

January 8, 2018

To: University Committee on Undergraduate Education

From: Integrative Studies Enhancement Team

Re: Suggested Revisions for Michigan State University Diversity Requirement (IDN)

Background of Diversity Requirement at MSU

As the nation's pioneer land-grant university, inclusion is one of Michigan State University's core values. Today, MSU advances this core value by building a community that respects and values different backgrounds and viewpoints. MSU embeds this concept in the graduation requirement, which currently states:

Many of the courses in the Arts and Humanities area and in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences area, emphasize national diversity (designated "N" at the end of the course title), or international and multicultural diversity (designated "I" at the end of the course title). Some courses emphasize both national diversity, and international and multicultural diversity (designated "D" at the end of the course title). Students must include at least one "N" course and one "I" course in their Integrative Studies programs. A "D" course may meet either an "N" or an "I" requirement, but not both (Undergraduate Academic Programs Catalogue, Graduation Requirements, Requirements for the Integrative Studies Program).

Although this requirement represents the University's commitment to fostering a strong foundation in cultural understanding as a vital piece of the undergraduate learning experience, the world has changed since this statement's implementation in the early 1990s. MSU's commitment to diversity in the curriculum needs to be clarified and expanded to reflect both our current global society and inclusive teaching practices.

Requirement Revision Process Timeline

- In Spring 2016, then-Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Douglas Estry charged a group of faculty and administrators to consider how the concept of diversity should be included in the MSU curriculum at the request of Provost Youatt. This investigation led to an agreement that MSU's diversity requirement needed to be more clearly articulated and refined to reflect current classroom practices and global realities.
- In Spring of 2017, IAH's faculty advisory committee (FAC) reviewed current requirement language and agreed that the language was in need of revision. Also in

Spring of 2017, the ISS FAC was presented with a proposal of updated language to the IDN requirement. Initially these processes were conducted separately but have since become a collaborative process.

- In July 2017, a team of IAH faculty and curriculum development specialists researched current diversity requirements at other Big 10 Academic Alliance and R1 institutions. Then, using MSU's Undergraduate Learning Goals as a guide, the team formulated language to articulate recommendations for each IDN designation for both IAH and ISS curriculum, while also keeping in mind future potential adoption by General Science in the future.
- In September 2017, the revised language (*see next section and appendix tables*) was presented to the directors of IAH and ISS, who both agreed to approve the of the language and move the requirement to UCUE for further consideration. In addition to faculty approval, MSU's student governance (ASMSU) were presented with the language during their October 12 meeting and, after a discussion, gave their feedback for the language before it would be moved to UCUE.

Proposed Revised Diversity Requirement Designations for Integrative Studies Courses

Courses in the Arts and Humanities (IAH) area and in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (ISS) area emphasize diversity through IDN designations assigned to each class, which we propose defining as follows:

- Integrative Studies courses in the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences that are designated “N” at the end of the course title emphasize U.S. national diversity issues, ideas, and perspectives. The “N” designates a connection between the U.S. national landscape and diversity topics as they unfold in the United States. U.S. examples and readings play a dominant role in shaping the lens through which diversity is addressed.
- Integrative Studies courses in the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences that are designated as “I” emphasize international or global issues, ideas, and perspectives. The “I” designates a focus on one or more non-U.S. contexts and diversity topics as they unfold in these contexts. Non-U.S. examples and readings play a dominant role in shaping the lens through which diversity is addressed.
- Integrative Studies courses in the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences that are designated as “D” emphasize intercultural and diversity issues, ideas, and perspectives unconnected to geography or nation. The “D” designates a connection between intercultural and diversity topics that emphasizes the intersectionality of diverse identities and critical approaches to dominant narratives, institutions, and practices. Overall, courses with “D” focus on themes and questions that transcend time, space, and location.

Students must include at least one “N” course and one “I” course in their Integrative Studies programs. A “D” course may meet either an “N” or an “I” requirement, but not both.

MSU intends for this requirement to increase students' cultural understanding in ways that empower students to act as engaged, well-informed citizens as they meet the challenges and opportunities of a complex, interconnected world in the 21st century. In addition to the academic benefits of diverse perspectives, employers increasingly seek out college graduates who are skilled in communicating to varied audiences and making decisions that reflect broad historical, social, and cultural knowledge. Overall, Integrative Studies courses fulfilling the IDN designations prepare students to respond constructively to opportunities connected with a pluralistic society and global community.

Effects of New Requirement Language

Once approved, IAH and ISS will integrate this new language into course policies and begin to engage instructors in educator development that supports them in making their courses representative of the learning outcomes as they relate to the course designation. Second, the IAH and ISS Directors will also work with all instructors to include descriptive language about the class sections that inform students about the section's theme and diversity focus. Third, the IAH and ISS teams plan to assess these changes to better document the influence of IDN on the MSU undergraduate curriculum and student experience.

In addition, there is the potential for revision of existing course offerings—and creation of new offerings—to reflect this updated diversity language. There is also the possibility of the General Science program adopting the IDN requirement, which would expand the IDN offerings across all of the Integrative Studies Centers at MSU.

The following tables connect the criteria for IDN with MSU's Undergraduate Learning Goals' outcomes. Although a single course would not address all Undergraduate Learning Goals, this chart provides a tool to consider how IDN designations fit into the existing curricular priorities.

<p>Analytical Thinking: Uses a variety of disciplinary approaches to access information and critically analyze complex material in order to evaluate evidence, construct reasoned arguments, and communicate inferences and conclusions.</p>	I	The course emphasizes approaches, examples, and contexts from mainly non-US sources, and encourages critical thinking about these materials to deepen student understanding. A comparative approach emphasizes non-US perspectives and models to understand local and global problems. Additionally, the course encourages students to incorporate non-US perspectives when assessing and evaluating information, constructing arguments, and drawing inferences and conclusions.
	D	The course emphasizes approaches, perspectives, and course materials produced by people from groups or communities that have been historically marginalized and encourages critical thinking about questions of diversity, inclusivity, power, difference, or identities. Additionally, the course encourages students use of critical theory and pedagogy in order to incorporate those perspectives when assessing and evaluating information, constructing arguments, and drawing inferences and conclusions. Course is not affiliated with a specific geographic region or focuses on multiple international and national settings equally.
	N	The course emphasizes approaches, perspectives, and course materials from sources that emphasize the United States, U.S. examples, and/or U.S. multiculturalism. The encourages critical thinking about these materials to deepen student understanding of the US as a point of intersection of diverse cultures and social identities. Additionally, the course encourages students to incorporate diverse perspectives when assessing and evaluating information, constructing arguments, and drawing inferences and conclusions.
<p>Cultural Understanding: Comprehends global and cultural diversity within historical, artistic, and societal contexts</p>	I	The course focuses on increasing student understanding of global and cultural diversity through the exploration of mainly non-US historical, artistic, intellectual/scientific/philosophical, and/or societal contexts.
	D	The course focuses on increasing student understanding of diversity, inclusivity, power, difference, or identities in ways that are not primarily framed by nation or geography, through exploration of historical, artistic, intellectual/scientific/philosophical, and/or societal contexts.
	N	The course focuses on increasing student understanding of diversity within the US, including its distinct status as a point of intersection of diverse cultures and social identities, through exploration of mainly US historical, artistic, intellectual/scientific/philosophical, and/or societal contexts.

<p>Effective Citizenship: Participates as a member of local, national, and global communities and has the capacity to lead in an increasingly interdependent world.</p>	I	The course builds on and enhances students' awareness of how citizens, communities, and/or institutions affect, and are affected by, power, identities, differences, and/or affiliations in an increasingly interdependent world. The course discusses the rights and responsibilities of citizens around the world or in a comparative context and provides opportunities for students to consider their role as citizens of a global community.
	D	The course builds on and enhances students' awareness of how the lives and actions of individuals, communities, and/or institutions affect, and are affected by, power, identities, differences, and/or affiliations; the course provides opportunities for students to consider their own roles and responsibilities within various communities.
	N	The course builds on and enhances students' awareness of how citizens, communities, and/or institutions in the US affect, and are affected by, power, identities, differences, and/or affiliations in the US as a pluralistic nation; the course provides opportunities for students to consider their role as citizens.
<p>Effective Communication: Engages in effective communication practices in a variety of situations and with a variety of media.</p>	I	The course makes use of a range of non-US communication practices, media, and situations to enhance students' ability to engage effectively with a diverse and complex world. Through exposure to these ideas, students gain greater understanding of global histories, contexts, and experiences that might shape their own perspective of the world, while also developing their communication skills for a diverse, global audience.
	D	The course makes use of a range of communication practices, media, and situations that address questions of diversity, inclusivity, power, difference, or identities, in order to enhance students' ability to engage effectively with a diverse and complex society. Through exposure to these ideas, students gain greater understanding of the histories, contexts, and experiences that might shape their own perspective while also developing their communication skills for a diverse audience.
	N	The course makes use of a range of communication practices, media, and situations drawing on the intersecting cultures and identities of the US to enhance students' ability to engage effectively with a diverse and complex society. Through exposure to these ideas, students will develop an understanding of the histories, contexts, and experiences that might shape their own perspective while also developing their communication skills for a diverse audience.

<p>Integrated Reasoning: Integrates discipline-based knowledge to make informed decisions that reflect humane social, ethical, and aesthetic values.</p>	<p>I</p>	<p>The course develops students' capacity to assimilate a range of disciplinary perspectives on non-US cultural and/or intellectual traditions, by drawing on mainly non-US sources and materials. The course encourages students to recognize the overlapping relationships among these perspectives when contemplating social, intellectual/scientific, ethical, or aesthetic values.</p>
	<p>D</p>	<p>The course develops students' capacity to assimilate a range of disciplinary perspectives, with an emphasis on materials produced by people from traditionally understudied identities or critical perspectives and/or on materials that engage questions of diversity, inclusivity, power, difference, and/or identities (in ways that are not primarily defined by geography or nation). The course also encourages students to recognize the overlapping relationships among these perspectives when contemplating social, intellectual/scientific, ethical, or aesthetic values.</p>
	<p>N</p>	<p>The course develops students' capacity to assimilate a range of disciplinary perspectives on US cultural and/or intellectual traditions, by drawing mainly on sources and materials connected to the US. The course encourages students to recognize the overlapping relationships among these perspectives when contemplating social, intellectual/scientific, ethical, or aesthetic values.</p>