Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum
Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Social and Behavioral Sciences. Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

This lower division undergraduate course is an introduction to sociological perspectives on race and ethnicity designed to provide the student with both an understanding of the concepts of race and ethnicity and the effective use of sociological theories and methods in their study; covers sociological theories and perspectives on race and ethnicity, their influence on individual and group identities, and their influence on the institutions that organize community life.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

By the end of the course, students will have produced 1) several short analytic pieces (reading responses), 2) two medium-length pieces of analytical written work (concept papers), and 3) be capable of critically engaging with social science data pertaining to race and ethnicity. These require that students combine different perspectives and different types of information from different sources.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

Students are required to produce two (2) medium length papers, at least ten (10) short reading responses posted in a class blog addressing their own reactions and interpretations of course materials, and engage in substantive class participation in at least five (5) ongoing class discussions and one (1) class presentation including a memo and Power Point slides that depict statistical information. The goal is to develop effective communication skills through speaking and writing and visual representations.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills (to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions):

Students are required to reflect upon information gleaned from course readings about racial/ethnic populations in the United States. In so doing they will demonstrate their understanding of and ability to apply critical theoretical frameworks and engage with methodological practices in the study of race and ethnicity. Emphasis will be upon assessing how different sources of data might be assessed for accuracy. This is assessed through papers and in-class presentations.
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Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Students are required to consider how large-scale social problems distinctly impact racial and ethnic communities in the United States using information gleaned from population histories, theoretical frameworks and readings on methods with an eye towards assessing policy interventions. This is assessed through in-class discussions and written short responses.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.