

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

August 25, 2005

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Michael Schechter, UCC Chairperson  
Ralph Putnam, UCAP Chairperson  
Ross Emmett, UCFA Chairperson  
Bob Murphy, UCSA Rep.

**FROM:** Jon Sticklen, Interim Chairperson  
Executive Committee of Academic Council



**S** **SUBJECT:** New Residential College/School Final Report

OFFICE OF THE  
**SECRETARY**  
**FOR ACADEMIC**  
**GOVERNANCE**

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As a follow up to our special ECAC meeting on August 23, 2005, I want to formally send the New Residential College/School Final Report to your committee for review and comments. As you know the time line for review is short. Therefore, we are asking that you report back to the Secretary for Academic Governance office in writing no later than September 16<sup>th</sup> so we can include your committee response with the Academic Council agenda for September 27, 2005.

Thank you!

Report of the Summer Task Force 2005  
for the  
New Residential College/School

August 15, 2005

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## **Introduction**

We live at a time when dilemmas of freedom and responsibility at home and abroad confront us daily as students, teachers, and citizens. The humanities – from art, theater, and music to literature, writing, foreign languages, history, religion, and philosophy – play a critical role in this encompassing drama. They provide us with some of the most important skills and sensibilities we need to make sense of our world and make it a more hospitable place.

For the last two years at MSU all of the discussions about a new residential program in the humanities have stressed the need for a global orientation and the important role the visual and performing arts should play in the curriculum of this new program. As this conversation has moved forward, we have been able to refine these ideas and connect them more meaningfully to the mission of an engaged humanities. What has emerged now is a coherent conception of a four-year program with its own major, its own required core curriculum, and its own dynamic conception of engaged learning in a residential setting open to and connected with other communities on and off campus. What is planned is an interdisciplinary humanities curriculum closely linked to other academic units on campus and to a diverse set of community partners. That is, we propose a college with its own life and spirit which relates to and serves the needs of the broader university. Whether they become artists and scholars, or professionals in law, education, medicine, business, or government, the graduates of this college will be prepared to help themselves and others make a home in this rapidly changing world.

Residence life is an essential element of the humanities program described in this report. The curriculum and the co-curricular activities depend upon the space within which students, faculty, visitors, and community partners will engage with one another. We do not describe in any detail the space requirements of the program, but we refer several times (for example, in the section on foreign language proficiency and repeatedly with regard to the visual and performing arts) to the need for flexible and technologically appropriate space. The next step in the planning and implementation process must be to match curriculum and co-curricular activities with properly funded residential spaces and facilities.

We have benefited greatly from the work of our predecessors, the New Residential College Program Planning Committee and the New Residential College/School Curriculum Team. For example, the initial NRCPPC Report (October 15, 2004) contains very useful ideas about faculty roles and the assessment of student learning. We also note the comments and suggestions made by the Academic Assembly of the Associate Students of MSU (October 26, 2004) and the University Committee on Academic Policy (November 22, 2004) in response to the NRCPPC report. Our specific curricular, co-curricular, and residence life proposals and observations build explicitly on the report of the faculty-student Curriculum Team (April 9, 2005). All of these documents and responses to them have informed the current Summer 2005 Task Force Report. We try to avoid covering the ground that these other committees have covered so well where we are in basic agreement with their recommendations and findings.

## **I. The College**

One of the most intensely discussed questions raised by the original proposal to create a new residential college has been whether it should be an autonomous college or whether it should be embedded as a school in one or more of the existing colleges at MSU. This is in part a question of resources. However, it is also a matter of what is the best structure for the curriculum of the new residential college or school. The two – budget and curriculum – are inescapably connected, but our task has been to start with the latter and be cognizant of the reasonable budgetary limits we are likely to face.

Here are some of the questions and possible answers that we have kept in mind as we have focused on curricular goals.

1. *What is best for the humanities as a whole at MSU?*
  - a. Strengthening disciplinary departments and programs
  - b. Strengthening international and global programs
  - c. Emphasizing engagement, outreach, and immersion
  - d. Creating new connections among faculty and programs
  - e. Attracting highly motivated and well-qualified students to MSU
  
2. *What do faculty members in the humanities want and need?*
  - a. Teaching committed students
  - b. Being rewarded for excellence in undergraduate teaching
  - c. Having opportunities to teach in interdisciplinary programs
  - d. Having opportunities to be connected to disciplinary departments
  - e. Having opportunities to participate in graduate programs and path-breaking research
  - f. Working in a context in which outreach and engagement activities are supported
  
3. *What do students in the humanities want and need?*
  - a. Studying in close contact with faculty
  - b. Being challenged by rigorous courses
  - c. Acquiring foreign language proficiency and a multi-dimensional literacy in written, visual, and oral communication
  - d. Participating in immersion and engagement experiences
  - e. Discovering connections between courses and programs
  - f. Preparing for graduate or professional study
  - g. Developing and initiating career plans

This Report has been guided by these three general questions and elaborates on some of the answers listed above. We do not explore their budgetary implications and their affordability in the current and projected fiscal climate.

We do offer a detailed description of the curriculum, co-curricular programs, and residence life activities. We believe that this description points very clearly in the direction of an autonomous college rather than a school that is embedded in one or more of the existing colleges. **Furthermore, we believe that the curricular, co-curricular, and residence life programs described in this Report for an autonomous interdisciplinary residential college in the humanities can and should strengthen disciplinary departments and programs in the humanities.** Near the end of this document in Section XII we make this argument (and several others) for a new residential college and consider possible objections to this structure. In anticipation of this final section, henceforth we will refer simply to the New Residential College (NRC).

## II. The Students

One goal of the NRC is to attract students who otherwise would not come to MSU. They are uncertain that a small liberal arts college will provide them with the faculty expertise and research opportunities of a large university, but they are wary of becoming lost at MSU. In this respect, the NRC seeks to emulate James Madison College and Lyman Briggs School by bringing students who are well-prepared in and motivated to study the humanities in a rigorous way at a small college within a large research university.

Who exactly are these prospective NRC students? Any answer to this question now will be speculative. Rather than identify them in terms of their future career goals alone, we prefer to see them as students who are wrestling with a more complex question. That is, how to combine their interests in the humanities with the need to plan for future decisions about their lives as professionals and citizens? It is possible to group these students into three general categories.

1. *The Arts.* These are the students who may not be anticipating a career in music, art, theater, or dance but have good artistic and performance skills and want to continue to develop them in studios, workshops, etc. They want to perform, not just understand the relationship between the visual and performing arts and the world around them. They may love to act and work on set design but do not have the time and dedication to be theater majors. They may enjoy singing in a choral ensemble but are not Music majors. Many of them are students in the Residential Option in Arts & Letters (ROIAL) and many have strong interests in creative writing and film. The NRC will provide these students with apprenticeship programs, master classes with visiting guest artists and writers, and performance space. Most of all, it will help them connect their passions for the arts to the responsibilities they feel as individuals and citizens.
2. *Public Service.* There is another heterogeneous group of students to whom the NRC will appeal, but from the opposite direction. They begin with a commitment to public service, but they soon find that pre-professional and technical training is not enough. Students in Bioethics, Humanities, and Society; Humanities Pre-Law;

Peace and Justice Studies; and smaller interdisciplinary programs often have a very strong career interest in public service. They want to practice public interest law, public health, social work, counseling, and teaching. They also want to discover ways to connect their technical training and their humanistic values. They realize that as teachers, lawyers, social workers, and health care professionals, they will have to understand the lives of their students, clients, and patients in the round and in the moment.

3. *Cultural Studies*. Many of the current MSU students with a potential interest in the NRC will add the NRC to their primary major in, for example, History, English, Philosophy, History of Art, Sociology, Psychology, Religious Studies, Music, Anthropology, Geography, Journalism, Communication; or to specializations such as Women, Gender, and Social Justice; Museum Studies; Film Studies; American Indian Studies; Professional Writing; Asian American Studies; Hispanic Studies; and area studies programs. The NRC will add a new dimension to their disciplinary work, whether it is residential life in general, a career-oriented civic engagement project, or the pleasure of small studio and performance immersion experiences. Students with inter-disciplinary interests in race, gender, and ethnicity will discover connections to new bodies of thought and new methods of inquiry through the NRC without losing sight of their primary intellectual interests.

Students in all three of these categories have strong desires to map out a clear career path, as they should, and it is one of the primary responsibilities of MSU to assist them. The NRC will provide students with a way to bring their interests in the humanities and in a career in public and private life together in a coherent way. Students will improve their skills of communication, expand their modes of expression, and deepen their understanding of their own cultures and the cultures of others.

This involves something more than career development for an age in which people must be prepared to learn new trades, change jobs, and shift careers several times. Students will acquire, through practice as well as study, the dexterity to understand the world through what Howard Gardner has described as different “frames of mind.” The NRC will provide them with the assistance they need to deploy these “multiple intelligences” after graduation in every job they do, but students will learn them by using them in the diverse engagement activities that are integrally woven into the curriculum and related co-curricular activities within the NRC.

### **III. The Major**

NRC students must take 47-52 credits to meet the requirements of the major.<sup>1</sup>

- Four core courses
    - Two courses to substitute for the University IAH requirement 8 credits
    - Two courses to fulfill University Tier One requirement<sup>2</sup> 6 credits
  - Seven electives courses<sup>3</sup>
    - Two courses inside NRC 6 credits
    - Five courses outside, all at the 300-level or above 15-20 credits
  - Foreign Language Proficiency<sup>4</sup> 8 credits
  - Capstone experience (400 level)<sup>5</sup> 4 credits
- TOTAL: 47-52 credits

The major for NRC students is an inter-disciplinary field of study defined by four conceptual commitments. Although we have not given it a name, these conceptual commitments define the broad intellectual space within which the life of students and faculty can flourish.

1. *World History*. The main currents of history connect and divide peoples in various regions of the globe. World history is about what generates these currents, what they have meant to people, and what they have left in their wake. World history is not the story of a unified world system told from the top down, but rather a web of relationships and influences that have fluidly linked and distinguished the stories of many peoples and cultures. We see the strands of this web in the technology we rely upon, the clothes we wear, the monuments we honor (and topple), and the films we devour. We hear it in the music that entertains us and prompts us as consumers. We internalize it, sometimes literally in the cuisine that sustains us.
2. *Art and Culture*. As speakers, writers, and readers; as singers, composers, artists, and dancers; we make sense of our worlds through languages and expressions that

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<sup>1</sup>This does not include the University ISS, ISP/B, and Math requirements. The spring 2005 New Residential College/School Curriculum Team Report recommended that specially designed ISS and ISP/B courses be taught on a small scale to some NRC students. We support this option, but because it would not be feasible to require that all NRC students fulfill their ISS and ISP/B requirements inside the NRC we have not gone beyond the descriptions of sample ISS and ISP/B courses in the CT Report and we do not include these credits within the NRC major.

<sup>2</sup>Because these are three-credit courses, students transferring out of the NRC after taking the first course will still have to take a one-credit independent study to meet the University Tier One writing requirement.

<sup>3</sup>Courses taken outside the NRC that count toward a second major, second degree, or a specialization also can be used to fulfill the NRC Electives requirement.

<sup>4</sup>Credits in foreign language courses above the 8 credits needed to meet the proficiency requirement can be counted toward graduation and toward the fulfillment of requirements in other programs outside the NRC.

<sup>5</sup>The capstone experience will meet the University Tier Two writing requirement.

have evolving dialects as well as basic structures. We respond to a ubiquitous visual culture – from billboards and insistent electronic advertisements to drawings, collages, sculpture, and functional architecture. Who we are as peoples, not just as individuals, depends upon our cultural identities, and these identities are increasingly global hybrids. This is not mere metaphorical shorthand, as we know from recent DNA studies of racial identity. However, metaphors are unavoidable as we try to translate from one culture to another. Understanding the meaning of metaphors such as global hybridity and cultural *mélange* requires an interdisciplinary education in the humanities, including the visual and performing arts. We may be able to change the metaphors we live by, but we cannot do away with them and still expect to achieve mutual understanding.

3. *Ethics*. Which cultural identities we display proudly, wear lightly on our sleeve, or hold at a distance are often highly contested moral questions. Which historical legacies we artistically memorialize and which ones we reject are matters of ethical judgment. Which languages we use to express our deepest feelings, how we move to the rhythms of nature, how well we respond to calls for help and expressions of joy – these are all matters of some choice. How much choice we have will depend in part on our abilities to understand how others have responded to earlier dilemmas and emergencies. We face these challenges on an individual daily basis in our families and communities, and we sometimes face them on a grander scale when as a people we must decide how to allocate scarce resources and keep our word. Ethics, in the sense of how we should live our lives, is an integral part of coming to terms with the presence of the past and negotiating between competing and cross-cutting cultural identities. This presence, itself a metaphor, can be heard in the voices that oral historians have recorded, but it is also inscribed in the products we choose to use or do without.
4. *Engaged Learning*. In order to grasp the main currents of world history, the cultural challenges and opportunities that it has created, and the ethical values that are at stake, students and faculty of NRC will be engaged in a variety of ways. Through the relationships and projects nurtured in this residential setting, they will take even greater pleasure in the texts they study and the scores and scripts they perform as they prepare themselves for rigorous advanced disciplinary scholarship and agile interdisciplinary professional lives. They will develop a greater compassion for the people with whom they work in communities, whether they are near or far, whether in their native language or in a foreign language. They will learn to compose their thoughts more clearly, communicate them more effectively, and reflect upon them more cooperatively so that they can be of use in the world.

The conceptual breadth of the major is reflected in way in which it encourages dual majors and specializations in other departments and programs. Breadth is also encouraged through a variety of engagement activities inside and outside the classroom. The NRC major, closely linked to other departments and programs in the humanities and to engagement activities inside and outside the University, provides a

solid foundation for a lasting practical, not just conceptual commitment to the humanities as a vocation.

#### **IV. Core Courses**

During the first year of their two-year residence in the four-year NRC program, in order to fulfill the core course requirement, all students will take four courses.<sup>6</sup>

- The two-semester writing course sequence (that fulfills the University Tier One writing requirement):
  - *111: Writing in Trans-cultural Contexts*
  - *112: Writing, Research, and Technologies*
- The two-semester sequence (that substitutes for the University IAH requirement):
  - *201: Trans-cultural Relations through the Ages*
  - *202: The Presence of the Past*

These four courses drive the first-year experience and launch the major. 111 and 112 provide a comprehensive 6 credit foundation in the skills of reading, writing, and research methods. 201 and 202 introduce students to the web of cultures and traditions that constitutes our world histories, and then raise questions about how individual and collective identities have been and ought to be shaped by these historical and cultural forces. In general, the writing skills that are learned in 111 and 112 will be used and refined in the work done in 201 and 202. For example, students typically may keep common online journals for 111 and 201, and then again for 112 and 202, or there will be other analogous common writing projects. Also, in the spring semester the formally organized engaged learning and immersion activities that students in 202 choose will be the subject of their research projects in 112.

In terms of content, students in 201 will study trans-cultural<sup>7</sup> historical development, while in 111 they will learn to situate themselves through writing in their own specific culture and history in relation to other cultures and histories. Similarly, while

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<sup>6</sup> A draft sample syllabus for each of the four required first-year courses is included in Appendices 1 and 2. The syllabi for these first-year courses do not yet have major codes. They will be submitted to the University Curriculum Subcommittee C by the Provost's Office at its September 8, 2005 meeting as PRO 111, PRO 112, PRO 201, and PRO 202 until a new major code is created for the NRC.

<sup>7</sup> A task force report such as this, even one on the humanities, is not the place for an excursus on meaning. However, given the importance of the word 'trans-cultural' in this document, it is worth pausing momentarily to clarify its meaning. Trans-cultural studies are gaining respect in academia, but there are still relatively few research centers, graduate programs, and journals that are organized around this notion (see, for example, discussion on the World Wide Web <[www.wisc.edu/btcs/mission.htm](http://www.wisc.edu/btcs/mission.htm)> and <[www.sas.upenn.edu/transcult/whoweare.html](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/transcult/whoweare.html)>). Trans-cultural is not synonymous with multi-cultural, and it also does not refer to anything like a universal culture or something over and above (i.e., transcending) culture. By trans-cultural we mean the ways that cultures combine with, separate from, absorb, and sometimes collide with other cultures. In other words, in this Report trans-cultural refers to the transactions between cultures and the many other ways cultures relate to one another.

202 students will be exploring the influence of the past and the opportunities we have to respond to it ethically in cross-cultural, global contexts, students in 112 will be involved in learning to do research and make arguments that are appropriate to this context.

As a whole they blend history, ethics, and culture together with selected topics and projects from the visual and performing arts in a residential environment that stresses engagement with the material at hand and in the cultural communities that give our lives meaning. This infusion of the visual and performing arts into the core curriculum is as crucial for the major as is foreign language proficiency and engagement. The infusion of the visual and performing arts into the core courses will vary depending upon the make-up of the faculty teams teaching these courses in any particular year. Just as the Elective Pathways described below in Section VI are designed to guide faculty in the creation of particular iterations of upper-division Topics courses and connect to disciplinary departments and programs, the draft sample syllabi for 111, 112, 201, and 202 in Appendix 1 are also provisional in this sense. They are samples of what can be done under the general course descriptions. How the four core courses work together to map the general intellectual space of the NRC is more important at this stage than any particular reading list.

This intensive first-year curriculum in the NRC often will be coupled with other courses in Integrative Studies, mathematics, and introductory foreign language instruction in the foreign language departments. For those students wishing to take the full first-year curriculum in Art, Music or Theater as they pursue a dual major in addition to their major in the NRC, special arrangements can be made. Those enrolled in the B.A. in Music may not have this difficulty, and it may be possible for students in Studio Art or Theater to take a reduced first-year program in undergraduate specializations in those majors.

## **V. Foreign Language Proficiency**

Another feature of the residential program that all NRC students will share, and that is integrally connected to the NRC's emphasis on culture, ethics, and history, is the importance of language – one's own and the languages of others. The fostering of understanding and respect for the cultural values and norms of different peoples is at the core of the NRC's mission, and the curriculum of the college is global and cross-cultural in focus throughout. Foreign language proficiency, both as an essential vehicle for the understanding of foreign cultures and as a valuable skill for communication, research, and employment in today's world, is thus a primary goal for students in the program.

The study of foreign languages provides us with a valuable point of entry into new cultures and their distinctive values. However, respect for the cultures of others should not be confused with a shallow moral relativism that deprives us of any grounds for criticizing harmful practices elsewhere or paying serious attention to the critical comments of others who do not share our own norms and values. The study of

one's own language and the languages of others makes cross-cultural understanding a more lasting experience and reasonable tolerance more likely.

The NRC will encourage and support the acquisition of foreign language proficiency from the time of initial student recruitment through graduation and beyond. Study and maintenance of language skills is an inherent part of the culture of the program, through traditional and experimental academic course work as well as integrated extra-curricular activities. In cooperation with MSU's language departments and centers, the NRC Proficiency Center will assist students in making a smooth transition from previous foreign language exposure to appropriate continuing study at MSU, either in existing courses on campus or in newly designed programs of self-paced or immersion instruction.

Assessment is the flipside of proficiency. Without clear and appropriate ways to assess student language learning, it is impossible to gauge whether proficiency has been achieved. All students will be assessed and certified in their foreign language proficiency at levels appropriate to their fields of study and career goals. Assessment criteria and proficiency levels are not arbitrarily set. The emphasis of foreign language study is on communicative competence beyond the classroom, and all students will engage in an immersion experience that will allow them to understand the value of language proficiency in the world outside the classroom.

There are many details of the Language Proficiency Requirement that will have to be worked out between now and when the first students enroll in fall 2007.

- Responsibility for administering the Language Proficiency Center will have to be clearly vested in a coordinator. This person, with the necessary staff support, will be responsible for
  - assessing the proficiency of incoming students for placement as well as assessing proficiency for certification, and
  - coordinating language instruction in the NRC with instruction in the foreign language departments and the English Language Center to avoid duplication at the introductory levels and to maximize enrichment and immersion opportunities.
- Graduate student instructional staff will have to be identified for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as film programs, language tables, and service-learning activities.
- Summer language institutes and immersion programs on and off-campus will be developed.
- Flexible facilities will have to be designed for mobile individual technologies, cooperative language study, and special workshop activities.
- Introductory courses on the history of world languages and upper level electives on topics such as second language acquisition may become part of the enrichment courses that enable students to move beyond basic proficiency.

## **VI. Elective Pathways**

Students, faculty, and advisors will work together to design a coherent path of study for individual students that integrates the four common courses, other general education courses, electives, foreign language instruction, co-curricular activities, and engagement activities. At the most general level, what is important is that the elective pathways available to students

- build upon the four common NRC core courses,
- enable students to pursue their own particular interests within the scope of the NRC major,
- connect to and complement courses and programs available outside the NRC, and
- prepare graduates of the NRC for professional, academic, and other career opportunities.

It is through their elective path of study that NRC students achieve fluency, not just proficiency in their field. It is also how faculty inside and outside the NRC collaborate through team teaching, faculty exchanges, and other innovative instructional models and pedagogical techniques.

This portion of every student's major in the NRC must include at the 300-level or above at least two NRC Topics courses (310, 320, 330, or 340) and 5 courses outside the NRC related to the Topics course(s) and the organizing theme of each student's particular elective path of study.

**Through these elective pathways NRC students will connect their NRC major to another disciplinary major or inter-disciplinary specialization outside the NRC. The elective pathways deepen their work within the NRC at the same time that they bring the skills, sensibilities, and knowledge they acquire in the NRC to classes in other departments and programs. It is through these elective pathways that NRC students and faculty benefit from and enrich the many other departments and programs at MSU that are committed to the humanities.<sup>8</sup>**

While there is one major in the NRC and one common starting point, there are several paths through the major. Provisionally, the four pathways of study we have identified are

1. Children and Cultures
2. Art and Public Life
3. Nature and Cultures
4. Technologies and Cultures

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<sup>8</sup> We do not mean to underestimate the effort this will require, and it may even require special arrangements in some cases. For example, it may be necessary to work cooperatively with departments and programs in the visual and performing arts so that students are able to enroll in the appropriate foundations courses while still meeting the requirements of the NRC.

Each pathway begins with one of the four Topics courses noted above. The content of the Topics courses will vary depending upon the interests of instructors and the resources available at the time in the NRC. For example, if a particular guest artist or writer is in residence at the time, a Topics course may place more emphasis on one set of questions or topics than others. Or, if students are engaged in a particular performance project or civic engagement project, the topics may also vary.

At this stage in the development of the NRC this is still a provisional list of elective pathways and corresponding Topics courses. It is not intended to be exhaustive and may well be modified to fit particular student and faculty interests. Like any path, these four elective pathways eventually will be made by those who walk them.<sup>9</sup>

## **VII. Capstone Experiences**

The capstone experience requirement can be fulfilled in one of two ways. Either one satisfies the University Tier Two writing requirement (W).

1. In *491: Senior Thesis (W)* students compose a piece of original writing or performance art, or a more scholarly academic project that will help them to launch their post-graduate career. The thesis projects can include field experience or internship projects, special exhibitions, performances, or other community-based activities. Whatever their final thesis project happens to be, students will complete a series of writing assignments that meets the Tier Two requirement.
2. In *492: Seminar (W)* students will study a particular topic that weaves together themes or questions that cut across the curriculum as a whole. Students will complete a series of writing projects consistent with the Tier Two requirement leading up to and including the final seminar paper.<sup>10</sup>

## **VIII. First-year Elective Seminars**

One of the most intellectually valuable experiences a student can have is a seminar in his or her first year that explores a subject of common interest in a setting in which thoughtful discussion and passionate learning are prized. The NRC first-year seminars (FYS) are electives, not required courses, open only to entering students. They will offer students a range of subjects by regular faculty and guest instructors. [See Section IX below for a brief description of types of guest instructors.] They will stress the meaning and importance of cross-cultural understanding and trans-cultural experience. They will also stress the relationships between the visual and performing arts on the one hand and the other humanities programs on the other. In other words, making and performing as ways of knowing will be studied and explored alongside of other modes of understanding and types of knowledge.

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<sup>9</sup> Sample course descriptions of these four Topics courses are included in Appendix 3.

<sup>10</sup> A sample course description for the capstone seminar is included in Appendix 4.

Each FYS will meet intensively for part of the semester, at off-hours so that it does not conflict with other regularly scheduled courses. For example, a FYS may run for 6 weeks during the middle of the semester, two evenings per week, for two credits. Or, it may be a non-credit FYS that is broken up into three two-week periods over the full semester. Eventually, there may also be summer seminars for entering students prior to their first fall semester.

## **IX. Residential Activities**

Many of the activities which will give life and richness to the college will come in more informal learning experiences than the regular 15-week semester structure permits. Some can be in the form of formal, one-credit classes; and some will be non-credit activities that enhance or complement endeavors already alive within the college.

1. *Visiting artists.* Artists, musicians, directors, choreographers or other emerging figures in the arts will take a short-term residency within the NRC. For each visitor, an appropriate means of interacting with the college will be negotiated. In some instances this may be master classes, in others the visitor may help students complete a group project.
2. *Visiting scholars.* Scholars engaged in work which fits either with the first-year curriculum or with the elective pathways will take a short-term residency within the NRC. In particular, the NRC will seek out scholars, including emeriti faculty, whose work can be read and discussed by a broad segment of the NRC, and which can push issues in new directions.
3. *Advanced graduate student mentors.* As graduate students are finishing their careers at Michigan State and elsewhere, many will have interesting and appropriate projects which coincide with the interests of students within the NRC. These special residency programs for advanced graduate students can be the basis for more effective recruitment by graduate programs and more collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships between undergraduates and graduate students.
4. *Informal performance opportunities.* In cooperation with the School of Music, students will have opportunities to participate in small group-lessons, ensembles, and other performance activities. With guidance from graduate students in Theater, students will learn how to produce programs such as a reader's theater for adults in community-based literacy programs.
5. *Program planning and governance.* Students will be involved at all levels of program planning for curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular events. These could include student-initiated seminars, special trips and excursions, and student advisory and governance committees.

## X. Engagement

Engaged learning connects students to the world around them in concrete ways; it is the common element that holds the curriculum together. Engaged learning is evident in the first semester through activities that occur in the residential setting (e.g., guest artists, small ensemble activities, and other co-curricular opportunities) as well as those integrated in the first-semester courses. A diverse array of activities will be designed and introduced at developmentally appropriate points in the student's experience in the NRC. The New Residential College Program Planning Report and the NRC/S Curriculum Team Report contain suggestive examples of co-curricular activities. Our goal in this Report is not to advocate for any particular set of co-curricular, immersion, or outreach projects, courses, or activities. We want to highlight the special character and importance engagement, in general, has within the NRC.

We can begin simply by categorizing the wide range of engagement activities at home and away and listing a few examples that will be possible through the NRC.

1. *Visual and Performing Arts Programs*
  - a. Art studio workshops
  - b. Creative writing workshops
  - c. Music Performance workshops
  - d. Photography and film workshops
  - e. Theater, dance, and creative movement workshops
  
2. *Health, Education, Justice, and Welfare Programs*
  - a. Food, nutrition, and community-based agriculture programs
  - b. Tutoring and education programs
  - c. Social justice and neighborhood organizing programs
  - d. Health care programs
  - e. Alternative spring break
  
3. *Immersion and Research Programs*
  - a. Study Abroad
  - b. Field work and supervised research
  - c. Internships
  - d. Exchange programs with other colleges and universities

These engagement activities are designed to provide reciprocal benefits for students, faculty, and community partners. To achieve these goals, engagement activities will be closely integrated into the academic curriculum of the NRC and will be organized in cooperation with community partners to meet their needs. This requires careful planning and continual reflection. But, the rewards to all can be considerable. For example, students working with community artists – where the community includes local residents and visitors from sister cities abroad – can learn about the placement

of public art, its cultural resonances, and the ethical issues it raises through practical experience and academic discussion and reflection. Or, they may participate in a community photo-voice project in which students and residents explore and publicize health hazards in their community in order to raise the issue of when a health disparity between neighborhoods becomes an unacceptable inequity.

Engagement, then, performs a function similar to language proficiency. It brings cultural and historical material to life. It provides students with a newfound and legitimate confidence in their own ability to make moral judgments and ask hard questions. To repeat, engagement can take many forms from immersion in an art workshop or studio performance to exploring health and justice issues in native settings. Wherever a student may choose to become immersed in this kind of experiential learning, there will be an important link to community partners. They may be women and children living in a shelter or safe house, they may be children who have come to the NRC to learn new performance skills, or they may be elderly residents in an assisted living community whose recollections of formative events in their lives are videotaped and discussed. Whatever particular engagement project is offered or that students design, the ultimate goal is to achieve a kind of literacy that motivates students to see their studies within a wider trans-cultural and global context.

There are already many effective engagement opportunities at MSU through the Community Service-Learning Center. The Office of Outreach and Engagement has extensive experience and expertise in this area. The new MSU Cultural Engagement Council provides a forum for cooperation and innovation in this area. Individual faculty and departments in the humanities such as The School of Music are already actively involved in outreach and engagement. The NRC will work collaboratively with these individuals and groups to raise the profile of engagement at MSU and seek to attract new private and foundation funds for faculty positions and student programs.

Again, the parallel with language proficiency is clear. Just as the NRC does not seek to duplicate language instruction that already occurs at the introductory levels in the departments, but to enhance and connect it to other parts of the curriculum, it does not seek to create a special preserve of engagement activities only for NRC majors. **The idea is to be a catalyst for more engaged language learning and interdisciplinary engagement throughout the University.** One concrete way this can happen in language learning and engagement activities is through participation by graduate students and international students at MSU as assistants for enrichment programs in language education (e.g., coordinators of foreign film festivals) and engagement (e.g., mentors for refugee and immigrant tutoring programs and citizenship classes). In many cases, engagement and enhanced foreign language proficiency will go hand in hand.

Another important dimension of engagement is the way in which it brings undergraduate and graduate students together through creative work in the visual and

performing arts. Graduate students, individually and in ensembles and teams, will work as mentors to interested groups of undergraduates on particular short-term projects. This can be an engagement project within the NRC on a particular piece of music, theatrical production, or visual art project. Graduate students and undergraduates will plan and present different aspects of the work. They may also involve community partners and expand their audience. These ‘informances’ teach graduate students valuable community outreach skills at the same time that they involve undergraduates in the production and presentation of the work.

Yet another value of engagement is the way it may occur through a distinct set of co-curricular residence life activities. Rather than just invite speakers and performers in for a brief ‘engaging’ visit, the NRC will create longer engagements in which established and young artists and scholars will participate in residency programs in the NRC. Undergraduates (and where appropriate their graduate student mentors) will be actively involved in designing these residency engagement programs. They may be organized to coincide with particular topics in NRC courses, or they may branch off in new directions. They could also be coordinated with the Wharton Center, the MSU Museum, Kresge Art Museum, and the Great Lakes Folk Festival.

## **XI. Personnel**

**The projections in this section are for the starting year 2007-08 with an entering class of 100-150 students. We hope to have 400-500 total students by the sixth year but realize that this is ambitious for a new program.**

1. The administrative, faculty, and support staff for the NRC can be divided up according to functions and by persons. In this brief discussion we have focused on functions, but where it is important to identify how the functions ought to be distributed among persons, we have indicated how many persons we believe ought to be involved in the first year.
  - a. *Administration*
    - i. Dean, appointed by the Provost
    - ii. Assistant to the Dean, selected by the Dean
    - iii. Community Advisory Board, recommended by faculty-student committee and appointed by the Dean
  - b. *Faculty*
    - i. Eight Core faculty with full-time appointments in the NRC
    - ii. Four jointly appointed tenured faculty with ½ or ¼ time appointments in the NRC
    - iii. Affiliated faculty with *ad hoc* arrangements for teaching and participation in the NRC
    - iv. Visiting faculty and artists, including emeriti
    - v. Graduate student mentors, including special fellows
    - vi. Short-term scholars and residents

- c. *Staff*
  - i. Engagement activities coordinator with shared responsibility with Residence life staff (one hall director and 3 half-time graduate assistants)
  - ii. Technology coordinator
  - iii. Media coordinator
  - iv. Foreign Language Proficiency coordinator with shared responsibility with language coordinators in the three foreign language departments
  - v. Office supervisor
  - vi. Secretarial staff, including equipment manager
  - vii. Advising, recruitment, and career development staff
  - viii. Fundraising and development staff
  
- 2. We are hesitant to make detailed projections for years 2-6. It is not yet clear what a final enrollment goal ought to be for the NRC and what the full budget implications are for the space and facilities resources needed to carry out the curricular and co-curricular programs described in the Report. The NRCPPC projections for 800 students and 32 full-time faculty members by the sixth year may be too ambitious. Some sharing of resources, possibly with the other programs on campus, ought to be explored.

## **XII. Structure**

There are five primary **reasons for favoring** an autonomous college over an embedded school within the existing college structure.

1. *Distinctive approach.* The program that has been outlined above represents a distinctive interdisciplinary and engaged approach to issues and problems that are not solely within the domain of or paramount in the mission statements of any of the existing colleges. The visibility of this endeavor and its identity would be greatly diminished if it was embedded within one or two colleges in the existing college structure.
2. *Distinctive subject matter.* The core curriculum and the elective pathways map out a subject matter that cuts across several colleges and would be difficult to pursue within any one or two of the existing colleges. In addition to CAL, the curriculum addresses topics that are studied from complementary perspectives in SSC, JMC, CCAS, CE, and CANR.
3. *Student body.* This distinctive approach to a set of interdisciplinary historical, ethical, and cultural issues will increase the number of talented and academically accomplished students who come to MSU to study the humanities.
4. *Connections among students.* This approach, these issues, and this student body also will provide a bridge between undergraduates, international students, and graduate students that has been fragmentary at best throughout the University, not just in CAL.

5. *Allocation of new initiatives.* Given the current challenges facing CAL and the new initiatives that it has already undertaken in just the last year, launching a new residential program ought to be assigned to a separate major administrative unit.

The **objections and responses** to this administrative structure fall into two categories. Those that focus on the possible negative impact a separate college may have on CAL in particular, and those that focus on the budgetary implications of a new program on the humanities in general, regardless of whether it is inside or outside CAL.

1. *Objection:* An NRC will draw the best students away from CAL.  
*Response:* A distinctively engaged and interdisciplinary NRC program may be able to bring good students to MSU (and CAL) who would not otherwise have come, and the Elective Pathways curriculum in the NRC requires that these students do substantial work in other colleges, most likely but not exclusively in CAL. This is perhaps the most important reason for favoring an autonomous NRC. **The proposed NRC curriculum connects NRC faculty and students to disciplinary departments and programs. The four Elective Pathways do not duplicate work already done in existing departments and programs but rather extend and deepen that work so that NRC faculty and students will value the disciplines at the same time that they bring an awareness of the connections between them to classes, colloquia, research teams, and other cross-college activities.** The new initiatives in global and area studies in SSC and CAL may well be a meeting ground for such interactions where students and faculty from NRC work with students and faculty from these other colleges.
2. *Objection:* An NRC will siphon off the best faculty from CAL.  
*Response:* The faculty members most likely to be hired directly into the NRC or to transfer into or otherwise become affiliated with NRC are those who wish to make undergraduate teaching their primary work for the next 5-10 years and whose research interests are interdisciplinary. These faculty would not likely be the top hiring choices by departments. As for transfers and to a lesser extent affiliates, while these may be among the better CAL faculty now, if they are about to put more effort into undergraduate teaching and interdisciplinary research, they may well flourish in the NRC more than in CAL.
3. *Objection:* An NRC or NRS would reduce the budgets of other colleges or deny them new needed resources.  
*Response:* We believe that the NRC can be supported by increased general fund tuition dollars and external funding (e.g., Title VI National Resource Centers) without harm to other major academic units. New NRC faculty with interdisciplinary research interests may also help to form more successful collaborative research teams with department research faculty. Of course, all we can do in this Report is to describe the potential of the NRC to generate higher tuition and research revenues. Cooperative relationships between departments and programs in the humanities and the NRC, along with effective strategic planning and recruitment, will be needed to realize this potential.

### **XIII. Calendar**

These are the major tasks that we believe must be accomplished in the period leading up to an entering class in fall 2007.

- *2005-06*
  - Information Gathering Committee and meetings with interested MSU faculty beginning in fall 2005
  - Curriculum development
    - New Courses
    - New Program and Major
  - Publicity and Recruitment
  - Seek external funding to study NRC
  - Facilities management
  - Faculty and Coordinator hiring
  
- *2006-07*
  - Curriculum development
    - New Courses
    - Co-curricular and other engagement activities
  - Publicity and Recruitment
  - Pre-view with ROIAL students some first-year activities such as co-curricular and service learning projects
  - Facilities management
  - Faculty, Coordinator, and Staff hiring

**Appendix 1: Sample Tier One Writing Syllabi**

## **(PRO) 111: Writing in Trans-cultural Contexts**

This is the first semester of the required two-course writing sequence for all NRC students. In conjunction with the first semester of the required common course, 201, this three-credit course begins to establish the foundation for the NRC major. A student who completes both 111 and 112 will satisfy MSU's Tier One Writing Requirement.

All students enrolled in a Tier One writing course can expect to receive instruction and practice in conceiving, drafting, revising, and completing writing projects of various lengths for various audiences. Students who successfully complete this course will exceed the MSU standard of 6,000 words of instructor-evaluated writing and, more importantly, will have engaged in a wide variety of kinds of writing, experimenting with a wide variety of currently available technologies. Students also will learn to use source materials responsibly and to acknowledge those sources appropriately in consideration of the objectives, genres, and audiences that comprise various writing situations.

111 builds on experiences and practices students are expected to have brought from their previous years of schooling. As abstracted from the K-12 language arts standards promulgated in 1996 by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English, students will reach at least moderate levels of achievement in the following:

- Comprehending, interpreting, evaluating, and appreciating print and non-print texts by drawing on prior experience, knowledge of other texts, word identifications, and other textual features.
- Understanding that spoken, written, and visual language must be adjusted to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- Conducting research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, posing problems, and gathering and incorporating data from a variety of sources.
- Reading from a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
- Appreciation of their roles as members of a variety of literacy communities.
- Working in groups and evaluating one another's writing

Instruction in writing, like writing itself, is a recursive activity. From elementary through middle and high school, students have repeatedly learned much the same material. This is normal. Writing is not something that can be mastered quickly. Rather, it's a complex activity that involves cognitive, affective, and even psycho-motor aptitudes. The goal is, as Peter Elbow famously put it, "writing without teachers." To achieve that level of versatility – where in an unfamiliar context a person can select a format to communicate particular content to specific audiences – requires many years. Once a person enters college, the final stage of formal schooling in this learning process has commenced. Students enrolled in 111 are thus on the threshold of an end-process. 112 will complete the beginning of this last stage. The two courses together provide the foundation for the

writing, speaking, and digital communication that students will engage in through the rest of their college years, culminating with Tier Two. Considered this way, writing instruction is the most deliberately planned and executed sequence in American education.

## **Goals**

Students will learn to

- Establish a common vocabulary for talking about their writing, including knowledge of genres and modes of discourse, rhetorical structures, audience appeal, tone, diction, voice, grammar and syntax, punctuation and mechanics;
- Demonstrate a robust agility in using writing for a variety of purposes, such as to develop their own knowledge, engage in productive reflection, and communicate in a variety of contexts;
- Write with an awareness of the demands placed on writers by contemporary cross-cultural audiences;
- Use a flexible repertoire of writing techniques and strategies depending on the contexts in which they are writing, whether characteristics of an audience, content to be communicated, rhetorical and discursive conventions, or occasions for writing;
- Synthesize external data and documentary sources into a reasoned discourse with effective use of quotation and paraphrase;
- Develop expertise in using determining what ought to be cited;
- Understand differences among multiple systems of documentation, such as MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style, etc.;
- Demonstrate fluency in standard, edited English and distinguish the contexts in which formal, informal, and colloquial writing may be appropriate;
- Appreciate how written composition is analogous to composition in the arts;
- Experience the satisfaction of communicating ideas effectively;
- Cultivate a playful attitude toward language;
- Develop lifelong habits of utilizing peer review to develop ideas and revise texts.

## **Staffing**

To offer 6 sections of 15 in the fall semester of the first year, 3 FTE will be required, rising at a rate of 1 FTE/semester per 30-35 enrollees; and in accordance with stringent recommendations for writing courses made by all relevant professional societies (Modern Language Association, Conference on College Composition and Communication, National Council of Teachers of English, Michigan College English Association, Council of Writing Program Administrators), sections will be comprised of 15-20 students.

## **Format**

- One 50-minute discussion session per week
- One 100-minute writing workshop per week

- Out-of-class individual and small-group consultations, as needed

The discussion sessions will focus on the reading assignments from the assigned textbook, a “rhetorical reader” containing brief (5-10 pages) essays arranged by topic and illustrating one or, typically, several of the rhetorical forms, modes, and styles which students will employ in their own writing. The readings in each part of the course serve to stimulate discussion and written response, and those responses—at first informal and fragmentary—then begin to accumulate as a corpus of developing critical thought for each student that s/he may draw upon in composing a first draft. The readings in this syllabus begin with consideration of the self and then quickly move out to consideration of other people, institutions, and finally conflict and its resolution. In accordance with widespread practice in the field of composition studies, the course readings function as “occasions for writing.”

The primary focus of the workshop sessions will be the students’ own writing. Activities in these sessions will enable individual students to improve their skills of composition. These activities may be exercises to stimulate thinking (invention), small group responses (peer analysis and editing), mini-conferences with individual student writers, or copy-editing and proofreading. The process of drafting, revising, redrafting, copy-editing, and proofreading has a rhythm that also demands quiet reflection or stimulating diversion. Utilizing the studio space that the NRC will provide, some of the workshop time will, therefore, be used for analogous types of composing in the arts (pottery, ceramics, painting and drawing, beadwork and basketry, musical composition, choreography) and some will be devoted to directed meditation.

**Assignments and Grading**

Final course grades will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages. Stated word-lengths are minima applied to the final, polished draft.

Three writing projects of increasing complexity	
Narrative Reflection (1,500 words)	15%
Expository Text (2,000 words)	20%
Comparison/Contrast Essay (2,500 words)	25%
Participation in class discussions and workshop activities	20%
Participation in on-going course discussion boards on ANGEL	P/NP
Final self-evaluation exercises	20%

Article 2.3.3 of the MSU *Academic Freedom Report* states that “the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the NRC adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide*. Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course.

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY).

### **Course Text**

*The New World Reader: Thinking and Writing About the Global Community* by Gilbert H. Muller (Houghton Mifflin 2005).

This volume is an interdisciplinary compilation of provocative essays that will enable students and instructors to think critically about global understanding and civic engagement. As this is a prominent thrust of the College's curriculum and co-curricular activities, it serves to introduce students to this theme. The essays are arranged by topic as well as by dominant rhetorical type, thus enabling instructors to use them both to advance the level of discourse and to serve as exemplars of several kinds of writing. Each of the book's eleven sections begins with an overview, a suggestive photograph, and a series of pre-reading questions. Each of the fifty-some essays is followed by several questions, suggestions for responding in writing, and activities for networking with other class members and pursuing further research.

The class will also utilize the daily *New York Times* or other sources for contemporary issues. It is also assumed that students enrolled in 111 will also be enrolled in 201, which will result in mutually enriching interchanges.

### **Course Structure**

The course begins and ends with intensive segment of one-and-a-half to two weeks. In the first instance, this serves to establish ground rules, come to an understanding of what students already do well, adapt course activities to the needs of the learners, and become familiar with effective guidelines for group work and peer review.

At the end of the course there is an intensive process of taking stock, consolidating gains, reviewing the course, and preparing for the learning that will take place in the coming semester. There are probably as many ways of accomplishing these goals as there are professors. This sample syllabus contains a well-articulated exercise created by Professor Malea Powell in which students work in groups to construct a putative exam for the course and justify it to the class in a coordinated oral presentation. Although writing courses do not have formal final exams, this exercise functions both to recapitulate the course and to allow students to imagine how the lessons of the course might be applied to writing essay exams in courses where they are required.

The main body of the course consists of three segments in each of which students will develop a portfolio of writings, some in physical form and some virtual, with the objective of developing a written argument in draft form. In each case, a full first draft ("workshop draft") will be submitted simultaneously to the instructor and the peer group.

As its name implies, this draft will be evaluated by other students, acting in the role of interested but critical readers, in one or more in-class workshops. This will be followed 7-10 days later by an “evaluation draft.” The instructor will respond at length to the evaluation draft. This response is usually in a “triage” mode, i.e., placing the most stress on those elements that each student can best profit from, and will be assigned a provisional grade. Near the end of the semester students are expected to submit a revision of each of their evaluation drafts. Throughout this process, students will engage in individual and group processes of discovery, peer evaluation, editing, and proofreading.

The classroom discussions, and more particularly the peer group responses, provide practice in responding to others' objections and explaining both one's intentions and the strategies chosen to embody those – thinking on one's feet, as it were. The general goal of oral competency is reinforced throughout this course, and it sets the tone for the student's experience all throughout the NRC major. Speech and other forms of oral and visual communication, in combination with the written word, are essential ingredients for engaged learning.

Since revision and improvement is always possible, failure to submit a revision of the evaluation draft will result in a 10% reduction of the provisional grade. In order to encourage risk-taking, however, the provisional grade will not be reduced if the revision turns out to be of lower quality than the evaluation draft.

### **Outline of Topics and Assignments**

#### **1. Weeks One and Two—Establishing Understandings/ Intersections between Personal Experiences and Social Institutions**

Readings from *The New World Reader* will include a section on reader-response theory in order to provide a framework for reading critically and writing in response to reading. The selection of essays will seek to balance extensive exploration of the topic with deeper reflection on specific texts or passages. The actual selection of essays from the reader as well as additional sources is best left to the instructors, who will bring their own critical understandings and fields of specialization.

Two sections of the book, comprising 14 essays between them, seem particularly apt in that they focus on U.S. culture in a distinctly global way. One asks whether the U.S. is becoming “a universal nation” due to recent immigration and ethnic/racial consciousness. Ronald Takaki suggests that Asian Americans and other ethnics can confront racism by honoring the past, a point that N. Scott Momaday also makes concerning his grandmother's “holy regard” for the sun. Alternatively, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. worries that the “cult of ethnicity” will rob the country of its “common culture” and core of “unifying ideals.” The other addresses the multiplicity of languages in the U.S. today and the way that oral competencies confound expectations concerning language usage. In one selection, Amy Tan has come to appreciate the role of “multiple Englishes” where previously she had seen her mother's speech only as “broken English.” In another essay the Korean American novelist Chang-rae Lee reflects on how his mother, lacking fluent English, was effectively mute. James Baldwin muses about

Black English, two essays deal with Spanglish, another offers a demographic analysis of language preferences based on the two most recent censuses, and the section concludes with an uplifting, though sobering reflection, by Isabel Allende on reading as a way for the exile to recover lost memories.

Writing Activities & Assignments:

- Free-writing on Reading
- Group Writing
- Reflections to be posted to the Angel discussion board

**2. Weeks Three through Five: Locating the Self in Relation to Others**

Readings from *The New World Reader*: Many of the essays in this book are reflective narratives and so give students multiple examples of the texts they are being asked to produce in this unit. The topic of locating the self in relation to others is reflected in a number of the readings in this book. For example, Richard Rodriguez writes of a profound sense of brotherhood, yet as a “homosexual Catholic” he puzzles over the issue of “family values.” Mary Morris writes of issues women encounter when traveling alone. Barbara Ehrenreich and Annette Fuentes expose “the world’s new industrial proletariat: young, female, and Third World” in their 2002 *Ms. Magazine* article, “Life on the Global Assembly Line.” American-born Ann Grace Mojtabai, married to an Iranian diplomat, tempers her opposition to polygamy, which “speaks of the poverty of opportunities for women,” with quiet admiration of the threesome that are her father-in-law and two mothers-in-law.

Writing Project #1 – Reflective Narrative

- Workshop Draft (2-4 pages, double-spaced)
- Evaluation Draft (3-6 pages, double-spaced)
- Revisions of Evaluation Draft will be accepted until the final week of class

The goal of this writing project is two-fold:

- to make a significant connection between one’s own self-described location at the intersection of various communities or concentric circles of engagement AND one’s history as a reader, writer and learner;
- to practice reflective narrative as a genre for expressing and examining personal experience.

*Both* of these goals must be met.

*So, what’s this paper about?* It’s about how one’s location has shaped one’s life as a learner (a reader/writer). This shouldn’t be a listing of shortcomings as a student, nor a litany of triumphs. Reflective narrative is a form of writing that uses the process of story-telling to narrate a series of events connected by some form of reflection and analysis. Reflection is a process that *shows* how things happened but also *thinks* about

the *consequences* of what happened and *imagines* what those consequences might mean.

#### *How to get started*

We've already done some *prewriting* for this assignment, freewriting, group writing assignments, and in the reflections posted to the Angel discussion board. These have provided a chance to think through things like location (who am I) and to articulate responses to various essays about particular locations.

*Start* by going back to these writings and the readings and by thinking about how to characterize yourself as a reader/writer/learner. *Try* some more prewriting/freewriting in response to some of the following prompts: How has your life as a learner been shaped by such terms of engagement as family, community, schoolmates, ethnicity, and citizenship? How has that experience been affected by social and historical contexts? How can you best demonstrate the ways in which you are thinking through these questions in a written form?

*Then*, structure your project according to what you believe might be the most effective details, events, and reflection for meeting the goals stated above. Do NOT just write the paper as “answers” to these prompts! The prompts, and the above-mentioned prewriting, should get you thinking about the issues out of which your paper will be produced – they do not constitute a complete and meaningful way in which to complete this assignment.

### **3. Weeks Six through Nine: Rethinking Institutions**

Readings from *The New World Reader* for this segment of the course would come from two sections, titled “The Challenge of Globalization: What Are the Consequences?” and “Culture Wars: Whose Culture Is It, Anyway?” The first takes globalization as an institution affecting other institutions. It begins with an essay by *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman, Jr. defining globalization in terms of an “inexorable integration of markets, transportation systems, and communication systems to a degree never witnessed before.” Other texts in this section offer concrete examples of a globalized economy, either finding in it the solution to our problems or locating the problems in globalization itself. The former view is expressed by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., dean of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, who predicts that globalization will diminish the ability of the “soft” power of the U.S. to get nations to do what we want but will result in a world “more congenial to our basic values of democracy, free markets, and human rights.” The counter balance is provided by British sociologist Anthony Giddens for whom “Globalisation . . . isn’t developing in an even-handed way, and is by no means wholly benign in its consequences.” This section of the book is preceded by a stunning section of photos that illustrate the cultural conflicts or inconsistencies of globalization with apparatus that will help students read the rhetorical content of these and other images.

The other section takes its title from an included essay by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. who maintains that “a curriculum that reflects the achievement of the world’s great cultures, not

merely the West's, is not 'politicized.' "Much of this section moves back and forth between the effects of other cultures on the U.S. and the effect of U.S. culture on the rest of the world." A suggestive essay by Octavio Paz interrogates Latin American and North American culinary styles for their cultural content. Film critic Michael Medved finds exported U.S. pop culture, notably Hollywood movies, television programs, and music videos to be the culprit for growing anti-Americanism around the world. Yet the great Peruvian writer, Mario Vargas Llosa, finds that "the fear of Americanization of the planet is more ideological paranoia than reality." And *Weekly Standard* cultural commentator and University of Virginia English Professor Paul A. Cantor finds in the Springfield of Homer Simpson "the meaning of globalization in the contemporary world," which unlike *Gilligan's Island*, he writes, "*The Simpsons* portrays as a two-way street." There, "the bizarre logic of contemporary globalization" is exemplified by "a worldwide convenience store empire run by an enlightened guru from the sacred mountains of India."

### Writing Project #2 – Expository Essay

Workshop Draft (3-6 pages, double-spaced)

Evaluation Draft (4-8 pages, double-spaced)

Revisions of Evaluation Draft will be accepted until the last week of classes

The *goal* of this writing project is:

- to explain and illustrate how an institution operates, what it does well, what it might improve;
- to utilize a variety of rhetorical modes (narration, description, illustration, comparison and contrast, definition, classification, process analysis, causal analysis) to make the case.

*So, what's this paper about?* The reading and discussion for this segment of the course explores issues related to how institutions affect human life and how they might be changed to improve it. We all have experience with a number of institutions: families, schools, religious bodies, political parties. An expository text that re-thinks an institution might describe the institution as it currently is, define its purposes or classify its functions, narrate one or more stories that illustrate its usefulness and/or shortcomings, analyze its operations as parts of a process that may involve other institutions to which it might be compared or contrasted, and perform a causal analysis to suggest ways it might be refocused, repaired, reconstructed. Of course, no expository text, whether a traditional essay or a brochure, map, editorial, web page, etc. will do ALL of those. So the writer needs to choose what will make the strongest and most ethical case.

At its most fundamental level, an *expository* is a text that opens up a topic. It serves to inform, describe, present information, and sometimes to persuade. Its structure depends on the genre chosen by the writer—letter, journal, newspaper story, editorial, brochure, map, web page, campaign speech, lab report, sermon, etc. Once the choice of genre is made, expositorys are *organized by paragraph* or section. Typically, a writer uses a number of different types of information in

an expository text—numerical data, interviews, fictional vignettes, critical analysis, factual reports, etc.

*How do I get started?*

You've spent some time responding to the readings on the Angel discussion board and opening up broader areas of concern in the classroom discussions. In the workshop sessions you'll go through a number of invention exercises. Those and the threads on the discussion board should suggest an institution you want to work on.

Once you have an institution identified, you can start to investigate it to find a focus. Without a doubt, you have your own opinions on the topic, but that will only get you so far. Unlike the previous writing project, the reflective narrative, this one requires that you get outside yourself by doing research in the library and on the internet, and possibly even on foot. For example, if you focus on the MSU dining halls as an institution, there will be documentary sources available both for MSU and for college dining halls more broadly, but you should certainly interview some of the kitchen workers.

#### **4. Weeks Nine through Twelve: Negotiating Conflict**

Readings from *The New World Reader* for this segment may come from two sections: "The Clash of Civilizations: Is Conflict Avoidable?" and "The Age of Terror: What Is the Just Response?" The first of these deals with the broad issues. Samuel P. Huntington's "The West and the Rest: Intercivilizational Issues" argues for fortress-Europe while Dinesh D'Souza finds more to recommend outside the West in the 1500s yet chooses an easy explanation for Western dominance. And Edward Said writes that, "for an Arab, such as myself, to enter Granada's 13<sup>th</sup>-century Alhambra Palace is to leave behind a modern world of disillusionment, strife, and uncertainty." To these views, the Nobel Prize economist Amartya Sen adds a cautionary: that "problematic civilizational categories" like the West or the Islamic World "is already to adopt an impoverished view of humanity as unalterably divided."

The second of these sections brings the discourse to the concrete level in its focus on the so-called Age of Terror. Focusing on 9/11 as a "primal national event," the selections of this group puzzle over the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks seeking to find moral ground somewhere between revenge and outrage, anguish and anger. The section ends with a trenchant analysis by the much-translated Indian novelist Arundhati Roy containing the view that the Third World's response to America's moment of suffering on September 11, 2001 was neither sympathy with our pain nor revengeful satisfaction but rather a hardened absence of surprise. Those attacks, she writes, "were a monstrous calling card from a world gone horribly wrong."

Rather than leave it at that, this segment of the course might also include readings from the three remaining sections, particularly as the title of this segment is hopeful and quite positive. Negotiating conflicts means that they might, indeed, be solved or at least held at bay.

Students at this point in the course might well branch out into other areas through research and one of these sections could form the springboard for that. Alternatively, the class could divide into three subgroups, each of which would focus on the solutions to conflict suggested in the three additional sets of readings and bring their findings back to the class as a whole.

One section, then, forms a casebook on the contemporary Middle East and contains provocative readings by the Israeli peace activist Amos Oz (“We give up the dream of Greater Israel and they give up the dream of Greater Palestine”), the Afghani British journalist Saira Shah, the Afghani American memoirist Tamin Ansary, the Iranian commentator Azar Nafizi (*Reading Lolita in Tehran*), the Egyptian political scientist Hassan Nafaa, the Iranian lawyer and human rights activist Shirin Ebadi who received the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize, and the well known commentators Edward Said and Fouad Ajami.

Another section contains seven readings under the rubric “The Fate of the Earth: Can We Preserve the Global Environment?” (Rachel Carson, Andy Rooney, Bill McKibben, Annie Dillard, Jane Goodall, Francis Fukuyama, and Jonathan Schell). And the third poses this question: “The Digital Revolution: Will It Bring Us Together?”

### Writing Project #3: Comparison/Contrast Essay

Workshop Draft (4-8 pages, double-spaced)

Evaluation Draft ( 8-10 pages, double-spaced)

Revisions of Evaluation Draft will be accepted the final week of class

The *goal* of this writing project is:

- extensive treatment of a conflict and its solutions as a broadly significant topic where there may not be widespread acceptance of which facts are important;
- utilization of a comparison and contrast organizational scheme.

*So, what’s this paper about?*

A comparative essay implies both comparison of likes and contrast of unlikes. It’s the most common assignment in composition courses. Done well, it can help a writer retain control of a complex discourse. Moreover, it can be a sophisticated thinking tool when the writer takes responsibility for analysis and evaluation. But the compare and contrast essay will fall flat when the writer oversimplifies. And when the terms of comparison are not commensurate, it’s not just apples and oranges but a real howler. Conflicts among roommates at college are important and immediate, for example, but they don’t belong in an essay on resolving the conflict in the western Sudan.

*How do I get started?*

You already know the answer to this! As before, mine the class discussions and discussion boards for promising ideas. Strive for complexity when drafting. There will be plenty of opportunity to simplify at the revision stages.

**5. Weeks Thirteen and Fourteen:** Taking stock, consolidating learning, preparing final drafts for submission, investigating projects for the second semester course (112)

*Group Exercise to Construct a Final Exam and Justify it to the Class*

Essay exams are often used in college courses where the instructor wants to find out:

- 1) whether a student has “learned” what the course is about;
- 2) how a student makes sense of the course;
- 3) if the student has only rote knowledge of the course text or if they can connect course readings to the larger whole of the course;
- 4) how a student can use knowledge gained during the course and apply that knowledge beyond the confines of the course.

The *goals* of this assignment are threefold:

- as a group, to write an essay exam that you feel accurately and substantially represents what students should have learned during the course;
- as a result of the above activity, accumulate a series of planning and self-evaluation documents; and
- as a group, to make a coordinated oral presentation in which each person has a communicative role.

*What you’ll produce and turn in to the professor:*

*For goal #1 above –*

an actual essay exam with requirements, scope and questions exactly like a professor would hand out in class, including a “grading key” (i.e., what are the minimum answer components that would add up to a 4.0, a 3.0, a 2.0? This key should be very specific in relation to content of course readings and use of course readings as well as in relation to the kinds of writing tasks we’ve practiced during the semester).

In order to write these questions, your group will need to:

- decide (in consultation with the goals stated in the syllabus and in individual writing assignments) what students should have learned;
- figure out ways to link those learning goals to a specific set of readings from *The New World Reader*;
- decide what the major points and/or the most significant points of those texts are;
- decide what kinds of questions would be most appropriate to gauge student learning;
- design an essay exam that would successfully gauge that learning – in order to do this, you’ll need to consider the following:
  - *Is this an in-class exam?* if so, how long is the class period? how many questions can students reasonably answer in sufficient depth in this amount of time? will students be allowed to use notes or the text in question? will students have access to the questions ahead of time?
  - *Is this a take-home exam?* if so, how many days will students have to work on the exam? how many questions will you require students to answer? how in-depth should their responses be? should they use outside sources?

Groups may choose to examine students over any readings in *The New World Reader* which you feel significantly represent the main content goals of the course. You can choose as many of the essays from the textbook as you like, and you can provide students with whatever images you like, but your exam should, in some way, require that students consider at least 6 pieces of text in their answers to the exam you design.

For goal #2 above – planning and self-evaluation documents which must include, but are not limited to, the following –

- a record of each group meeting, topics discussed, tasks assigned and completed;
- drafts of significant points, questions, ideas, comments;
- individual reflective evaluations of the group' work and final project presentation.

During the finals slot for the course, each group will present their exam to the whole class and will be prepared to answer questions and field comments from peers and from the professor. **Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes.** Your planning documents, actual exam, presentation materials and individual reflective evaluations will also be due at that time.

## **(PRO) 112: Writing, Research & Technologies**

This is the second semester of the required two-course writing sequence for all NRC students. Successful completion of these two courses (111 & 122) satisfies MSU's Tier One writing requirement. Additionally, in conjunction with the second semester of the required common course, 202, this three-credit course completes the foundation for the NRC major.

112 builds on experiences and practices students gain from 111; this second semester, then, assumes that students already:

- have a common language for talking about writing;
- can use writing for a variety of purposes, especially to develop knowledge and engage in reflection;
- have practice writing with an awareness of cross-cultural audiences;
- understand rhetorical and discursive conventions;
- have practice with a flexible repertoire of writing tools and strategies;
- have practice with synthesizing evidence and appropriately citing sources;
- can write using Standard American English.

In other words, 112 asks that students use their knowledge of the generalized good practices of writing which were the focus of 111 in more specific, research-directed, argument-oriented ways.

Becoming a good writer is a recursive, complex, learning process that takes many years to accomplish. After the completion of 112, students will be fully prepared as writers to engage in the intellectual work of the University at a high-achieving level and will be able to engage in humanities-centered research, and to present that research in sophisticated ways.

### **Goals**

- learn to use writing for inquiry into specific issues in public life;
- have practice at arguing from a humanities-centered perspective;
- learn to assess issues and define research projects;
- have practice at locating, evaluating, citing, and using primary/secondary sources;
- become proficient in analyzing and composing arguments using multiple media (oral, written, and digital formats);
- learn to select specific genres and modes of expression to reach specific audiences;
- understand and participate in ethical research conduct.

## **Staffing**

To offer 6 sections of 15 in the spring semester of the first year, 3 FTE will be required, rising at a rate of 1 FTE/semester per 30-35 enrollees; and in accordance with stringent recommendations for writing courses made by all relevant professional societies (Modern Language Association, Conference on College Composition and Communication, National Council of Teachers of English, Michigan College English Association, Council of Writing Program Administrators), sections will be comprised of 15-20 students.

## **Format**

Three fifty-minute sessions per week:

- two focused on daily readings and assignments
- one focused on writing workshops and/or media instruction and exploration.<sup>11</sup>
- Out-of-class individual and small-group consultations as needed

## **Text**

*The Structure of Argument* 3E, Annette Rottenberg (Bedford/St. Martin's).

Note: This sample syllabus is based on readings from the above textbook for direct instruction in argument analysis and composing, and on using current daily newspapers, magazines, news shows, websites, blogs, etc. as a supplemental source on current issues. It's also assumed that students enrolled in 112 will also be enrolled in 202 so that, occasionally, there may be some readings assigned in common.

## **Course Structure**

All class sessions will be held in a fully networked computer classroom (or a wireless technology environment) or in the library. MSU's "Microlab Use Policy" and "Microlab Code of Conduct" can be found at <http://microlabs.msu.edu/policies.html>

While the course is divided into two major parts (see below), once a week there will be a 50-minute class period set aside as a workshop and/or media exploration day. During that time, students will either workshop writings in small groups (with the supervision of the instructor), receive direct instruction in a medium of composing and presenting their work for the course (oral presentations without digital technology, oral presentations with digital technology, using PowerPoint or FlipBook, creating web-based texts, using blogs, using visual texts in print-based writings, using visual texts in digital compositions, etc.), or have time to explore composing mediums using research they've already completed.

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<sup>11</sup> The format of 112 reduces the workshop time from 100 minutes per week to 50 minutes per week. The rationale for this change in format from 111 to 112 is that after the first semester, students will be more efficient in their use of workshop time.

The direct instruction sessions will focus both on the “how-to” of unfamiliar technologies and mediums and on the rhetorical usefulness of such mediums for exploring particular topics for particular audiences.

During the other two 50-minute class periods each week there will be direct instruction in argument analysis and design, in-class writings, group work, discussion of course readings and assignments, and discussions focused on synthesizing information from 111, 201, and 202 into “interest areas” for students to explore with research projects. Near the end of the semester, there will be in-class oral and digital presentations, and more concentrated work on the final course project – a research portfolio.

Much of the business of the course (turning in assignments, responding to drafts, etc.) will take place using MSU’s online course management system – ANGEL. Help guides for ANGEL are available at <http://angel.msu.edu>

### **Course Expectations**

1. Daily there will be reading and writing activities assigned: a reading, a response to a reading, a short written analysis, finding texts to share for analysis, an in-class activity (group and individual), or a draft of a project assignment. These are the building blocks of the major course activities and are, of course, required for successful completion of the course.
2. This is a course in which frequent engaged discussion and participation is required. I expect all students to consistently and productively participate in the “public” of our classroom. Students who consistently fail to engage in discussion, to participate in group work, and to complete daily writing/reading activities will not be able to pass this course.
3. Students will be expected to regularly work in groups during the semester – sometimes to complete an in-class activity, sometimes to provide feedback on one another’s Writing Project drafts, and sometimes to produce a group project. During the first few days of class, we will experiment with different group configurations and (with your feedback) I will assign permanent groups by the beginning of the third week of the semester. I expect each student to strive to be a good group member, to support and productively engage with the work of the other folks in his/her group, and to participate on a regular and equitable basis. If there are problems in a working group, I will be happy to meet with that group to troubleshoot and brainstorm solutions. Any individual who cannot be a productive and contributing group member will be at risk for not being able to successfully complete the course.
4. I will hold individual, out-of-class student conferences twice a semester. In addition to these two “required” conferences, students may meet with me any time during the semester – as individuals or groups – during my regular office hours or by appointment.

5. MSU expects that each student will attend class on a regular and consistent basis. I expect that each student will be in class every day since much of the course depends so heavily on classroom participation and instruction. For a student who misses more than three classes, his/her grade will be affected; a student who misses more than six classes will be at risk of failing the course entirely. Students who have a medical or personal emergency that requires/forces an absence should inform me as soon as possible. Students are responsible for making up all missed course activities.

## **General Outline of Topics and Assignments**

### **1. Weeks 1&2: Introduction to the Course – Definitions, Connections, Expectations**

Instruction during these first weeks will focus on laying out and normalizing course procedures (including the establishment of permanent peer working groups), remembering what was learned in 111 and using that as a foundation on which to build a common language for talking about research and argument in 112. We'll also talk/write about what the topic of focus is for this year's 202 and brainstorm some very preliminary ideas for research projects. We'll talk specifically about the differences between "fighting," argument and persuasion and do some "finding" exercises using the local/school newspaper to delineate what these three rhetorical forms look like in common use.

### **2. Weeks 3- 6: Part One – The Structure of Argument**

These weeks will be devoted to argument analysis with, of course, continued prompting for students to think about a research area of interest that intersects with their coursework in 202. This section has three main components:

#### **A. Understanding and responding to arguments – oral, written, and digital**

Readings for this component will come from Rottenberg's *The Structure of Argument* and include topics such as "the nature of argument," "why study argument," "the terms of argument," "responding as a critical reader," "responding to visual arguments," and "responding as a writer." Students will also learn some general guidelines to use for critical listening and argument analysis.

Assignments for this component will include a variety of beginning critical response writings (individual- and group-written, in and out of class) and some chances to practice annotating and evaluating oral, written and digital arguments. Two samples are listed below.

Sample #1: Report on an argument you have heard recently – either in person or from TV or the radio. What are the parts of that argument you can identify (claims, supports, warrants)? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the argument you heard?

Sample #2: Watch and listen to one televised talk show like *Oprah* in which audiences discuss a controversial social problem. Write a critical review of the discussions, mentioning as completely as you can the major claims, the most important evidence, and the declared or hidden warrants. How much did the oral format contribute to the success or failure of the argument? Which features of the argument are more prominent in this format? Which are less noticeable?

B. Understanding and using claims/supports/warrants for analyzing and composing arguments

Readings for this component of the course will be either direct instruction from the textbook and the instructor about how to recognize and interpret parts of argument (claims, support, warrants) or will be texts used for analysis (which will be drawn from readings in 202, local newspapers, current television and/or radio shows, or sample arguments included in the textbook or provided by the instructor).

Assignments will focus on analysis and bringing students to a deep comfort level with discerning and interpreting a text's claims, supports, and warrants, and with taking texts apart and think about how the pieces work (or don't work) to argue a point or persuade an audience. The sample assignment included after component "c" below requires that students synthesize all they have learned in this section of the course.

C. Language, style, and audience

Readings for this component of the course will be either direct instruction from the textbook and the instructor about how language use/style works to shape meaning and reach particular audiences or will be texts used for analysis (again, drawn from the same sources as in "b" above).

Assignments will ask students to pay attention to how language use and presentation style (including the writer's/speaker's ethos) contribute to the success or failure of an argument for a particular audience. They will do small assignments that focus on language, style, presenter, and audience in order to prepare students for the section capstone assignment listed below.

***Sample Section Capstone Assignment: Analysis of a Print Ad***

Draft due at the beginning of week 6, revision due at end of week 6.  
This written analysis must be 2-3 pages (approximately 600-900 words).

The goal of this writing project is to analyze a print ad using the strategies we've developed over the past few weeks in order to consider specifically how dominant cultural notions of "culture" and "history" inflect the ad AND your own analysis of the ad.

*Some Prewriting Suggestions:*

Once you've picked an ad to analyze, make an outline of claims, supports, and warrants that are important to the ad you're analyzing. Freewrite or outline the ways in which "culture" and "history" seem to appear (or seem absent) in the ad. Sketch an idea (based on where the ad came from) of the audience for this argument. Start to draft your preliminary analysis. Consult with your peer group for advice.

Remember, a good argument analysis includes a detailed description of the text, a clear statement of the claims the text is making, followed by a clear analysis of supports and warrants. A *good argument analysis is an argument in itself* – a series of claims & supports about the text being analyzed.

**3. Weeks 7-15: Part Two – Researching, Composing, and Presenting Arguments**

This Section of the course is focused entirely on direct instruction in researching, arranging, and composing an argument. It is dominated by the Major Assignment, a sample of which is included after the general activities outlined below.

A. Identifying a research area (weeks 7-10)

- write a statement of research interest (3 paragraphs, due beginning of week 7)
- do preliminary research in that area of interest (create a 10-source preliminary using books, periodicals and web sources, due end of week 7)
- define a do-able research question (construct a "this project will..." research question, due middle of week 8)
- doing more research (weeks 8-9)
- locating recent and usable sources (class will meet in library 1 day/week)
- reading sources with a purpose
- using source materials ethically – citing, paraphrasing, mentioning
- how to create an annotated bibliography
- create an annotated bibliography draft (at least 20 sources, appropriately varied, draft due at end of week 9) for peer review and instructor comments

B. Organizing your research into an argument (weeks 10 & 11)

- developing a framework of claims and supports (includes individual and group activities such as "making a map," "questioning & speculating," "playing the devil's advocate," and "narrowing the question")
- understanding how warrants work in your own writing (includes group response activities)

- understanding your audience (requires draft of written audience statement and analysis)
  - matching your research goal with the features of presentation mediums (requires draft of written research goals and fits with various mediums)
  - draft of complete organizational proposal, including research question, outline/map of claims/supports/warrant management, audience analysis and presentation medium analysis (end of week 11) for peer review and instructor comments
- C. Composing your argument (weeks 12-15) – finalized versions of all the below due in Project Portfolio (turned in during finals week)
- drafting, revising, polishing a written presentation version (draft due end of middle of week 13 for peer review and instructor comments)
  - drafting, revising, polishing an oral presentation version (peer review at end of week 14, present week 15)
  - drafting, revising, polishing a digital presentation version (draft for peer review due beginning of week 14, final due beginning of week 15)

***Sample Major Assignment: Researched Argument Project Portfolio***

Pre-writing and drafts due over the final half of the semester (see detail in outline above).

Each component of this project has its own scope; however, it's expected that students will produce finalized versions of a 10-12 page written argument about an issue of culture or history from a humanities-centered perspective, a 10-minute oral presentation of their research/argument, a digital accompaniment to their written project, and a 2-3 page written critical reflection.

The *goals* of this writing portfolio are that you compose three versions of a research-based argument about a topic raised or implied in your experiences of all of the common courses in the NRC, but especially 202, from a humanities-centered perspective for specific audiences, and that you critically reflect on the processes (skill-based and intellectual) that led to those compositions.

Major Components of Portfolio: (items for which drafts, comments, and finalized version should be included are indicated with an \*)

1. Identifying a Research Area – includes \*statement of research interest, bibliography, initial research question, \*annotated bibliography;
2. Organizing Your Research Into an Argument – complete organization proposal for project (includes \*research question, initial outline/map of claims/supports/warrant management, audience analysis and presentation medium analysis);
3. Three Different Presentations of Your Researched Argument -- \*written, \*oral, \*digital;

4. Critical Reflection – to focus on the processes of synthesis, skill acquisition, and intellectual engagement that are both evidenced by, and culminated in, the documents in this portfolio.

(Note: all of the assignment components outlined below will be vetted in peer working groups and to the instructor via ANGEL for feedback and revision advice. All are considered draft documents, subject to revisions, until a finalized version appears in the Project Portfolio; however, students will receive provisional evaluation of these components from the instructor when they are turned in.)

### Grading

Much of the work of the course is based on revised versions of assignments turned in at various points during the semester, and on the instructor’s evaluative feedback to students during the two required conferences. Students who have questions about their grade-status during the semester should speak with the instructor.

Final course grades will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages (see assignment sheets for detailed requirements). Students must turn in all assignments in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Breakdown of percentages:

Daily writing activities	20%
Daily participation	20%
Section One Capstone Project	10%
Researched Argument Project Portfolio	50%

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course, this college, or at this University. Please see *General Student Regulations* and *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide* for details about MSU’s policies on academic integrity. Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course.

MSU operates under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act – if you have a recognized disability that prevents you from completing any of the course requirements, please contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations.

**Appendix 2: Sample Core Course Syllabi**

## **(PRO) 201: Trans-cultural Relations through the Ages**

This is the first semester of the required two-course sequence for all NRC students. It is consciously coordinated with the first course in the writing sequence (101) and provides a common experience for students and faculty to focus on a set of questions which will be explored throughout the life and work of the college.

### **Objectives:**

201 serves as the opportunity for all members of the college to meet one another in an intellectual rigorous but also dynamic setting. Through a series of common meetings, members of the class will gain an understanding of the ways in which a trans-cultural approach to knowledge forces them to look for connections, relationships and potential new ways of synthesizing information.

Through a quartet of sections, however, students will also get specific information from which they can begin to work toward an understanding of how scholars have already begun to push past such models as Western Civilization and World Systems analysis to focus upon the cultural components of relationships throughout the world.

### **Staffing**

The course is taught by four faculty members who will coordinate the common experiences every week but also bring their specific field expertise to individual classes, in which discussion can be particularly robust.

### **Format**

1. *The 'Course as a Whole.'* All students will meet once a week on Monday evenings from 7-9; for each major part of the course, there will be a kickoff formal lecture, taught by all four faculty members, either as a series of talks over the two hours, a discussion in the form of a panel, a debate or some other means of presenting the issues; other Monday evening meetings may be largely based on a movie, a dramatic presentation, a concert or some other means of enriching the discussion, but there will be some "scene setting" by at least one of the faculty members in the class.
2. *Discussion Sections.* Students will meet three times a week in one of four sections, led by faculty in the college. **[Only two Discussion Sections are described below in this sample syllabus.]** These will be focused on specific areas on which the faculty member is expert, but will use the topics developed in the course as a whole, looking at the big questions from a specific point of view-- the obvious possibilities are using language (linguistics), religion and ethics, economic organization, gender analysis (including kinship and family), music, art and stories/narratives/tales/legends. However, as each year the faculty will change, these specific takes on the big questions will as well.

All four sections will focus the first two week's discussion on a common readings or reading. These might include a novel, a play, a historical account of cultural interaction or a theoretical work, such as Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*; Sherry Simon, *Gender in Translation*; Steven Fieirman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, Nicholas Oster: *Empires of the Word: a Language history of the world*; or Sidney Mintz, *Sugar and Slavery*.

### **Assignments and grading**

Final course grades will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages (Word counts are approximate):

One critical essay on a reading (1,500-2,000 words)	20%
One comparative essay on several readings (2,000 words)	20%
One creative work in response to readings	20%
Class participation	10%
Take-home final	30%
ANGEL journal	P/NP

The specific assignments for each of these projects will be created by the faculty member in charge of the sections.

NRC classes adhere to the university policies on Academic Integrity and will provide all necessary accommodations to students with disabilities.

### **Weekly Topics for the Course as a Whole**

#### **Part One: Why is studying cultural connections important?**

In this two week introductory section of the course, the students and faculty will engage in a close reading of a major theoretical text on trans-cultural relationships. Part of the purpose of this section is to move the discussion away from the idea of centers (Eurocentrism, Afrocentrism, etc.) and toward the issue of relationships among peoples. Among the issues to be considered is why the trans-cultural approach opens up issues which are not as available with other models, such as the international or global approaches, as students try to understand how they can cross artificial boundaries and begin to look at world issues. The topics for the course as a whole might be:

- Week One: What is the notion of trans-cultural relationships?
- Week Two: What does trans-cultural analysis require of academics?

Sample reading: Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*

#### **Part Two: How did the first societies reach self-consciousness as “the People”?**

The specific subject matter begins with an examination of early cultures, from prehistory through the ancient world. The dominant issue in this section is to begin to understand

how societies first coalesced around such issues as religion, language, myths, economic needs, environmental constraints and opportunities and creative expression. How did these societies then begin to “know” themselves? Ultimately, how did this shared consciousness, as expressed in various cultural forms, shape their interaction with other similarly forming societies. In the individual sections, these issues can be explored in specifics, which in the Monday general meeting the broad contours can be examined. The topics for this section might be:

- Week Three: How did early people understand their world?
- Week Four: How did early people use a variety of techniques to shape their world? How did gender and race relationships and assumptions shape these societies?
- Week Five: How did early people move from isolation to interaction?

Sample reading: Bruce Trigger, *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*

### **Part Three: How did contact among these societies bring change, trouble and new possibilities?**

The next section looks closely at the series of cultural collisions which took place in the period between ancient and modern societies, variously named the dark ages, the middle ages or the pre-modern era. However, from a world perspective, even such labels fall away, as the life of Tang China, the Inca empire, the world of Islam and the development of the Mississippian complex are hard to fit into the standard European history model. The class will consider the nature of varying developments, the rise of technologies and products in isolation from one another, and the routes of interaction which began to shape new relationships and increasing conflicts. The topics for this section might include:

- Week Six: What exchanges came from empires and other kinds of relationships?
- Week Seven: How did relatively isolated societies develop?
- Week Eight: What institutions were created to shape the nature of cultural interaction?

Sample reading: Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road*

### **Part Four: How did technologies and products from China, the Islamic World and Mesoamerica change everything?**

A set of technologies and goods suddenly transformed the world 600 years ago. Four crucial elements—ships, gunpowder, potatoes and horses—served to throw societies into sudden contact with one another. Europeans in particular took these technologies and products and transformed themselves around them, although each was borrowed from another culture. Out of this transformation came warfare, patriarchy, slavery and empires, while at the same time there emerged the scientific revolution, capitalism and the novel. Conceivable topics for this section might be:

- Week Nine: What effects did technology have upon cultural interactions?
- Week Ten: How did the modernization lead to inequalities across the world?
- Week Eleven: What new cultural forms came out of modern economic systems?

Sample reading: Sidney Mintz, *Sugar and Slavery*

## **Part Five: How did the world of the last 100 years become very small and very large at the same time?**

The life of the world in the recent past has become both infinitely complex and increasingly interwoven. As the early modern systems of slavery, colonialism, and emergent capitalism gave way to movements of liberation and expanding social welfare ideals by both capitalist and socialist states, the twentieth century also witnessed some of the greatest brutality, oppression, warfare and manifest evil in world history. All of these transformations had deep resonance throughout the world, forcing new relationships, new ideas and new cultural forms. Some of the questions which might be asked in this last section are:

- Week Twelve: How did “non-western” societies begin to transform “western” ones?
- Week Thirteen: How did individuals begin to take on roles beyond the border of their societies?
- Week Fourteen: How did the communication network serve to transmit trans-cultural forms?
- Week Fifteen: What tentative answers might be proposed for the main questions of the course?

Sample reading: Madan Sarup, *Identity and Culture in the Post-Modern World*

### **Discussion Section: Commodities and trans-cultural studies**

**Part One:** Common in all sections

**Part Two: Trans-cultural relations in the Ancient world:** *metals and the formation of culture*

- Week Three: How did early people understand their world? *gold and worship systems*
- Week Four: How did early people use a variety of techniques to shape their world? *Arrow points and obsidian in first societies*
- Week Five: How did early people move from isolation to interaction? *The Egyptian exploration of North Africa looking for copper and other commodities*

Typical Reading: James Richardson, *Peoples of the Andes*

**Part Three: Trans-cultural relations in the pre-modern world:** *silk as the East and West met*

- Week Six: What exchanges came from empires and other kinds of relationships? *The silk road as a route of contact*
- Week Seven: How did relatively isolated societies develop? *How the gypsies were transformed by their migration from India to Europe along the silk route*
- Week Eight: What institutions were created to shape the nature of cultural interaction? *Renaissance trade and silk*

Typical reading: Roger Moreau, *The Roma: Walking in the Path of the Gypsies*

**Part Four: Trans-cultural relations in the modern era: *sugar and modernism***

- Week Nine: What effects did technology have upon cultural interactions? *Sweets and societies in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia*
- Week Ten: How did the modern era lead to inequalities across the world? *Sugar and slavery*
- Week Eleven: What new cultural forms came out of modern economic systems? *Alcohol and pirates in the Indian Ocean*

Typical reading: Sidney Mintz, *Sugar and Slaves*

**Part Five: Trans-cultural relations today and tomorrow: *Reggae and the world***

- Week Twelve: How did “non-western” societies begin to transform “western” ones? *Reggae and Rastafarianism*
- Week Thirteen: How did individuals begin to take on roles beyond the border of their societies? *Bob Marley as the international man*
- Week Fourteen: How did the communication network serve to transmit transcultural forms? *World music, opportunities and concerns*
- Week Fifteen: What tentative answers might be proposed for the main questions of the course?

Typical Reading: Hank Bodorowitz, *Every Little Thing Gonna Be Alright: The Bob Marley Reader*

**Discussion Section: Telling tales in trans-cultural ways**

**Part one:** Common in all sections

**Part two: Ancient tales: *Myths and meanings***

- Week Three: How did early people understand their world? *How did the Aboriginal people of Australia use stories of the “Dream world” to begin to understand their world?*
- Week Four: How did early people use a variety of techniques to shape their world? *Comparing stories of law givers in three societies: Moses (Hebrew), Lycurgus (Greek) and Ala (Igbo)*
- Week Five: How did early people move from isolation to interaction? *Siddhartha’s discovery of the world*

Typical reading: Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* and Asvaghosa, *Buddhacarita*

**Part three: Tales from middle eras: *Literatures and connections***

- Week Six: What exchanges came from empires and other kinds of relationships? *Sheherazade and the narrative of empire*
- Week Seven: How did relatively isolated societies develop? *Potlatch as a set of stories*

- Week Eight: What institutions were created to shape the nature of cultural interaction? *Dealing with the great heresy: Cathar stories and Catholic stories*  
Typical reading: *A Thousand-and-One Nights*

**Part four: Narrating the new worlds: *Literatures and the colonial era***

- Week Nine: What effects did technology have upon cultural interactions? *The Aztecs discover Cortez*
- Week Ten: How did the modern era lead to inequalities across the world? *King Leopold and the Congo: tales from a Fanonian perspective*
- Week Eleven: What new cultural forms came out of modern relationships? *Van Gough and Japan*

Typical reading: *Codex Mendoza*

**Part five: Narrating the recent worlds: *Literatures in the postcolonial context***

- Week Twelve: How did “non-western” societies begin to transform “western” ones? *The Beats and Buddhism*
- Week Thirteen: How did individuals begin to take on roles beyond the borders of their societies? *Narratives of Che*
- Week Fourteen: How did the communication network serve to transmit trans-cultural forms? *The internet and world literature*
- Week Fifteen: What tentative answers might be proposed for the main questions of the course?

Typical reading: Ana Menendez, *Loving Che*

## **(PRO) 202: The Presence of the Past**

This is the second semester of the required two-course sequence for all NRC students. In conjunction with the second semester of the required writing sequence, 112, this four-credit course completes the foundation for the NRC major

### **Objectives**

202 introduces students to the notion of the presence of the past, and how it creates possibilities for an engaged ethical life now and in the future. In 201 students learned what it means to think of our cultures and histories in global terms. We traced the main currents of world history across a diverse set of cultures through some of the many products, technologies, and forms of life that have emerged since antiquity. In 202 we examine the complex cultural significance of this history and some of the ethical challenges that we now face.

Engagement is the linchpin of the course, and it takes several forms. It refers to the immersion of the creative artist, writer, and scholar in his or her subject matter. It also refers to the civic engagement of community members, activists, and social critics. Students will choose among various experiential learning activities located on this continuum – for example, informal creative writing workshops among themselves or with a community group such as residents in an assisted living program; coffee house poetry readings; and tutoring immigrants and refugees who are preparing for their INS citizenship test.

### **Staffing**

A team of three faculty members will teach the larger plenary meetings, lead the smaller discussion sections, and supervise the additional experiential learning activities. There will be guest lectures, workshops, and studio and performance apprenticeships with other faculty, community partners, and advanced graduate students.

A course coordinator will organize the experiential learning activities and other co-curricular events specific to the course.

### **Format**

1 lecture  
1 recitation  
4-hour experiential learning activity per week

The lecture will vary from a traditional presentation by 1 lecturer to more interactive presentations in which 2-3 faculty members will debate, discuss, and comment on one another's presentations.

The recitation section will be tailored to areas of particular interest to students and the faculty leader, who will supplement the general syllabus for the course with appropriate readings, films, and other materials and activities.

The experiential learning activities will cut across recitation sections, and students will choose among a set of organized options with scheduled times and places. These engagement activities will include student-run film programs, poetry slams, short performances of various sorts, community service-learning projects, and studio art and performance workshops. Web technologies will be used to share information and post a calendar of events for different projects, activities, and special events for small groups, the class as a whole, and community partners.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Final course grades will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages. (Word counts for each paper assignment are approximate minima.)

Two essays (1,500 – 2,000 words each)	50%
Participation, including one oral presentation	15%
Bi-weekly journals on ANGEL	P/NP
Final examination	35%

The topics for the essay assignments will be written specifically for individual discussion sections. The oral presentation will focus on individual or group experiential learning activities. The presentations will be given in discussion sections, but will be open to all students in the class. A member of the faculty team must approve the student's written outline for the oral presentation in advance. In addition to the oral presentation, participation grades will be based upon active and informed contributions to discussions in class and on the ANGEL website for the course. Journals will be graded Pass/No Pass, and they must be turned in every two weeks. Students must receive a passing grade on each of the bi-weekly journals in order to receive credit for the course. The final examination will be cumulative and based on the common readings for the course as a whole.

Article 2.3.3 of the MSU *Academic Freedom Report* states that “the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the NRC adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide*. Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course.

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY).

## **Topics and Readings**

The five general topics below are the fixed points in the course. The Introduction creates a vocabulary for the course that builds upon the work done in 201. Topics 2-4 take Paul Gauguin's later painting, "*Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?*" as their inspiration, but are not confined to his particular answers to these questions or even his formulation of the questions. Topic 5 is an attempt to think about what concrete steps people can take in response to this analysis, with special attention to career questions that students themselves may have.

**The books listed as readings for each sub-topic are illustrative. Not all of them will be used, and more likely there will be shorter reading selections from these authors and others like them. These readings for the course as a whole will be supplemented with literature, film, and music chosen by each of the faculty team members for her or his section(s).**

### **1. Introduction: The Presence of the Past**

There are many ways that the notion of the 'presence of the past' can be refined and discussed. Each faculty member will find his or her method for developing it in more detail. The past that we are talking about is the four-part story that students have studied in 201 on the major trans-cultural relationships that have constituted the human experience. What are the legacies of this complex past? What meanings and significance do they have in the present and how can and should they be used to shape the future?

One way to grasp 'the presence of the past' is to identify the dominant myths that guide our present and future choices. What stories do people tell about the past and its development over time? These myths link certain ways of knowing certain things about the past with certain kinds of power over nature and social relations. The 'presence of the past' can be embodied in myths, poetry, and other forms of literature. It can take the form of a written constitution, an epic poem, or a musical tradition. It can also be embodied more concretely in monuments and memorials

Here are three such stories or creation myths. By 'story' or 'myth' we do not mean something that is fantastic or simply false. We mean narratives that provide a framework that people have used to interpret key parts of their lives. Constitutional democracies have founding myths just as religious societies have creation myths. While myths are culturally specific in once, they are also more than that. In the words of Paul Ricoeur, "The mythos of any community is the bearer of something which exceeds its own frontiers; it is the bearer of other *possible* worlds." We begin with the myths that have set us apart and guided our actions in order to see how they have created the possibilities for new cooperative as well as competitive courses of conduct.

- **The myth of good and evil.** Knowledge of good and evil seems to be a recurrent value and form of power in many cultures. It is often institutionalized and organized in complex ways within religious institutions. It is also hotly disputed. How this myth is incorporated into present institutions and practices will have profound implications for who can be a member of a society, who can participate, and on what terms. Priests have been the privileged interpreters of good and evil in some societies. Teachers and other professionals have controlled this power at other times.

Sample Readings: Jean Delumeau, *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (University of Illinois Press, 2000); Thomas King, *The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative* (House of Anansi Press, 2003); Marilou Awiakta, *Selu: Seeking the Corn Mother's Wisdom* (Fulcrum Publishers, 1994).

- **The myth of the Tower of Babel.** Knowledge of collective organization is also a form of power. Whoever knows how tribes, communities, corporations, and nations ought to be organized exercises enormous power. Common languages, however, can fall apart; and new structures based on new understandings can be built. Hobbes began *Leviathan* (his dictionary for the sovereign) by reminding his readers what happens when there are no agreed upon definitions of key terms.

Sample Readings: Jeffrey Stout, *Ethics after Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents* (Princeton University Press, 2001); Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (James Currey/Heinemann, 1986); Chang-rae Lee, *Native Speaker* (Riverhead Books, 1995).

- **The myth of the hero.** Here individual virtuosity and technical knowledge occupy center stage in the story of creation. This power is double-edged, of course, and can encourage hubris and cloud our vision of future unintended and unwanted consequences of action.

Sample Readings: David E. Nye, *America as Second Creation: Technology and Narratives of New Beginnings* (MIT Press, 2004); *Sunjata: A West African Epic of the Mande Peoples*, trans. David C. Conrad, ed. Tjanka Tassej, (Hackett, 2004)

## 2. Where do we come from, and how?

One can answer this question geographically, but this immediately raises the vexed question of how borders are drawn and how long they last. Similarly, one's identity as a member of a caste or profession may depend upon how secure one's claim to knowledge is, and one's claim to be a member of a clan or family will depend upon the contested genealogy of that clan or family.

- As we explore how founding and creation myths have been written and used more closely, we discover that as certain people map **territories** that are new to them, others may be excluded or even expelled. One group's founding may be the expropriation of another. The history of settler societies is especially complex in this way.

Readings: Amitav Ghosh, *The Hungry Tide* (Houghton Mifflin, 2005); Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton University Press, 2002); Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton University Press, 2005); Orhan Pamuk, *Snow* (Knopf, 2004); W.S. Merwin, *Migration: New and Selected Poems* (Copper Canyon Books, 2005); Gunter Grass, *Crabwalk* (Harcourt, 2002).

- At the same time that expert knowledge has been a creative and liberating force, it has also engendered new social relations and institutions: **academic disciplines and professions**. These bearers of expert knowledge and authority have competed with older established castes and privileged classes for authority, and their claims to expertise have been just as contested as the claims to territory of other ruling elites.

Sample Readings: Andrew Abbott, *Chaos of Disciplines* (University of Chicago, 2001).

- People also answer the question “where do we come from” by examining the genealogies of their respective **families**. Here too, however, the terrain is more contested and uneven than it may first appear. How families established themselves is not always a cause for celebration. Sometimes certain family members have been excluded, hidden, or expelled on the basis of race or religion while others have enjoyed rights of inheritance for the same reasons.

Sample Readings: Jan Lewis and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture* (University of Virginia Press, 1999); Lan Cao, *Monkey Bridge* (Penguin, 1997); Patricia J. Williams, *Open House : Of Family, Friends, Food, Piano Lessons, and the Search for a Room of My Own* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2004).

### 3. What are we like, and why?

Against the background of these stories that explain where we have come from (e.g., a particular land, an occupational group, a family, or some other point of origin) and that define our basic identity, individuals develop additional group identities. As they struggle to understand where they have come from, they develop new relationships to others.

- **Participants and members** in political societies enjoy certain rights and responsibilities. These are not absolute – they can be lost and qualified. They

can also be gained and regained. Through processes of immigration, occupation, and restoration, the terms of political membership can shift dramatically.

Sample Readings: Joseph Carens, *Culture, Citizenship, and Community: A Contextual Exploration of Justice As Evenhandedness* (Oxford University Press, 2000); Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: equality and diversity in the global era* (Princeton University Press, 2002).

- Individuals who depend upon professionals and other experts for knowledge and a range of goods and services are **clients and consumers**, not participants and members. While they may enjoy a degree of consumer sovereignty, for example, this metaphor may obscure the differences that exist between clients and consumers as groups on the one hand and citizens on the other.

Sample Readings: Peter N. Stearns, *Consumerism in World History: The Global Transformation of Desire* (Routledge, 2001)

- A third set of groups that individuals may find themselves in is the group of **victims, bystanders, and perpetrators** in the context of mass violence. Despite their political membership and their economic and social positions, individuals may be swept up in violent mass movements that cross political boundaries and ignore economic class and social status. This is not to deny that as individuals they have certain limited choices in this context, but only that their choices are made all the more difficult by the cycles of hatred that can rage between peoples.

Sample Readings: Elizabeth Spelman, *Fruits of Sorrow: Framing Our Attention to Suffering* (Beacon Press, 1997); Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, trans. Stuart Wolf (Touchstone, 1996); Wysława Szymborska, *Poems New and Collected* (Harvest Books, 2000); Jane Taylor, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (Juta Academic, 1998); *Shoah*, director Claude Lanzmann.

#### 4. Where are we going, and should we?

At the same time that individual and group identities are formed and contested, critical questions arise about what is best and what wrongs ought to be righted. These moral questions involve our relationship to future generations, not just compatriots, neighbors, and relatives.

- As we try to decide who belongs and who doesn't, who should be in authority and who should not, the moral problems of **sustainability** – environmental, economic, social, and cultural – must be faced. Not all claims can be honored, and even those that ought to be honored will require sacrifices.

Sample Readings: Daniel Little, *The Paradox of Wealth and Poverty: Mapping the Ethical Dilemmas of Global Development* (Westview, 2003); Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Basic Books, 1999)

- Disagreements over resources, sovereignty, and moral values themselves often lead to **war and peace**. If there is to be some settlement – whether it is a truce, a peace, or an imposed cessation of hostilities – the terms must be negotiated. Whether they are merely a matter of ‘victor’s justice’ or they are part of a fair settlement is a complex question whose answer may well determine the likelihood of future wars.

Sample Readings: Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Beacon Press, 1998); Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment* (Schocken, 2003); *Ashes and Diamonds*, director Andrzej Wajda

## 5. How can we get there from here?

How individuals and groups have responded to the ‘presence of the past’ and the possibilities it affords has varied as much as have their group identities and the struggles that have arisen between them. These modes of response are not mutually exclusive. More often than not, we respond in a variety of ways along a continuum between engagement and disengagement. Sometimes the response involves personal transformation, that is, a rethinking of human needs. Sometimes it involves primarily a strategy of coping and conflict avoidance. Sometimes we experiment with new institutions and practices inspired by our democratic imaginations.

- Some of the modes we find are **artistic**. By coming to terms with ethical problems of sustainability, war, and peace through art, poetry, literature, and drama, citizens create new fora in which to respond to new problems and challenges.

Sample Readings: Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Doubleday, 1997); James E. Young, *At Memory’s Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (Yale University Press, 2000).

- On the other hand, they may become directly involved in **civic and political** life. They can organize and lobby the state and other political powers through civic organizations and professional societies. They can participate directly in political life as elected officials and citizens. They can join movements to resist unjust and oppressive regimes. They can collaborate on new experiments in democracy locally and across borders.

Sample Readings: Miles Horton, *The Long Haul: an autobiography* (Teachers College Press, 1998); Mary Kaldor, *Global Civil Society: An Answer to War* (Polity, 2003); Carol C. Gould, *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

**Appendix 3: Sample Topics Course Descriptions**

### 310: Topics in Children and Cultures

What is childhood? How long does it last? What mix of dependency and autonomy should it involve? What privileges and immunities should it entail? What risks and dangers run through it? Dostoevsky famously said of prisons that “The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons.” We no longer speak with confidence, of course, about ‘civilization’ and its progress by degree, as if it was a single entity capable of moving in a single direction. However, duly qualified, we might say the same thing about children and the space they inhabit. By entering the worlds which our children inhabit, whether it is contemporary India through the lens of a modern filmmaker or 19<sup>th</sup> century London through the eyes of a novelist, we learn as much about our own claims to humanity as we do about the lives of our children.

Children are neither the property of their parents nor fully autonomous persons. Yet, children are the inhabitants of this ambiguous zone of development, part invention and part inheritance. They are the legatees of our greatest accomplishments and our greatest failures, and they are the trustees of the future. How they are raised is both a central part of any culture and a central determinant of how that culture fares in the global bazaar in which cultures encounter each other today.

As we judge the development of cultures – disparate, dominant, and subordinate – and the ethical challenges this process has generated, the place of children proves to be an extraordinary indicator of what’s been done and what lies ahead. In order for their potentials to be realized within this shifting trans-cultural context, children must be educated, nourished, protected, and loved. Because they are differently endowed, culturally and naturally, realizing their potentials requires different types and levels of resources. This is as true for recreational resources and diets as it is for coming-of age ceremonies and vaccinations; what is needed for children to reach a threshold of basic human functioning will vary from one climate and culture to the next.

NRC students who wish to view our trans-cultural heritage and the ethical dilemmas it poses for us through the lens of childhood and society will take *Topics in Children and Cultures* taught by an NRC faculty member joined by guest participants from other departments and programs. The topics covered include

- a. Children’s literature: fairy tales, folklore, and mythology
- b. Children in school: basic needs and special needs
- c. Children’s health and nutrition: disparities and justice
- d. Children’s safety and security: protections and entitlements
- e. Children in wartime: soldiers, refugees, victims
- f. Child’s play: theater, dance, animation, recreation, music

In addition to this Topics course, students who have chosen this path will take 5 upper-level courses in other departments and programs. Consequently, students pursuing this path may

also receive a degree or certification in programs such as education; music therapy; pre-law; or Bioethics, Humanities, and Society.

Because engagement is an integral part of the mission of the NRC, it is important that students have the opportunity to pursue engagement activities that build upon and take advantage of their particular course of study. For students in *Childhood and Cultures* opportunities will be available with community partners such as St. Vincent's Home, The Black Child and Family Institute, Cristo Rey Community Center, The Beekman Center, The Heartwood School, Lansing Refugee Development Center, The Community Music School, and Potter Park Zoo.

### **320: Topics in Art and Public Life**

What is public life? In the NRC we are concerned with public life in the broadest sense, that is, the life of the political communities whose cultural identities have emerged, coalesced, and come apart. Public life is a struggle for political recognition that includes what goes on within official political institutions like legislatures, courts, and political parties. But even more importantly for our purposes, it includes what goes on in civil society: the neighborhood associations, clubs, and support groups; the many associations that have formed through the Internet; and many more groups who are all, at one time or another concerned, with how the public good is defined and who can have a say in this process.

The roles of art in this process of public life are as different as the forms of art themselves, and even more ephemeral. Monuments to great political leaders and memorials to fallen soldiers are objects of veneration that can quickly become targets of revenge as political tides turn. In other words, the role of a particular work of art in public life is not always what it was intended to be. It may grow in importance beyond the cultural boundaries in which it was conceived, and it may acquire an entirely different political meaning than it originally had. But, art is more than simply the object of competing interpretations of public goods and purposes. It can just as easily be the active agent itself. Greek tragedy's role in the political education of democratic Athens has been a rich source of inspiration for subsequent societies. The films of William Kentridge (*Ubu and the Truth Commission*) and Claude Lanzmann (*Shoah*) provoke and prompt as much as they report and remind. Music can inspire protest, reinforce loyalty, or rally the troops. Art in this active sense can also create public space, not just public sentiments. It can make it possible for citizens to gather, but it can also exclude others from participation in public life. For example, the history of suburban architecture, as Dolores Hayden has shown in *Redesigning the American Dream*, is the story of a better life for some and the loss of opportunities for others. The creation of suburban shopping malls – single-minded public spaces – has narrowed public discourse but then become a foil for critical cinematic representations.

An important part of the NRC major is to learn how to see, hear, read, and feel our cultural environment. Students study the trans-cultural histories of our world through the objects that link societies together such as gold, cotton, silk, and even salt. These are as much objects of art as they are economic commodities. Deciphering the peculiar impact of art on public life requires that we think of the familiar in unfamiliar terms, for example, suburban housing, handmade quilts, comics, and other crafts are laden with cultural significance for public life. Similarly, we must learn to re-think the cultural significance of the more traditional and iconic artistic productions, for example, sculptures, symphonies, and portraiture. We must learn to read these famous objects historically, not just as exquisite works of creative genius, whose cultural and ethical significance changes sometimes dramatically.

In *Art and Public Life* faculty joined by guest participants will explore topics such as the following.

- a. Architecture: gender and the family
- b. Political theater: resistance and revolution
- c. Comic art: memory and justice
- d. Photography: race and family
- e. Film: responsibility and reconciliation
- f. Monuments and memorials: honor, sacrifice, and inspiration
- g. Music: mourning and celebration
- h. Folk art and crafts: proverbial knowledge and community
- i. Landscapes: sacred sites and recreation

Students choosing this pathway will have the opportunity to pursue dual majors and other certifications in Art History, Museum Studies, Urban and Regional Planning, Film Studies, or other programs in the visual and performing arts. They will have opportunities within the NRC to explore art and public life through special studio and performance co-curricular activities. In addition to these immersion activities, they will have opportunities to pursue engagement projects with community partners in the arts, for example, with local community theater and dance companies.

### 330: Topics in Nature and Cultures

This intellectual pathway considers the complex ways in which culture and the natural world shape each other, and the ways in which the understanding and treatment of environmental issues might be enhanced through a richer understanding of that relationship. Three main premises provide direction: 1) the natural world shapes cultures and the ways that cultures interact, 2) culture influences both the natural world itself and how we understand it, 3) environmental issues are global issues at both a theoretical and practical level. Looking at environmental and ecological issues from a cultural perspective does not, of course, deny the scientific qualities of the underlying issues. However, the insights gained by examining how culture and nature influence one another makes nature a much more complex component of cultural studies.

How has nature shaped cultures and cultural interactions? In *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Jared Diamond argues that environmental factors created both obstacles and opportunities for cultures and that the dominance of one culture over another is often a product of their different interactions with their natural environments. This intellectual emphasis with the “nature pathway” will examine the issue of the interplay of culture and nature. For example, to what extent are food supplies determinative of a culture’s development? To what extent do cultures interact through their manipulation of nature?

How can nature be the object of discovery and inquiry in trans-cultural ways? While it is certainly true that the natural world shapes cultures and cultural interactions, it is equally true that cultures shape both the natural world and understandings of it. William Cronon’s *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* reminds readers that places are made as much as they are discovered. Cultural understandings of nature are reflected in religions and creation stories, art (including visual art, fiction, music, and nature writings), and science. In this area of emphasis students will explore the ways in which cultures engage in interchanges amongst one another about the meaning of nature, about the reality of the supernatural and about how people should relate to nature.

While it is obvious that many environmental issues are global issues – for instance, the impact of global warming knows no national boundaries – closer attention to the relationship between culture and nature reveals a much deeper sense in which this is true. Environmental problems are global problems not only because they affect people around the world, but also because they are understood and addressed by people with different cultural understandings of nature as well as different political and economic agendas. Thus, the ability to navigate cultural differences in regard to the environment is an important element in addressing global environmental problems.

The class will consider such topics as:

- a. Maps: how cultures depict nature
- b. Politics: how decisions about nature are made

- c. Film: recording nature
- d. Mending the land: how nature reclaims the land from people
- e. Food: how cultures use the products of nature
- f. Art: how cultures depict nature
- g. Scale: the relations between local and global views of nature
- h. Gender: how views of masculinity, femininity and the family shape views of nature

How do dual majors and specializations in environmental studies relate to trans-cultural studies? As students begin to think about how to apply what they are learning to a real-world situation, many will find that the already burgeoning field of environmental studies serves as an interesting arena for them to work out the cultural issues embedded in the work in the NRC. Reading and understanding environmental material from a cultural perspective will open up new areas of inquiry and give outreach and engagement activities with government agencies, private foundations, and non-profit organizations more depth.

### 340: Topics in Technology and Cultures

What is technology? What is the relationship between humans and technology? As the story of Prometheus teaches us, the human ability to harness nature and use it for our own ends is the knowledge of *art*, a creative knowledge of craft and technique, a knowledge that comes with much danger and much possibility.

Technology is itself a product of chance, trial and error, and human knowing. For Aristotle, *techne* was a productive knowledge, an art concerned with bringing into being, an art that places an ethical and moral responsibility upon the maker. While *techne* and technology are not synonymous, tracing their relationship through history and across cultures can help us understand how humans are related to the things they make (arts/artifacts) and the systems they use to make those things (technologies). It is that search for knowledge, art, and use that drives all technological production – from the creation and use of *wampumpeag* among the Haudenosaunee Peoples of North America to the innovations of the likes of Thomas Edison, Frank Lloyd Wright, Buckminster Fuller, and Linus Pauling to more recent innovations like the development of the Internet from the ARPANET.

NRC students who wish to study the relationship of technology to human cultures, and consider the intellectual questions and ethical dilemmas raised by such study will take *Topics in Technology and Culture* taught by an NRC faculty member joined by guest participants from other departments and programs. The topics covered include

- a. Histories of technology in writing, literature, music, art, theatre – how have available technologies shaped the possibilities of meaning-making for different cultures?
- b. Ethical issues in technology and culture – what are our human responsibilities in relation to the technologies we use and create?
- c. Technology and the environment – what is the relationship between the capabilities of human technologies and our responsibility to the natural world in which we live?
- d. *Techne* and the humanities – where do questions of art, craft, and knowledge-making intersect other fields of study and practice in the humanities?
- e. Technology and the study of material culture – what kinds of knowledge become more visible through studying the materials of culture and the ways in which those materials were made and used?
- f. Relationships between peoples and things in contemporary culture – how are the epistemologies of everyday twenty-first century life made?
- g. The laws of technology – where do technology standards, like the International Organization for Standardization, intersect with the study of human art and culture?

In addition to this Topics course, students who have chosen this path will take 5 upper-level courses in other departments and programs. They will have the opportunity to test their ideas in a variety of practical ways, and generate new hypotheses through experimental practice. Students pursuing this path may also receive a degree or certification in programs such as Environmental

Studies, Professional Writing, Museum Studies, Art & Art History, Music, Theatre, English, or Gaming Design.

Community and University partners with whom students in *Topics in Technology and Culture* may participate in engagement activities that build upon and take advantage of their course of study might include the Mid-Michigan chapter of the Sierra Club; the Nokomis Center; the WIDE Research Center; the Centre for Human Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences Online (MATRIX); the Knight Center for Environmental Journalism; and the Center for Fundamental Materials Research.

**Appendix 4: Sample Senior Seminar Description**

## 492: Senior Seminar in Trans-cultural Studies

Cultural studies has been one of the exciting fields of scholarship within the humanities over the last two decades. Some advocates, especially scholars of the Birmingham school, ask questions about popular culture, and how it serves as an alternative set of views and practices to those in the dominant and official culture. Other advocates, especially those in post-colonial studies, study the means by which oppressed people have responded to and developed cultural resources against colonial systems of oppression. Yet other cultural studies advocates, modeled on the black studies movement of the sixties, want to understand paths of development of cultures independent of and in juxtaposition to the cultural demands of the majority society.

Scholars of complex systems of cultural interaction, such as the Caribbean, have pioneered an emerging field of study which moves beyond the three major strands of cultural studies. Such scholars as Paul Gilroy, in his first book, *There Ain't No Black In The Union Jack*, have begun to study the complex interaction of cultures in what Ortiz labeled "trans-cultural studies." Students in the World College will have spent their first three years exploring the dimensions of these issues, and this course will provide them an opportunity to work out many of the implications of their work.

- To what extent are there successful examples of trans-cultural analysis? Franco Moretti has proposed the creation of a world republic of letters. One of the key issues in understanding and analyzing culture is who gets to do it. Critics, anthropologists, sociologists, etc., stake claims to understanding and characterizing cultures. Yet cultures are often resilient in the face of those who want to pin them down. Margaret Mead thought she understood Samoan culture, but it may well be that her informants were engaged in a complex disinformation campaign to send Mead in exactly the wrong direction. Therefore, this strain of inquiry will focus upon the relationship between scholar/critic/analyst and informer/participant.
- What are the best practices in trans-cultural studies? Students and scholars who wish to understand how cultures interact need to develop a set of skills which make them at once sensitive to cultural particularity but also attentive to cultural exchange. This requires developing skills in interviewing, understanding the ethical dimension of outsiders inquiring about cultural practices, development of historical knowledge of social and cultural relationships, creation of a facility in the complex nature of language in trans-cultural development as well as a host of other skills which can be the basis of both coursework and less formal projects.
- What are the discourses of trans-cultural studies? One of the most complex issues in this project comes from understanding the appropriate terminology to be used in developing the field. The term internationalism, long a key word for the political left, has now taken on a variety of means, as Perry Anderson has begun to explain. How have scholars developed an understanding of this word? Even more complex is the word global, which has come to have political meaning as

well. Theoretical, historical and practical explorations of the meanings of these and related words will be of particular interest to faculty trained as cultural critics. Embedded within this area is the very question of naming, identifying issues by giving them a name. For scholars of the plastic arts, a related puzzle is how to distinguish between art and artifact.

- What is the future of trans-cultural studies? As one of the only academic locales to focus upon these issues, the NRC has an obligation to begin to understand what opportunities and questions the field presents to the academy. This will include exploring the work of critics, writers, artists and musicians who are at the forefront of such engagements. Looking at case studies has already begun. Sabry Hafez, in an account of the history of Haydar Hadar's *Banquet for Seaweed*, understood the ways in which a novel about Islam could become a touchstone for the many levels of interaction within Islamic societies. As students and scholars begin their own explanation of robust cultural interactions, the NRC can become the leading center for the expansion of knowledge about the myriad issues emerging from trans-cultural studies.

## Addenda

### Report of the Summer Task Force 2005 For the New Residential College/School

September 2, 2005

After the STF Report was submitted to the Provost's Office on August 15, 2005, discussions have been held with Provost's Staff, Executive Committee of Academic Council, University Committee on Academic Policy, and approximately 25 interested faculty members from CAL, SSC, CCAS, and JMC. Based on these discussions and further STF deliberations, we now have a more detailed staffing model for the NRC over its first four years. We also have included in the required courses for the major four additional credit-bearing courses. These courses formalize the references to workshops, engagement activities, first-year seminars, and tutorials that are already discussed in the original Report.

### **Addendum to Section III. The Major**

- Required Courses and credits taken within NRC
  - 111 – 3
  - 112 – 3
  - 192 (First Year Seminar) – 2
  - 201 – 4
  - 202 – 4
  
  - Language Proficiency – 8
  
  - 290 (Second Year Tutorial) – 4
  - 291 (Creative Workshop) – 4
  - 292 (Engagement and Enrichment) – 8
  
  - 310/320/330/340 – 6
  
  - 491/492 – 4
  
- Required Courses and credits taken outside NRC
  - Five Electives – 15-20

Total required credits within NRC: 50

Total required credits: 65-70

## **Addendum to Sections XIII-X**

### **192: First-year Seminar**

These seminars (15-20 students) led by an individual faculty member would focus on topics that invite an interdisciplinary and broad humanistic approach. They would also stress the various modes of expression and forms of intelligence, so that students would learn how to analyze, critique, and perform as part of the seminar experience. Topics could include general issues such as rivers and dams, and home and work. They could also be focused on particular artists and social movements.

### **290: Second-year Tutorial**

These small-group tutorials will be built around general themes in the first-year core curriculum and provide students opportunities to explore some aspect(s) of the material they encountered in 111, 112, 201, and 202. Each section of 290 will emphasize independent study and research by students working in teams within that tutorial section. Faculty tutors will be assisted by graduate mentors. Scheduling will be flexible, not necessarily evenly distributed over the full 15-week semester.

### **291: Creative Workshops**

These workshops will be supervised by faculty, staff, community partners, and guests. They will involve a variety of forms of experiential learning, collaborative learning, and critique in a workshop setting (for example, a visual or performing arts workshop or an educational workshop). Students will revise and rephrase their work, often in conjunction with presentations by visiting artists, writers, and performers. The goal will be to enrich a student's command of language, including foreign languages, and other media of expression and types of performance.

### **292: Engagement and Reflection**

All students will be involved in an engagement project or set of engagement activities that integrate experiential learning with critical reflection. These will be supervised by faculty, staff, and community partners. They may stress civic engagement and service learning, or they may chose to participate in internships, study abroad programs, or apprenticeships. Students will meet periodically in small groups to compare notes and reflect on their experiences. There will be a final project, which may be a performance activity, the creation of a web site, or a public journal.

## Addendum to Section XI. Personnel

Table 1. Faculty Assignments and Full-Time Equivalents

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010	2010-2011
111 (3 credits) 112 (3)		5 sec.(100-125 seats) x 2 sem. = 10 FAs	10 FAs	10 FAs	10 FAs
201 (4) 202 (4)		4 sec. (100-125 seats) x 2 sem = 8 FAs	8 FAs	8 FAs	8 FAs
192: First-year Seminar (2)		5 sec.(100-125 seats) X 2 sem. = 10 FAs	10 FAs	10 FAs	10 FAs
290: Second – year Tutorial (4)			2 FAs	3 FAs	4 FAs
291:Creative Workshop (4)		2 workshops (20-40 seats) x 2 sem = 1 FA	1 FA	2 FAs	4 FAs
292: Engagement and Reflection (8)	1 FA	1 sec. (50-60 seats) x 2 sem. = 2 FAs	2 FAs	2 FAs	2FAs
Language Proficiency (8)	1 FA	1 FA	1 FA	2 FA	2 FA
310 (3)			1 sec. (25 seats) x 1 sem = 1 FA	1 FA	2 FA
320 (3)			1 FA	1 FA	2 FA
330 (3)			1 FA	1 FA	2 FA
340 (3)			1 FA	1 FA	2 FA
492: Capstone (4)				1 FA	4 FA
	2 FAs ??	32 FAs	38 FAs	42 FAs	52 FAs

Assuming a 2-2 teaching assignment per faculty, this means that NRC begins in fall 2007 with 8 FTE to cover 32 faculty assignments for the required courses for 100-125 students. It then ramps up to 13 FTE in fall 2010 to cover 52 FAs and all of the required courses within the NRC for approximately 400-500 students.

In addition there is a need for 3.0 FTE as coordinators, tech consultants, and facilities managers; and for visiting artists, graduate mentors, tutors, and special fellows. Not all 3.0 FTE would be needed in fall 2007.

**TOTAL FTE = 16.0 by 2010-2011 .** This does not include any formal faculty assignment as part of the 2-2 teaching load for 491: Senior Thesis, Summer School teaching, Honors Options, and other 390: Independent Studies. It also does not include teaching by dean and other administrators, possibly 4 FAs/year. If sections of 111 and 112 are capped at 15+, then three sections may be the equivalent of two regular FAs.