**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

**Course Name and Number:** Cultural Food Patterns HN 362

**Home Department:** School of Health and Human Performance

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (Mary Jane Tremethick, 227-2528, mtremeth@nmu.edu)

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** ON DEMAND

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

**A. Overview of the course content**

Everybody eats. Given how food choices are influenced by the society in which one lives it is important for students to examine multiple perspectives of food choice. This course considers economic, environmental, political, religious, and physiological aspects of food habits while comparing/contrasting national and international viewpoints.

This course is organized into three modules which specifically address learning objectives for Perspectives on Society. The first module explores social & ethical issues of food culture and prepares students with an overview food culture principles mainly addressing religion, environment, economy and politics of food in society. Formative in-class activities and a summative short answer exam assesses module 1 knowledge.

The second module explores themes in the development of human society by focusing on how food unites and divides people through application of the concepts learned in the first module. Students use reasoning and insight to reach informed conclusions and an understanding of how the main principles influence their own food culture. Learning for module 2 is assessed with formative in-class activities, a summative written 5-7 page *familiar cuisine* paper and a summative essay exam. Students peer evaluate the familiar cuisine paper with a rubric as well as instructor.

Module 3 requires students to present a foreign region’s food culture (non-affluent, developing country). Student groups are charged to collect evidence, critically evaluate it, and integrate their findings into a group presentation (30 minute in groups of 3). Learning for module 3 is assessed formatively through a food preparation/tasting activity and a summative evaluation of the *foreign cuisine* presentation. Also, group presentations are student peer evaluated with a rubric as well as instructor evaluated (please see syllabus for more details).

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

PERPECTIVES IN SOCIETY COMPONENT

The cultural food patterns course satisfies this Component because many of our class meetings address a variety of social issues such food security, food sovereignty, the obesity paradox, GMOs, food value, competitive eating, global warming on food production, religious aspects of food practices, etc. Perspectives are shared by looking at each issue through several lenses. For example, the policies that dictate whether or not an individual should be allowed to raise a chicken within city limits is debated in class with many different perspectives shared (noise, pollution, human ownership of animals, the right to raise your own food, etc.). These types of issues are ideal for addressing this Component, Perspectives on Society, within the General Ed Program.

Learning Outcomes for Critical Thinking

This course will offer an excellent opportunity to assess critical thinking and communication abilities. Eighty percent of the points available in this course require some form of writing/presenting with critical thinking applications.

*Evidence (Assess quality of information that may be integrated into an argument)*

Students will be required to provide written responses to in-class activity questions and on 2 exams, one short answer and the other essay format. They will also write one *familiar cuisine* research paper and perform an evidence-based presentation on a *foreign* *food culture*. In their writing and presentation, students must support statements and arguments with evidence from credible sources (ethnographies, journal articles and government data).

*Integrate (Integrates insight and or reasoning with previous understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding)*

Students will evaluate foreign food culture information from a variety of credible resources, apply principles learned from module 1 and integrate discovered information into a group presentation to share with the rest of the class. Written responses to in-class activities, the *familiar cuisine* research paper and the *foreign cuisine* presentation must demonstrate the ability to synthesize major themes/concepts/issues shared from lecture, supportive reading materials, and other sources.

*Evaluate (Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines)*

Critical thinkers evaluate the evidence for an issue or problem from several perspectives. Food culture is an ideal subject matter for applying critical thinking skills to help illuminate related social issues. Established principles, such as Maslow’s theory of human maturation, is applied in this course. This course explores Maslow’s theories by exploring how food use progresses from eating for existence to eating for self-actualization.

Learning Outcomes for Perspectives on Society

This course will offer an excellent opportunity to explore many perspectives of food culture. From personal to foreign, rich to poor, fat to skinny, desert to rainforest, big ag to local policy, tastes good to disgusting, Judaism to Islamic and everything in-between will be explored.

*Analysis of Society*

Students will demonstrate synthesis and analysis of major social structures and processes or events involving food culture. About ninety percent of this course discusses social issues related to food. As previously stated, students are not only required to learn about these social issues, they are asked to analyze these issues and apply their own food beliefs/opinions (increasing awareness of their own food choices) and evaluate evidence-based literature regarding food of a foreign culture.

*Ethical Issues*

Ethics will be featured throughout the semester with topics like food security, food sovereignty, GMO food exporting/importing, the obesity paradox, etc. There will be several opportunities for students to identify ethical issues and share their perceptions of origins/impacts within society.

*Development and Context of Society*

Social influences on food culture are often viewed with themes such as physiological influence of taste. For example, some genetic variations of taste buds make a high percentage of some cultures to be described as non-tasters and while others to be described as supertasters. Food scientists that work for food manufacturing companies produce products that will appeal and “addict” their consumers based on this advancement in knowledge. Another theme shared in class is patenting food seeds, which often undermines optimal social development for economic profit.

**C. Describe the target audience**

At least sophomore standing students that have passed an English/writing prerequisite (EN211) with a C or better. HN 362 is an optional elective for many SHHP majors and is offered as an elective for students pursuing a health and nutrition minor. Because food plays such a large role in the lives of all citizens, this course is certainly relevant to the entire student population as a general education course. The emphasis on food in society, social effects, writing and critical thinking make it good option within the Perspectives on Society rubric.

**D. Give information on other roles this course may serve**

Historically, this course has applied toward the division II humanities requirement, the world cultures requirement, and the upper division liberal studies requirement. This course also serves as an elective in Health Majors (Management of Health and Fitness, and Community Health Education, Sport Science) and in the Health and Nutrition minor.

**E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC**

Historically, there has only been only 1 faculty member teaching this course with no plans to include more than this. The cap has been set at 40 students. It has already gone through a liberal studies vetting process.

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | *Type*: Familiar Cuisine paper  *Frequency*: Once, mid-semester  *Importance*: 25%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of 75% of the students in HN362 to demonstrate proficiency in the Evidence dimension of the Critical Thinking rubric for this task  *Reasoning*: Instructor will consider the extent to which students rely upon high quality support (i.e., source citations, quoted material, facts or figures, representative examples) for statements and arguments made in the paper. The evidence presented in the student’s written work will be evaluated based on relevance to the topic, accuracy and logical consistency. Ultimately, good “evidence” should clearly support the inferences and conclusions made by the writer. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with previous understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | *Type*: Exams  *Frequency*: Three times a semester  *Importance*: 30%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of at least 75% of the students in HN 362 to demonstrate proficiency for the Integrate dimension of the Critical Thinking rubric for exam questions that assess this dimension.  *Reasoning*: Instructor will consider the extent to which students use information gained in the course and from personal food experiences to provide a well-reasoned and insightful synthesis in approaching exam questions that assess this dimension. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | *Type*: Foreign Cuisine Presentation  *Frequency*: Once, end of semester  *Importance*: 25%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of at least 75% of the students in HN 362 to demonstrate proficiency for the Evaluate dimension of the Critical Thinking rubric for this task.  *Reasoning:* Instructor will consider the extent to which students rely upon established descriptive frameworks, follow a student-developed team contract, and track with presentation guidelines. For example, student groups will create a team contract to establish their teamwork guidelines, then research, evaluate and synthesize evidence of food culture principles which influence a particular foreign region’s food culture. Students work collaboratively and present their findings. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Analysis of society** | Analysis of social issues, structures and processes or events | *Type*: Exams  *Frequency*: Three times a semester  *Importance*: 30%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of at least 75% of the students in HN 362 to demonstrate proficiency for the Analysis of Society dimension of the Perspectives on Society rubric for this task.  *Reasoning*: Instructor will consider the extent to which students analyze social food issues, processes or events in approaching exam questions that assess this dimension. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | *Type*: In-class Activities/Discussions  *Frequency*: At least 50% of classes held a semester  *Importance*: 15%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of at least 75% of the students in HN 362 to demonstrate proficiency for the Ethical Issues dimension of the Perspectives on Society rubric for this task.  *Reasoning*: Students will explore ethical issues surrounding the topic of the day and be prompted to develop discussion questions and/or perform an in-class activity related these important ethical issues (i.e. human rights and access to safe food; water rights for food production; distribution and quality of food among social classes). |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | *Type*: Familiar Cuisine Paper  *Frequency*: Once, mid-semester  *Importance*: 25%  *Expected Success Rate*: Expected rate of at least 75% of the students in HN 362 to demonstrate proficiency for the Development and Context of Society dimension of the Perspectives on Society rubric for this task.  *Reasoning*: Instructor will ask students to dissect and critically evaluate a personal familiar meal. In this task, application of the principles of food culture with supportive arguments and evidentiary data are required. Students explore why their food choices are the way they are and how they developed over time. |