**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**INTEGRATIVE THINKING**

*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:** LDR 400 - Systems Thinking in Workplace Leadership

**Home Department:** School of Education, Leadership, and Public Service

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Joe Lubig, 227-1880, [jlubig@nmu.edu](mailto:jlubig@nmu.edu)

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

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

Systems thinking is seeking to understand system behavior by examining the whole, rather than by analyzing the parts. Systems’ thinking is a discipline of seeing the whole, recognizing patterns and interrelationships, and learning how to innovate more effective, efficient and creative system solutions. *LDR 400 - Systems Thinking in Workplace Leadership* will acquaint students to basic concepts of systems thinking. The primary emphasis will be the introduction of basic systems thinking fundamentals, i.e. defining a systems perspective about any situation or problem, solving problems with that perspective, describing and modeling a problem, and designing and improving upon system solutions.

This is an introductory course in “systems thinking,” a leadership model that recognizes that people, structures, and processes interact within organizational systems to foster organizational health. The purpose of this course is to introduce the students to a new way of thinking and its applications. Nowadays it is urgent to learn how to deal with diversity, instability, continuous change, and uncertainty. This course proposes a profound transformation in our traditional way of thinking. This course aims at stimulating the integration of logical (Cartesian) thinking with systems thinking, which is a non-linear way of thinking. Complex thinking allows us to deal alternately with the parts and the whole, as part of an existing sustainable paradox. This course is rooted in anti-oppressive understandings of the interconnections of systems and ethnicity, class, gender, age, and disability; and it will explore systems thinking in relation to social media and non-hierarchical organizational systems

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

1. Critical Thinking:

In order to satisfy the *Evidence* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to use information gleaned from text readings, online content, discussion forums, and professional experience to describe and analyze workplace issues and dilemmas and to apply system thinking skills in resolving those issues.

In order to satisfy the *Integration* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to cumulatively combine theories and concepts from text readings, online content, discussion forums, and professional experience to demonstrate awareness of one’s own values and investigate how individuals, and small or large groups interact within organizations, as well as the nature of complex systems (which include human beings and their organizations) and how they function in concert.

In order to satisfy the *Evaluation* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to critically assess the relative value of related course ideas and system thinking frameworks to identify and support pragmatic approaches to managing interpersonal opportunities and challenges in the workplace. Students will enhance their ability to think critically, to analyze complex and diverse concepts, and to use their reasoning, judgment and imagination to create new possibilities in leadership situations.

1. Integrative Thinking:

In order to satisfy the *Connections to Experience* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to draw from and synthesize theories and concepts introduced from a range of academic vantages so as to formulate optimal solutions to workplace problems. Students will demonstrate awareness of one’s own values and investigate the interrelationships and tensions that occur between personal, professional, and societal values. They will use systems thinking to enhance team development and performance.

In order to satisfy the *Transfer* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to apply systems thinking skills and methodologies to workplace situations in order to create long-term solutions to recurring problems. Using scenario planning, students will conceptualize future possibilities and actions from multiple perspectives.

In order to satisfy the *Integrated Communication* learning outcome dimension, LDR 400 requires students to focus on both the form and content employed when completing course assignments. The content of their work must demonstrate the use of perspective-taking skills and person-centered message design logics in examining both process and performance elements of communication competence. Students are required to make and defend their choices for conveying content to their classmates and workplace audiences.

C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

LDR 400 is required for Leadership majors and minors; however, the course should be attractive to other majors, as systems thinking is certainly relevant to other fields.

D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

LDR 400 is required for Leadership majors and minors.

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

**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:* Weeklyresponses to questions/prompts based on text readings, online articles and videos, as well classmates’ comments discussion forums.  *Frequency:* Weekly  *Overall grading weight:* 30%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to assess the quality of information integrated into an ethical argument proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors 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 response to questions/prompts. 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.  *Task type:* Applying Outcomes Thinking analysis paper and Systems Thinking barriers analysis paper  *Frequency:* Once each per semester.  *Overall grading weight:* 10%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to assess the quality of information integrated into an ethical argument proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors 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 response to questions/prompts. 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 existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | *Task type:* Weeklyresponses to questions/prompts based on text readings, online articles and videos, as well classmates’ comments discussion forums.  *Frequency:* Weekly  *Overall grading weight:* 30%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to integrate insight and reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusion proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors 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 response to questions/prompts. 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.  *Task type:* Variety of papers and visual representations, including:   * Linear vs Complex Systems Examples Paper * Systems Dynamics Visual Representation * Organizational Patterns visual * Causal Loop Diagram     *Frequency:* Once each per semester.  *Overall grading weight:* 20%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to integrate insight and reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusion proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.    *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors will consider the extent to which students rely upon high quality support from course materials and other sources. 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. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | *Task type:* Variety of evaluative reports and reflections including Feedback Exercise report and Interventions Exercise report.  *Frequency:* Once each per semester  *Overall grading weight:* 10%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to evaluate information, ideas, and activities according to established guidelines proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors will consider the extent to which students are able to evaluate information and ideas according to ethical principles and guidelines. |

**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:* Comprehensive Systems Thinking Strategic Plan  *Frequency:* Once per semester  *Overall grading weight:* 30%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to connect academic knowledge to experiences proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*:  Instructors will ask students to connect course content to personal leadership actions, particularly to use system thinking tools to improve organizations. |
| **Connections to Discipline** | Makes connections across disciplines |  |
| **Transfer** | Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations | *Task type:* Written responses to two field-based exercises, one of workplace feedback and one on interventions.  *Frequency:* Once each per semester  *Overall grading weight:* 10%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to adapt and apply skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.  *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors will consider the extent to which students were able to adapt and apply skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations. |
| **Integrated Communication** | Communicates complex concepts by choosing appropriate content and form | *Task type: Several* written analytical reports, including a Comprehensive Systems Thinking Strategic Plan  *Frequency:* Once each per semester  *Overall grading weight:* 40%  *Expected proficiency rate:* The SELPS expects that 15% of students will not be able to communicate complex concepts by choosing appropriate content and form proficiently, 70% of students will be able to do so proficiently, and 15% of students will exceed the proficiency expectations.    *Link Between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan*: Instructors will ask students t communicates complex systems thinking concepts using appropriate content and form. |