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?

The course is an overview course that examines the roles of men and women and how they vary across different times and different places. It is a social and behavioral science because it emphasizes the social aspects of gender and considers how empirical evidence relates to the theoretical conjectures about the principles. There is emphasis upon the careful construction of principles related to human behavior and then the use of scientific methods to test these principles. The course examines the very concept of gender and differentiates it from sexuality, sex category, and biology. It explores the role of gender in and across primary groups, organizations, institutions and societies. While historical comparisons are used to illustrate principles, most of the course deals with contemporary issues, particularly how evidence from the last 20 years, from experimental social and biological studies, relates to the idea of gender.

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):

Students will learn the general concepts and methods of sociological analysis, especially as these relate to gender dynamics. They will learn to evaluate different arguments on both logical and empirical grounds. They will learn to apply sociological principles to the analysis of issues related to how men and women interact in both the private and public spheres. Assessment will be based on in-class discussion and exams.

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

Students will learn to evaluate different arguments presented through different modes of communication: statistical or mathematical representation, verbal, written, and visual. Through exams and in-class exercises, students will be required to assess evidence from charts, graphs and tables to come to conclusions. Verbal communication will occur through in-class discussions and exercises that involve discussing responses to questions posed. Students learn about different cultures’ norms and forms of interactions as they related to gender and how these varieties lead to different types of communication.
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Empirical and Quantitative Skills (to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions):

A critical component of all sociology involves developing, critiquing, organizing and analyzing empirical data. Students will learn to interpret tables and graphs and assess the general reliability and validity of particular sources of data as they relate to gender in particular. Students will be examining data from U.S. sources as well as international sources. Assessment will be based primarily on exams, and in-class discussions and exercises.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Students will learn to appreciate different cultural views of gender and interaction. Students will be able to assess consequences of different gender stratification systems. They will also learn how different programs have or have not been successful in modifying or changing gender stratification. This will be assessed through group discussion and in-class exercises.

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