**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:** SO101 Introductory Sociology

**Home Department:** Sociology and Anthropology

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Alan McEvoy, 227-1687 amcevoy@nmu.edu

**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? 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

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

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

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

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

**A & B: Overview of Course Content General Education Course Learning Goals**

This course is designed to satisfy both the *Critical Thinking* and the *Perspectives on Society* learning outcomes as defined by NMU’s General Education requirements. Please note that these two learning outcomes can overlap; together they form the bedrock of a critical analysis of social structures and processes. The following is a specific set of learning goals for this course consistent with General Education. Students are expected to:

* Comprehend the origins of the discipline and how sociology is a distinctive social science.
* Understand methodological concepts applied to the study of social behavior (e.g., independent and dependent variables, correlation v. causation, hypothesis, levels of analysis, types of research, limitations of social scientific methods, and foundations of scientific approach).
* Master basic sociological concepts (e.g., culture, socialization, social self, symbolic communication, roles, social structure, social interaction, social control, norms, social class, social stratification, social change, social construction of gender and race)
* Apply and critique sociological theories (e.g., symbolic interactionism, structural functionalism, conflict theory).
* Develop a “sociological imagination” 1) when examining social institutions (e.g., family, education, political economy); 2) when examining the complexity of selected social concerns (e.g., poverty, inequality, race/sex discrimination, social control of crime/deviance).

The main sections of this course include the following:

* An overview of the sociological perspective – the sociological approach, concepts, theories, methods.
* A consideration of the origins of human behavior, with emphasis on symbolic communication and the emergence of the social self.
* An overview of the processes of socialization and social control, the nature and significance of culture, and the characteristics of norms and social roles.
* A consideration of the social construction of gender and the dynamics of gender role socialization.
* An examination of social structure and social stratification, with emphasis on the nature of social class and perspectives on inequality.
* A critique of functionalist and conflict perspectives on social inequality.
* A consideration of poverty, racism, and racial inequality.
* A consideration of the dynamics of social organization and social change in contemporary social institutions (e.g., family; education).
* An overview of the nature, origins, and consequences deviance and deviant labels, and perspectives on social control of deviance.

**C & D:** This is an introductory course that serves the general student population in that it fulfills a GenEd requirement. It also is a required course for Sociology majors and minors. Enrollment is capped at 125 students per section. Most often sections are filled to capacity or near capacity.

**E:** This course is taught by all members of the Sociology faculty.

**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 | Exams/assignments will evaluate application of social scientific approaches to the study of social issues, including use of data to support arguments. Assessments will be ongoing and will include a summative evaluation at the end of the semester. The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | Exams/assignments will emphasize the interconnectedness of theory and research in making generalizations about social issues. Assessments will be ongoing and will include a summative evaluation at the end of the semester. The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | Given that core concepts, theories, and sociological methods will be embedded in exams, assignments, and discussions throughout the course, students must demonstrate their ability to apply this material when critically examining social structures and processes. Conclusions and judgments must reflect use of logic and application of evidence to demonstrate critical thinking. Mere opinion in the absence of a conceptual framework and supportive evidence will not meet the standard of proficiency regarding critical thinking. Students, both individually and in groups (where appropriate), as well as the instructor, will assess work accordingly. ~~A pre-test and post-test will be used to assess mastery of core concepts.~~ The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |

**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 | Students will be given a pre-test and post-test to measure a change in mastery of core concepts applied to social issues. Course assignments and exams will be used throughout the semester to further assess the analysis and application of the sociological perspective. The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | Regular class discussions and assignments throughout the semester involving the relationship between social structures/processes and social justice concerns will be employed. Students are expected to identify and evaluate fundamental ethical issues related to a range of social problems, especially problems related to patterns of inequality. Students will be judged proficient to the extent they can frame analyses along an ethical dimension. The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | Class discussions and exams will include perspectives on cultural diversity within and between societies, both contemporary and historical. Pre-test and post-test questions, and exam questions throughout the semester, will assess understanding of core concepts associated with human social organization. The department expects 80% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. Although 100% mastery is ideal, it is reasonable to expect a mean of about 80% -- the rough equivalent of a B- grade. This is consistent with average grades for all department courses combined. |