**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD**

*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:** Race, Politics and Public Policy PS440

**Home Department:** Political Science

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Carter Wilson, 227-1502 carwilso@nmu.edu

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

1. Overview of the course content:
2. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes

This course focuses on U.S. political culture. It defines culture as learned and shared language, values, stories, myths, legends, world views, modes of thinking, forms of religion, and patterns of behavior. It identifies competing political cultures throughout U.S. history that explains competing interpretations of law and forms of federal policy, in which different groups had different values, stories, myths, world views, and saw human beings and social situations in fundamentally different ways. These different cultures explain the tendency to either support or oppose forms of racial oppression such as slavery, racial segregation, racial sterilization, racial biases in death penalty, extraordinarily high incarceration rates, etc. This course examines how different cultural orientations in U.S. history and politics have contribute to different social outcomes and ethical decisions. It focuses on specific contemporary policy areas: criminal justice, welfare, housing, employment discrimination. King and Smith in their book, *Still a House Divided* identifies two different political coalitions and cultures: a colorblind and a color-conscious coalition and cultural orientation. The color blind coalition and orientation opposes affirmative action, supports law and order criminal justice policies, and opposes racial preferences and welfare programs. The color conscious one supports affirmative action, racial preferences welfare and opposes the hard line law and order. These competing alliances and cultures contribute to competing ethical decisions. In her book, *The New Jim Crow*, Michelle Alexander develops a searing critique of the law and order approach which she claims contributes to a racially biased and repressive criminal justice system. The student outcomes are consistent with the designated learning outcomes for Social Responsibility in a Diverse World.

This course explores the four dimensions related to engagement with cultural and ethnic diversity: Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, intercultural awareness, intercultural engagement, and ethical issue recognition. It examines multiple cultures in the United States today and throughout history. It forces students to examine both their own cultural orientation and the cultural orientation of others within the same region and throughout other regions of the country.

In regards to knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, this course draws from the extensive literature on American political culture such as the works of Daniel Elazar, *The American Mosaic: The Impact of Space, Time and Culture in America*, Richard Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, and Rana Aziz *The Two Faces of American Freedom*. It exploits the literature on race and political culture drawing from Audrey Smedley, Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview, Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America*, Thomas Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America*, David Theo Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning*, and Ian Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class*. This literature that the United States today and throughout history has been a mosaic of multiple and sometimes competing cultures. These competing cultures have embodied competing values, world views and political and social orientations.

This course is designed to promote not just the knowledge of cultural differences, but intercultural awareness as well. It help students understand their own cultural orientation and the cultural orientation of others.

This course promotes intercultural engagement. It focuses on the role of culture in socially constructing and reconstructing racial and ethnic groups are promoting stories and images that provoke emotional reactions that affect political perspectives and explain both cultural and political conflicts.

This course is designed to help students recognize ethical issues embedded within cultural contexts. The goal of this course is to get students to recognize intellectual, ethical and emotional dimensions of different worldviews and cultural orientations. It impresses on students that cultural orientations shape attitudes related to race and racial politics and public policies. It challenges students to critically assess their own cultural orientation and the cultural orientation of others. It empresses upon students that race is artificial social, cultural and historical construct, whose meaning and political-social implications vary from one cultural-worldview orientation to another. Most importantly, this artificial construct have real, powerful and enduring impacts on U.S. politics and the evaluation and formation of a range of public policies. It will require students to recognize ethical issues embedded within cultural frameworks.

Critical Theory

This course exposes students to basic tools required for critical thinking: The importance of evidence and conceptual frameworks. First, in regards to evidence, students will learn about various sources of hard data such as U.S. Department of Commerce Census Tract and public opinion surveys. They will learn about the importance of data and evidence in refuting common stereotypes about various racial, ethnic and religious groups. They will learn about the importance of using highly regarded government and academic sources to validate and document evidence and information.

Second, in regards to conceptual frameworks, students will learn about three important issues about culture: how culture shapes behavior, the extent to which the dominant culture promotes racial and ethnic prejudices, and the degree to which societies experience conflicting cultures: cultures that promote prejudice and culture that challenges prejudice. Understanding the dynamics of culture is important for both critical thinking and ethical judgment.

Finally, students will learn to integrate evidence with conceptual frameworks in developing analysis of controversial issues, particularly issues pertaining to race and ethnicity. Students will learn how evaluations and judgments vary among different cultural and conceptual frameworks. Students will learn the importance of meta-analysis in evaluating judgments. That is, students will learn that judgments occur within the contexts of conceptual or cultural frameworks and that all frameworks or opinions are not equal. Some are grounded more solidly in the evidence. Some conceptual or cultural frameworks offer more cogent or powerful explanations than others. Thus, the validity of opinions, cultures and frameworks are not all relative. Some are more powerful and useful than others.

Social Responsibility in a Diverse World

This course challenges the myth of mono-cultural societies. It strives to understand the complexity of competing U.S. cultures. It not only demonstrates sophisticated knowledge of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy or beliefs and practices; it exposes students to the complexity of contradictory currents in U.S. cultural history. It identifies competing mainstream cultural currents in U.S. society. These competing currents emerged in the post-Revolutionary period. They continue to plague U.S. politics today. There is a progressive culture, associated with Thomas Paine who opposed slavery, abhorred the expropriation of Native American land, and envisioned an activist government committed to alleviating poverty, advocating a diverse society and providing equal opportunities for all. There is a contradictory reactionary culture associated with political leaders like John Calhoun and many others whose vision of the United States was the antithesis of Paine’s. These cultural conflicts erupted into the Civil War. Remnants of these cultural conflicts reappeared in conflicts over Reconstruction policies and Civil Rights policies. These cultural conflicts persist in current debates over issues related to the incarceration crisis, policing, voting rights, predatory lending, redlining, equity in school funding, and many others.

This course asks complex questions not only about U.S. culture, but about the manner in which the dominant U.S. culture portrays the cultures of others. It explores not just the cultures of different racial, ethnic and social class groups; it challenges the dominant U.S. cultural presentation of these groups. This course not only examines the culture of poverty literature, it questions the extent to which the dominant U.S. culture racializes poverty. Students completing this course will not only recognize ethical issues, but understand the extent to which different cultural frameworks frame these issues and shape judgments.

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

This course is designed primarily for senior. It is taught at the 400 level.

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

This course is a political science elective. It is new.

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** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | The evidence dimension of critical thinking will be assessed via term papers~~,~~  and class presentations ~~and class discussions~~. Term papers will be assesses on the basis of both the accuracy of factual evidence and the quality of the sources and documentation. ~~Evidence in class discussions and presentations will be assessed on the basis of the accuracy and validity of the facts. Most importantly, evidence presented in term papers will be assessed on the basis of the quality of its sources. Evidence must be documented by high quality sources.~~ Class presentations will be assessed using an evaluation matrix with a 0-5 score, 0 for failure and 5 for outstanding for the category “evidence.” Because this is an upper level course, we expect 90 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with previous understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | The integrate dimension of critical thinking will be assessed via term papers, and class presentations ~~and class discussions~~. Term papers~~,~~ and class presentations ~~and discussions~~ will be assessed on the basis of the ability of students to organize and integrate evidence within the context of conceptual frameworks to provide a cogent analysis of race related issues and controversies. Class presentations will be assessed using an evaluation matrix with a 0-5 score, 0 for failure and 5 for outstanding for the category “integrate.” Because this is an upper level course, we expect 90 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | The evaluate dimension will be assessed in the context of term papers~~,~~ and class presentations ~~and class discussions~~. These assignments will be assessed on the basis of students’ ability to evaluate both issues and conceptual and cultural frameworks used to assess issues. Class presentations will be assessed using an evaluation matrix with a 0-5 score, 0 for failure and 5 for outstanding for the category “evaluate.” Because this is an upper level course, we expect 90 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD**

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| **DIMENSION** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks** | Knowledge of elements important to members of another culture | Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks will be assessed via papers~~,~~ and essay exams ~~and class discussions~~. We expect 90 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |
| **Intercultural Awareness** | Awareness of multiple cultural perspectives | Intercultural awareness will be assessed via papers~~,~~ and essay exams ~~and class discussions~~. We expect 90 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |
| **Intercultural Engagement** | Being willing to engage with cultures other than one’s own | Intercultural engagement will be assessed via papers~~,~~  and essay exams and class discussions. We expect 80 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |
| **Ethical Issue Recognition** | Awareness of ethical issues as they relate to cultures | Ethical issue recognition will be assessed via papers~~,~~ and essay exams ~~and class discussions~~. Because acquiring knowledge, demonstrating awareness and engaging other cultures are much easier than recognizing ethical issues embedded in cultural frameworks, we expect only 75 percent of students to demonstrate proficiency in this dimension. |