**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number:** “Honors 201: Origins of Western Values— Medieval to Modern”

**Home Department:** Honors Program

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): David Wood ([dwood@nmu.edu](mailto:dwood@nmu.edu)) ext. 2112

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): every semester

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

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**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**: Hon 201 offers an interdisciplinary examination of representative social, political, and artistic works of antiquity explored against the backdrop of a historical grounding in the various and distinct societies of the period. As the NMU Bulletin indicates: “This interdisciplinary course investigates the origins of the ideas and values central to Western culture since the Middle Ages through primary sources.” Students in Hon 201 focus on social structures and issues facing various peoples in a variety of locales during several different time periods. Students then examine and think about the ethics and impact of those structures and issues on people over time, and analyze how modern society deals with similar issues.

Throughout the course, the importance of becoming active readers and participants in a collaborative learning community will be stressed. Students will complete reading and writing/multimodal assignments designed to build upon their development in the following areas: reading comprehension, reading motivation, critical thinking, academic writing, and societal analysis.

**B.Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes**. Hon 201 provides keen perspective on various societies ranging from the medieval to the modern periods as figured via the interdisciplinary study of their political, historical, and artistic traces. In addition, this course is writing intensive, requiring writing with revision and a significant term paper.

***Critical Thinking***

Critical thinking undergirds all of the work students engage in for Hon 101. All students compose several written reader response forum postings, compose analytical and/or reflective essays, and/or complete exams.

* In order to satisfy the ***Evidence*** learning outcome dimension, students will be required to incorporate evidence from texts to generate and support assertions.
* For the ***Integration*** learning outcome dimension, students will synthesize and integrate insight from texts and experiences into conclusions about the human condition.
* For the ***Evaluate*** learning outcome dimension, students will not only assess the quality, appropriateness, and credibility of texts, but will also appraise the quality of their own learning through reflective practice.

***Perspectives on Society***

Developing new perspectives on society serves as the principal focus in this Honors course. All students engage in numerous reading, writing, and discussion activities to accomplish the following goals.

* In order to satisfy the ***Analysis of Society*** learning outcome dimension, students will be required to examine a range of texts that promote the “analysis of social issues, structures and processes or events.”
* For the ***Ethical Issues*** component of the learning outcome dimension, students will explore texts and experiences into conclusions about the human condition.
* For the ***Development and Context of Society***, students will explore themes pertaining to the development of human society, with a focus upon antiquity.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the readings through personal connections to the texts, as well as identify ways that such texts reflect the human condition and the societies that foster them. To achieve these outcomes, students will be required to read texts and communicate their views on them to a broader audience, and in doing so demonstrate how they have synthesized the ideas they glean from actively reading such texts.

Students will participate in multiple forum postings and/or in-class discussions about the works they read for class, and students must demonstrate obvious engagement with and understanding of the texts. Insights, predictions, connections, evaluations, inferences and conclusions will be supported by textual evidence. Students will actively read, discuss, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize texts, demonstrating obvious engagement with and understanding of the texts read for class. The instructor will use rubrics to evaluate students’ writing and/or exam answers which should demonstrate students’ understanding of ways that such writing reflects the insights into the human condition and the societies that foster them*.*

**C.Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)** Hon 201 is designed for freshmen or sophomores within the NMU Honors Program. It is crucial that these bright and talented students develop and demonstrate the ability early in their academic careers to read, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and write knowledgably about a range of texts; in fact, doing so is absolutely central to academic, career, and personal achievement. This course draws students from all majors and minors.

**D.Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)**  Successful completion of Hon 201, with a grade of “B” or higher, along with successful completion of Hon 101, will allow Honors students to fulfill the “Perspectives on Society” component of NMU’s new General Education Program. It is also 1 of 4 Honors courses that allow students accepted into the Honors Program fulfill requirements for Lower Division Honors.

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

This course will be an excellent choice for Honors students in their first or second years at NMU. The course provides ample encouragement for students to improve their reading comprehension, researching skills, understanding of a range of societal analysis, cultural studies, and, most importantly, on becoming strategic readers and talented writers.

**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** *(This is one illustrative example. This will change if course is taught during a regular term of shortened term and whether it is taught online, face-to-face*, *or as a hybrid course.)* |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | ***Task Type:*** Students will create multiple **reader response forum posts** and/or participate in several **forum/classroom discussions**. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:** at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight:** 20%  **Expected Proficiency Weight:** The criterion weight level for *proficient* is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | **Task Type:** Students compose an **analytical essay or answer essay questions on exam**. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:**  at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight:** 60%  **Expected Proficiency Weight:** The criterion weight level for *proficient* is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | **Task Type:** Students take reflective exam and/or construct a reflective essay. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:** at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight:** 20%  **Expected Proficiency Weight:** The criterion weight level for *proficient* is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*Attainment of the PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY 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** |
| **Analysis of society** | Analysis of social issues, structures and processes or events | **Task Type:** Students complete **written analytical assignments and/or exams**. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:** at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight:** 60%  **Expected Proficiency Weight:** The criterion weight level for *proficient* is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | **Task Type:** Students compose a **reflective essay or answer essay questions on exam**. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:**  at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight: 20**% Expected Proficiency Weight: The criterion weight level for proficient is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | ***Task Type:*** Students compose several **reader response forum posts** and participate in several **forum/classroom discussions**. *Evidence* dimension is assessed via assignment-specific rubrics.  **Frequency:**  at least twice  **Overall Grading Weight:** 20%  **Expected Proficiency Weight:** The criterion weight level for *proficient* is at 90% because HON 201 is an Honors class, and as such draws upon students who have self-selected to take on the challenge of an Honors curriculum. |

**Honors 201 // Origins of Western Values—Medieval to Modern**

Instructor: Michael Joy

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Office phone: 227-1818

Home phone (please call before 9:30 p.m.): 228-1523

E-mail: mjoy@nmu.edu

Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 11:00-11:50 or by appointment

**Rather vague bulletin description**

“This interdisciplinary course investigates the origins of the ideas and values central to Western culture since the Middle Ages through primary sources. Critical writing with revisions and library research will be required.”

**What does that mean in reality?**

We’re not even going to attempt an investigation of the origins of all ideas (and values!) central to Western culture since way-back-when. Instead, we’re going to see what one book can tell us about some of the ideas and values that have affected the development of “modern,” “Western” culture. Admittedly, it’s an important book—Miguel de Cervantes’s monumental magnum opus, *Don Quixote*, which was published in two volumes in 1605 and 1615. Have you read it? It’s a fun read, if a bit long. We’re going to read it together, seeking enjoyment and enlightenment above all else. With any luck, we’ll discover that this four hundred year old novel has some things to tell us about identity and insanity, appearance and reality, heroic idealism, and the life-changing power of the act of reading itself. (You’ll also have the opportunity to experience the life-changing power of the act of writing a composition about *Don Quixote*.)

*Then* we’re going to seek the quixotic in some other texts and films. Critics assert that Cervantes’s novel has had a massive impact on modern society and culture. I’ve picked three books and a few movies that may (or may not) provide evidence of that impact. I’ll also be asking you to find other examples of Don Quixote figures, Sancho Panza figures, or Dulcinea figures in books, movies, TV shows, or other products of our culture.

**Books (to be purchased)**

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*. Trans. Edith Grossman.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Trans. Burton Pike.

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*. Trans. Lydia Davis.

David Halperin, *Journal of a UFO Investigator*.

Selections from texts relating to the history and culture of the time periods under study (including Maravall’s *Culture of the Baroque*, Elliott’s *Imperial Spain*, and Peters’s *Inquisition*.)

**Course objectives**

Among other things, we will:

- read texts (and view films) critically

- respond to these texts, in writing and during in-class discussions

- relate the works to their social and cultural contexts, and to our own twenty-first century culture

- seek “the quixotic” in art, music, film, and other cultural forms

**Course grade**

A heroic idealist like Don Quijote would scorn the notion of a course grade; our actions should be not be motivated by something as base and wordly as a letter grade. But just in case, here is the grade breakdown.

5% Quixotic character short essay (2 pp.)

5% Quixotic character presentation

15% Essay #1 (on the *Quijote*)

15% Essay #2 (on *Werther*, *Bovary*, and/or the films)

15% in-class writing, revisions of papers, miscellaneous assignments

20% participation, enthusiasm, laughing at professor’s jokes, etc.

25% final essay (5% for proposal/pre-writing, 20% for the rest)

A 93-100 B 82-87 C 72-77

A- 90-92 B- 80-81 C- 70-71

B+ 88-89 C+ 78-79 D 60-69

F <60

**Participation**

Given our small class size, and the fact that our class sessions are scheduled to last for 100 minutes, it’s vitally important that we all come to class ready to participate. (Otherwise, we’re in for 2800 very painful minutes.) “Participation,” by the way, is not limited to speaking during our classroom discussions. It is equally important to participate by listening actively to others’ comments, by engaging in our in-class writing activities, by carefully reading the texts under discussion, by not sending texts or engaging in online farming while in class, and by laughing at the professor’s jokes. **Finally, so that we may fully immerse ourselves in the seventeenth century, I must ask that you refrain from the use of cell phones or your laptop computer during our class.**

**Attendance**

Our success in this quixotic endeavor is directly linked to our presence—here in class. As Woody Allen is alleged to have said, “80% of success is just showing up.” **Missing more than 4 classes will cause a reduction in the participation portion of your grade**.

**Academic honesty**

is extremely important. We’ll follow the rules set forth in the Student Code and the Student Handbook. Plagiarism won’t be tolerated and will result in, **at a minimum**, a grade of 0 for the assignment in question. If you have any questions at all about how to properly cite others’ work in your papers, please contact me or talk to the experts at the Writing Center.

**Late work**

Everyone gets one “free pass”—an automatic 48-hour extension for **one** assignment/paper/homework. This is once per **semester**. You don’t need to ask me for this extension; a quick email to let me know you’ll be exercising the option is appreciated but not required. Other than that, I can’t accept late work.

**Disability service**

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office by: coming into the office at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock; calling 227-1700; or e-mailing disserv@nmu.edu.  Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Quixotic reading schedule**

Possibly implausible, definitely tentative, certainly subject to change. But, for now (and not counting extra essays and short stories):

Week of Work(s) to be discussed

8/25 *Don Quijote*

9/1 *Don Quijote*

9/8 *Don Quijote*

9/15 *Don Quijote*

9/22 *Don Quijote*

9/29 *Don Quijote*

10/6 *The Sorrows of Young Werther* + **turn in essay #1**

10/13 *Young Werther* / Film: *Lost in La Mancha*

10/20 *Madame Bovary*

10/27 *Madame Bovary*

11/3 *Madame Bovary*

11/10 *Madame Bovary* / Film: *Toy Story* / **turn in essay #2**

11/17 *Journal of a UFO Investigator*

12/1 *Journal of a UFO Investigator*

**Notes, etc.**

**Your quixotic character essay may be turned in at any point after week five of the semester.**

**We will have some sort of fun (?) class gathering, at a fun location, at the end of the semester.**

**Final papers will be due during the week of finals (December 8). Details TBA.**