

# 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:** PL 260 Philosophy of the Arts

**Home Department:** Philosophy

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Chet DeFonso (cdefonso@nmu.edu)

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

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

*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

The goal of PL 260 is to help students investigate philosophical questions concerning the nature, value, appreciation, and creation of art. Sample topics include what is art; why is art valuable; what is the relationship between art and morality; what is the relationship between art and emotion; and what is the relationship between art and truth. Art is construed here in the broad sense that encompasses literature, film, music, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to do the following: (1) analyze and discuss philosophical texts concerning art; (2) evaluate competing theories regarding the nature and value of art; (3) evaluate competing perspectives on contemporary debates in the philosophy of art; and (4) develop and defend positions of their own concerning issues that arise in the philosophy of art.

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

**Critical Thinking Component:** To satisfy the *Evidence* dimension, PL 260 requires students to analyze the real-world examples, armchair intuitions, and theoretical assumptions relied on in the philosophical arguments concerning art contained in the assigned readings. To satisfy the *Integrate* dimension, PL 260 requires students to synthesize ideas contained in assigned readings with their own personal experience appreciating or creating art in order to develop philosophical positions of their own. To satisfy the *Evaluate* dimension, PL 260 requires students to appraise the logical merits of philosophical arguments concerning art presented in assigned readings.

To assess all three dimensions, PL 260 requires students to write weekly 1-page reading response papers. Completing these assignments involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, *and* evaluating arguments.

**Integrative Thinking Component:** To satisfy the *Connections to Experience* dimension, PL 260 requires students to use the ideas and arguments discussed in the assigned readings or in class to acquire new insights about their own engagement with art. To satisfy the *Transfer* dimension, PL 260 requires students to use classical and contemporary philosophical views regarding truth, emotion, rationality, morality etc. in order to address questions about the nature, value, appreciation, and creation of art. To satisfy the *Integrated Communication* dimension, PL 260 requires students to select an appropriate means to express their own original views regarding issues in the philosophy of art, choosing between a traditional essay and an artistic or literary creation.

To assess all three dimensions, PL 260 requires students to write two research papers, create two comparably substantive artistic artifacts, or do one of each. Completing these assignments involves making connections to experience, transferring existing knowledge to new situations, *and* connecting form and content in an appropriate fashion.

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

The class has a dual target audience. It is intended to reach students with an interest in philosophy on the one hand and students with an interest in the arts on the other hand. Because of this dual focus, the class does not presuppose any background knowledge of philosophy or of the arts.

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

The class serves as an elective for the philosophy major and minor. It is not a requirement or an elective for any other major or minor.

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

PL 260 was approved by CUP for the 2014 Undergraduate Bulletin.

**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.*

<b>DIMENSION</b>	<b>WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED</b>	<b>PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>Evidence</b>	Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument	<p><b>Task Type:</b> 1-page reading response papers. Completing these papers will involve analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, <i>and</i> evaluating arguments.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Weekly (approx. 10 per semester)</p> <p><b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 35%</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75%</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.</p>
<b>Integrate</b>	Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding	<p><b>Task Type:</b> 1-page reading response papers. Completing these papers will involve analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, <i>and</i> evaluating arguments.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Weekly (approx. 10 per semester)</p> <p><b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 35%</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75%</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.</p>
<b>Evaluate</b>	Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines	<p><b>Task Type:</b> 1-page reading response papers. Completing these papers will involve analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, <i>and</i> evaluating arguments.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Weekly (approx. 10 per semester)</p> <p><b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 35%</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75%</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.</p>

**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.*

DIMENSION	WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED	PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT
<p><b>Connections to Experience</b></p> <p align="center"><i>OR</i></p>	<p>Connects academic knowledge to experiences</p>	<p><b>Task Type:</b> Research paper or substantive artistic creation. Completing this assignment will involve making connections to experience, transferring existing knowledge to new situations, <i>and</i> connecting form and content in an appropriate fashion.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Twice</p> <p><b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 50% (25% each)</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75%</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.</p>
<p><b>Connections to Discipline</b></p>	<p>Makes connections across disciplines</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Transfer</b></p>	<p>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations</p>	<p><b>Task Type:</b> Research paper or substantive artistic creation. Completing this assignment will involve making connections to experience, transferring existing knowledge to new situations, <i>and</i> connecting form and content in an appropriate fashion.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Twice</p> <p><b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 50% (25% each)</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75%</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.</p>

<b>Integrated Communication</b>	Communicates complex concepts by choosing appropriate content and form	<b>Task Type:</b> Research paper or substantive artistic creation. Completing this assignment will involve making connections to experience, transferring existing knowledge to new situations, <i>and</i> connecting form and content in an appropriate fashion. <b>Frequency:</b> Twice <b>Overall Grading Weight:</b> 50% (25% each) <b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> 75% <b>Rationale:</b> Philosophy requires students to reflect in an unusually sustained and careful fashion about very abstract issues. Most students find it difficult and unnatural. Experience suggests approximately a quarter fail to achieve “proficient” status here.
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