Tests/Exams (40%); Major Project and its publication online and presentation to class (40%) **Expected Proficiency:** 90% **Rationale:** Early on, students are tested on the critical thinking model, and then re-tested on it. Ethical principles (the great ideas) are addressed in in-class assignments and students are tested on them. All various issues addressed in class/homework require students to put pro and con arguments into the framework of the critical thinking model used (Missimer model) and to identify reasoning and evidence supporting each side of the new issue. The whole class involves this quality – applying the disciplined form of inquiry for novel situations. Experience says those engaged in the class are proficient in this area. |
| **Integrated Communication** | Communicates complex concepts by choosing appropriate content and form | **Task Type:** Major project (and its publication online and presentation to class). See <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/> for an example. Students are asked to identify a health issue critical to them, set it in context/introduce it, outline and analyze both pro and con sides of the argument, document their research, evaluate each side of the argument, render his/her research to an opinion piece about the issue, and then provide an expressive way to present it to class, then present their opinion pieces and expressive pieces to class. All goes onto a wix or weebly online, but students present/defend their argument in person in front of the class.  See for example opinion piece: <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/uploads/2/0/6/4/20642300/oped_piece.pdf>  See for example expressive piece:  <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/expressive-piece.html>  Students also engage a reflection piece about the class/project:  <http://rhiansmithhl440.weebly.com/reflection-piece.html> **Frequency:** Semester long project  **Overall Grading Weight:** 40% **Expected Proficiency:** 90% **Rationale:** Experience has shown that formative evaluation of project by professor and by other students in class gives students the opportunity to improve on their work to better meet standards for proficiency before summative evaluation occurs. |