

Executive Summary of Proposed Changes to the International and Cultural Diversity Graduation Requirements

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International and Cultural Diversity Sub-Committee Report
CORE CURRICULUM COUNCIL | TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Executive Summary of Proposed Changes to the International and Cultural Diversity Graduation Requirements

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History, Need, and Factors to Consider in Implementing International and Cultural Diversity Graduation Requirements

Texas A&M University first instituted its international and cultural diversity (ICD) graduation requirement in fall 2002. Since this requirement was implemented, over three hundred courses have been approved. The majority of ICD courses are three credit hours, and many meet other core curriculum requirements (such as *Philosophy, Culture and Language, Social Science, and Creative Arts*). Most degree programs do not have a separate “slot” for this requirement; students are encouraged to “double dip” with core curriculum requirements whenever possible.

Additionally, almost any study abroad course can count for this requirement. In 2003, the Faculty Senate and President approved the following study abroad courses to be automatically counted to meet the core curriculum requirements for International & Cultural Diversity: 1) Texas A&M faculty-led permanent courses, 2) Courses offered through another institution that have prior approval by Texas A&M, or 3) Courses taken on a Texas A&M Reciprocal Educational Exchange Programs (REEP).

Approval of ICD courses has been problematic and controversial amongst faculty. The Undergraduate Catalog statement related to the ICD requirement has not provided sufficient guidance as to what an ICD course should encompass:

"As individual and national destinies become progressively more interconnected, the ability to survive and succeed is increasingly linked to the development of a more pluralistic, diverse and globally aware populace. Two courses from the following list are to be taken by the student. If a course listed below also satisfies another University Core Curriculum requirement, it can be used to satisfy both requirements if the student wishes to do so. For example, a course that satisfies the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement may [also] be used to satisfy the International and Cultural Diversity requirement if that course also appears on the list below."

In order to develop a better operational definition, for a period of time, the Core Curriculum Council (CCC) utilized and applied the rule of 30/50 – for a course to be considered appropriate for ICD 30% of the course content was required to focus on the last 50 years. The intent of the rule was to ensure that the course addressed contemporary issues in diversity. However, it was believed that many appropriate courses were precluded from consideration because of the rule. This rule was sunset in summer 2015, but without a rubric or other guidelines, consistent approval of courses has been difficult for members of the committee and those submitting courses.

The second major problem has been a lack of any recertification process for courses approved as ICD. Under current guidelines once approved a course retained its ICD designation in perpetuity. Some courses have evolved significantly since approval, both in terms of the course requirements and instructors teaching those courses.

Despite the 30/50 rule, the general consensus among CCC committee members, over the years, as well as other faculty and students, is that ICD courses are not addressing critical and significant societal issues and therefore not meeting the intent for the ICD graduation requirement. Students and faculty have expressed concern over many aspects of the requirement as currently implemented. These concerns include massive variability and the courses not meeting the intended goals.

The Core Curriculum Council (CCC) is a faculty senate committee charged with approving and recertifying core curriculum courses. The CCC had recognized the need to significantly revise the ICD requirement for some time. While the state mandated requirements to revise the University’s Core Curriculum sidelined the ICD discussions for several years, the vision was to examine the ICD requirement once the Core Curriculum revisions had been completed. The basic premise was to adapt the process developed for recertification of the

Core Curriculum to a revised ICD requirement, including that each ICD course would periodically be reevaluated for continued inclusion as an ICD course.

This committee began working to revise the ICD requirement in 2014, holding open forums with faculty, students, advisors, and administrators to determine if we still needed the ICD requirement. Support was overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the requirement, but revisions were required.

In fall 2015, a subcommittee in the CCC was formed to revisit the ICD requirement, particularly the process for approval and recertification. It should be noted that during fall 2015, the primary thinking was in developing a replacement for the 30/50 rule and a process to require periodic reevaluation of all ICD courses. This committee created a rubric based on the university learning outcomes and proposed a process for approval and recertification (see “Proposed International and Cultural Diversity Requirement”). Two open forums were held in spring 2016 to discuss the proposed rubric and process. While faculty were very receptive to the proposed changes, many students voiced concern.

Through the open forums and other meetings, faculty and students expressed concern in several areas. In particular, students wanted opportunities to truly engage in difficult topics related to race, diversity, inclusion, gender, privilege, and other related topics. Student leaders across campus shared concerns over our graduates being able to live and work in a diverse and global society. Though it is possible to take courses of this nature under the current ICD requirements, students shared that this type of course should be required of ALL students. They were very specific about their requests. They wanted a particular course or a small list of courses, small class sizes to ensure engagement, topics that address specific areas related to culture, diversity, and inclusion, and instructors who are well equipped to facilitate these types of discussions. It became evident to the ICD subcommittee that more work was to be done. Confounding these issues, a racial event occurred on campus, making our work even more timely and important. It is important to note that this event caused both the ICD Subcommittee and CCC as a whole to reevaluate whether the proposed revisions were sufficient in nature or whether more significant changes in the University’s ICD were required. The consensus of the committee that significant changes to the ICD were required and the committee shifted focus to undertake a larger reevaluation of the ICD requirement.

Therefore, the ICD Subcommittee reviewed the requirements at other universities across the nation. Members found that most universities have some sort of requirement, some more stringent (up to 6 courses required) and some more flexible (one course required from a long list of options) than our current requirements. Members also found that many universities are dealing with a variety of cultural and racial issues on their campuses. Many universities look to course requirements to resolve these issues though no summative evaluation of effectiveness of these courses was found.

After many discussions with students, faculty, and administrators, the committee developed the proposed Cultural Discourse Requirement. This requirement focuses on ensuring our graduates are equipped to have difficult conversations to become leaders in a diverse and global society (see “Proposed Cultural Discourse Requirement”). Though there is currently much agreement on “what” this course would entail, there is little agreement on how to best implement across campus (see “Proposed Suggestions for Implementation of Cultural Discourse Requirement”). Practical concerns over the impact on the University ICD on time to degree etc. must be weighed as many degree programs have little to no flexibility in how ICD requirements are accommodated. Furthermore, whatever we implement will be utilized not only on the main College Station campus, but also on our Qatar and Galveston Campus and in and across wide ranging, and often quite focused, undergraduate degree programs, such as nursing, engineering, etc.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is very clear that most degree programs shall not exceed 120 hours, and those that do face considerable scrutiny over excess hours. Additionally, our paradigm for undergraduates typically visualizes a student entering as a freshman. However, any successful ICD requirement must recognize that transfer students constitute a significant portion of the Texas A&M undergraduate population, many of whom enter Texas A&M “core curriculum complete.” Texas A&M also

faces an increasing number of entering freshmen with substantial hours of university credit. Both populations must be considered in developing an ICD requirement. Students who may transfer into degree programs with little flexibility face additional constraints.

It is clear that the University needs and desires a change in the ICD requirement. However these changes are implemented, attention must be given to ensure high quality experiences for all our students, across all degree programs and campuses. Ensuring the next generation of Aggies are competent, reflective, global leaders is not optional. Our current and former students demand the best from faculty, administrators, and staff. Finding a way to meet these challenges is paramount to our collective success in the immediate future.

The current Texas A&M Undergraduate Catalog simply states for International and Cultural Diversity Requirements “Students are required to complete six (6) semester credit hours from the courses listed.”

The CCC is broadly proposing to revise the approval process for the international and cultural diversity requirement and institute a new cultural discourse requirement.

The specifics of these revisions are outlined below.

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Proposed Changes to the Current International and Cultural Diversity Requirement (3 hours)

The International and Cultural Diversity (ICD) requirement is broadly aimed at meeting our institutional requirement:

“As individual and national destinies become progressively more interconnected, the ability to survive and succeed is increasingly linked to the development of a more pluralistic, diverse, and globally-aware populace.”

Student Learning Outcomes

ICD courses should seek to meet the following University Baccalaureate Learning Outcomes within the context of preparing graduates for a diverse, global society:

- 1) Live and work effectively in a diverse and global society
- 2) Articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective
- 3) Recognize diverse opinions and practices (including but not limited to economic, political, cultural, gender, and religious opinions) and consider different points of view

Rationale and Approval Process

It is envisioned that these courses represent the replacements for existing ICD courses. However, a rubric-based assessment and periodic re-review will ensure that these courses do a better job in meeting the intent of the ICD requirement than the menu of existing ICD courses. Study-abroad experiences will also meet this requirement if they meet the rubric criteria.

The course coversheet should address how the course will meet these outcomes. The cover sheet and course syllabus will be reviewed by members of the Core Curriculum Council (CCC). The CCC will evaluate the materials based on rubric criteria and the spirit of the institutional requirement. Caution will be taken to interpret the rubric criteria in the broad sense; only courses meeting the “sufficient” criteria in all categories will be approved. It is recognized that those submitting the materials should not be overly burdened, yet should be held to high standards. The CCC will maintain a balance of high standards while avoiding narrow interpretations. Before submitting a course, it is recommended that faculty review the ICD exemplary examples resources.

Study Abroad Courses

Study abroad experiences will also need to follow this process for approval for the ICD attribute. It is envisioned that the approval process will also ensure that study-abroad experiences used to meet the ICD requirement are structured to provide students an immersive cultural experience and can provide evidence that that ICD requirements are being met.

Re-Approval Period and Process

Courses that meet the spirit of the ICD institutional requirement will be approved for three years. To continue as an ICD course, a semester prior to the end of the three years, the department teaching the course will request recertification. The recertification process will include a review of the syllabus (or syllabi if more than one section is taught by a different instructor) of the course to determine if the spirit of the institution ICD requirements is continuing to be met. The rubric used to evaluate the course will be provided to faculty prior to the recertification review. A process to evaluate study-abroad experiences will also be developed.

Timeline

It is anticipated that the new process and rubric will be approved in spring 2017. Once approved, any course seeking ICD approval will utilize this process. However, once the Cultural Discourse (CD) requirement is implemented, all currently approved ICD courses will need to seek re-approval as either ICD or CD. This process would begin in summer and fall 2017 for full implementation in fall 2019.

Proposed Cultural Discourse Requirement (3 hrs)

Perhaps the strongest sentiment to emerge from the campus-wide discussions held by the CCC during the spring 2016 semester was that our undergraduate students felt that Texas A&M does not adequately require its students to engage in deep, and often difficult, dialogs on cultural discourse. Any successful revision to the ICD requirement must address this outstanding issue.

Rationale

Texas A&M University strives to produce world class graduates who are well equipped to live and work in a diverse world. The cultural discourse (CD) requirement will prepare our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly diverse world. The topics below will be addressed while also developing skills in critical thinking, logic, and ethics.

Student Learning Outcomes

In terms of the Baccalaureate Learning Objectives, a cultural discourse requirement will:

1. Reinforce the learning objectives related to Social, Cultural and Global Competencies
2. Impact critical thinking
 - a. Evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources
 - b. Develop critical, reasoned positions
3. Improve communication
 - a. Listen actively and critically
 - b. Present work effectively to a range of audiences
4. Develop collaboration skills including,
 - a. Consider different points of view

More specifically, Texas A&M wants graduates who:

1. Hold respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics
2. Understand self, including personal bias and prejudices
3. Understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole
4. Understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies
5. Understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society
6. Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints

Background

After much discussion of several different options under consideration and thoughtful discussion of the myriad impediments in implementing the CD requirement, the decision was made to propose an approach similar to that for the revised ICD designation. A process will be developed by which faculty can propose their courses be designated CD courses. As with the revised ICD courses, a rubric-based approach will be used to ensure that approved courses meet fairly stringent guidelines. A recertification processes similar to ICD will also be implemented. It is hoped that a fairly limited, stringent, cohesive set of course offerings for the Cultural Discourse Requirement can be created.

Aim

The primary aim of the Cultural Discourse requirement is to ensure students are able to have difficult conversations with respect. There are essentially three additional aspects for courses approved as CD: 1) the inclusion of high quality modules that would be completed by students outside of class; 2) the inclusion of small group discussions incorporated into courses to foster true interaction and dialog; and 3) the inclusion of Aggie Experiences as appropriate to the course content. It is our hope that students can grow in their ability to have respectful discourse on difficult topics by discussing content learned in the modules and Aggie Experiences within the context of the content specific to the CD course. Additionally, courses should draw from a wide student audience in order to ensure broad points of view.

Concerns

Many faculty have expressed concerns over academic freedom in terms of the module concept. The CCC wants to be clear that the intent is not to usurp the instructor in determining course content. The primary aim of the modules is to merely create a common contextual experience for all students that can then be discussed and reflected upon within the context of the course. Ideally, these modules will complement the course and provide additional opportunities for students to dialog on difficult topics. It is our intent to secure funds from the university to have “experts” identify content that would be applicable across a wide range of cultural discourse courses. This content will then be professionally and expertly developed into online modules that will enhance all courses approved for this requirement. It is also proposed that a Cultural Discourse Steering Committee be created. This committee will initially guide development of the modules toward the intended learning outcomes as well as revisit the modules each semester to ensure the content is timely and high quality.

Module Development

It is anticipated that the online modules will be developed in the spring and summer 2017. The online modules will include videos, lectures, and readings that are relevant to the content of all approved courses. These modules are expected to evolve over time to reflect the current issues facing our nation and world. Examples of content include issues related to the United States criminal justice system, the global refugee crisis, racism in America, inequality of educational systems across the United States, and other timely topics of importance to our nation and world that will allow students to develop skills in cultural discourse and respectful dialog. Emphasis will also be on the development of skills in critical thinking, logic, and ethics, which will enhance specific content being taught in cultural discourse courses.

In addition to course content and modules, approved cultural discourse courses will incorporate “Aggie Experience” activities. These will vary, but will be tied to the modules and will be designed to help our students better articulate themselves on current issues and be able to engage in cultural discourse that encompasses multiple perspectives. Examples of Aggie Experiences include the Difficult Dialog Series, Aggie Agora, seminars, speakers, meetings, etc. It is envisioned that a combination of curricular/co-curricular activities will provide a unique and transformative “Aggie Experience.”

Relationship to Core Curriculum Courses

It is also envisioned that the majority, if not all, of these courses will also meet Core Curriculum Requirements enabling students to meet the major curricular piece of the ICD/CD graduation requirement while also meeting Core Curriculum Requirements. The state mandated Core Objectives that must be met by Core Curriculum courses will be leveraged to ensure the course engages students in Cultural Discourse; a number of Foundational Component Areas, *Language, Philosophy and Culture, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Creative Arts*, are well suited as they have they require communication and social and/or personal responsibility as core objectives. Cultural discourse seems a natural fit to these courses.

Graduation Requirement

An important outcome of the discussion concerning the CD component was that as a University Graduation Requirement it should, ideally, impact all Aggies, both those starting at Texas A&M as first-year students and those entering later as transfers. Students who enter core complete will be provided an opportunity to complete the modules and Aggie experience activities to meet the graduation requirement.

Timeline

It is anticipated that we will ask faculty for current ICD courses to pilot CD modules in spring 2018. Full implementation could come with the fall 2019 catalog. Open forums will be held in fall 2016/spring 2017 with the greater campus community for feedback and refinement. Feedback from the pilot will be used to develop and refine the final requirement.

Approval Process

When the Cultural Discourse requirement is ready to be launched, all ICD courses will need to seek re-approval as either ICD (International and Cultural Diversity) or CD (Cultural Discourse). This activity is anticipated over summer and fall 2017 with full implementation in fall 2019.

Cultural Discourse Steering Committee

The Core Curriculum Council recognizes that it has neither the expertise nor the diversity to fully develop this portion of the ICD requirement. Therefore a major point of moving forward is to engage and leverage existing Texas A&M faculty expertise on issues of cultural diversity in developing this proposal. Toward that end, we recommend the development of a “Cultural Discourse Steering Committee” to ensure that a quality discourse component is created.

Aspirations

It is believed that this proposed change to ICD has the potential to provide the vast majority of Texas A&M students with a unique curricular/co-curricular experience. It is hoped that the upper administration will be able to provide continued support for development of the modules on current and relevant topics. We also view this as a vehicle for the university to support a campus wide curricular experience perhaps including hosting a colloquium series of speakers commensurate with an AAU University and an associated campus-wide common reading experience. There are many other activities the university could support under this program as well.

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Overall Timeline for Implementation of Changes

The committee recognizes that this type of change is not easy, especially at an institution as large and diverse as Texas A&M University; however, we believe that challenges are far outweighed by the positive outcomes associated with developing our students to be leaders for the future. Recent events highlight the importance of preparing students who are able to:

1. Hold respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics
2. Understand self, including personal bias and prejudices
3. Understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole
4. Understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies
5. Understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society
6. Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints

The timeline for implementing these changes is immediate, though rules and regulations for catalog and course updates present challenges that will take some time to fully implement. Below is the suggested timeline for implementation:

Fall 2016/Spring 2017

- Submit report for review through the appropriate university committees and individuals
- Seek approval for the ICD and CD changes through the appropriate university committees
- Utilize the ICD rubric for any new courses submitted (will need to seek re-approval once CD goes into effect)
- Conduct open forums with the greater campus community to seek additional input on the proposed changes to ICD and CD courses
- Form the Cultural Discourse Steering Committee
Create the Cultural Discourse Rubric

Summer/Fall 2017

- Submit paperwork to make changes to ICD and CD graduation requirements to be implemented for 2019 catalog
- Cultural Discourse Steering committee begins process to create CD modules
- Approve new courses for ICD requirement—all currently approved courses would need to seek re-approval under the new rubric
- Plan for full implementation of new ICD courses and CD attribute courses in Fall 2019

Spring 2018

- Current ICD courses to pilot CD modules

Summer/Fall 2018

- Approval of new CD courses and reapproval of all ICD courses

Fall 2019

- CD and ICD changes appear in 2019 catalog

Frequently Asked Questions And Answers

How many modules will be required for CD courses? How much time will they take?

It is anticipated that there will be approximately 4-6 modules. Each module should take students less than 30 minutes outside of class to review and complete.

What will be the content of the CD modules?

The Cultural Discourse Steering Committee will ultimately determine the content of the modules. Likely modules will include selected readings, videos, case studies, or other materials that are widely applied to a variety of issues related to cultural discourse.

Will resources be available to assist faculty teaching cultural discourse courses?

Resources will be provided to assist faculty in implementing the modules into cultural discourse approved courses. It is anticipated that these resources would include discussion questions related to the modules as well as examples of how to appropriately incorporate these discussions into class. An example course syllabus will also be provided to help guide those who would like to propose courses for CD. Both ITS and CTE will be asked to provide best practices for topics such as incorporating online modules into class discussions, managing small group discussions in courses, etc.

I teach an ICD course. Do I need to worry about incorporating the modules into my course?

Only approved cultural discourse classes will be incorporating the modules.

I am worried about limiting academic freedom with the requirements for modules, "Aggie Experience Activities", and small group discussions.

Not all courses will be appropriate for the cultural discourse requirement. If the course content doesn't easily match with these requirements, it would be best not to submit it. The intent is not to limit academic freedom. Ideally, all courses meeting this requirement will be a good fit for meeting these criteria based on the course content.

How will the approved CD courses be assessed?

The modules will include pre and post reflection activities that will be utilized for assessment and recertification every three years.

Can CD courses be limited by major/college?

The courses approved for CD should draw from a wide student audience in order to ensure broad points of view. Because of this, courses should not have prerequisites (other than classification) nor be limited by major.

Will instructors of CD courses be responsible for grading modules? How much are they worth?

It is anticipated that modules will be completion based. For example, students could receive a certificate of completion with an email sent to the instructor. The Cultural Discourse Steering Committee will work with Instructional Technology Services to ensure that module completion is not a burden for instructors or students. Instructors will determine the worth of the modules in terms of the course grade (for example, 10-20% depending on the course).

What are "Aggie Experience Activities"? Who gets to choose which activities belong in a particular course? How are they graded?

"Aggie Experience Activities" are any activities on campus or in the community that help students relate to course content in a real world setting. The activities for a given course will be determined by the instructor. These should be planned, with appropriate activities and dates on the syllabus. Participation in activities will be required and part of the grade for the course (for example, 10%). These "Aggie Experience Activities" should also become part of the small group discussions during class to allow deeper connections to the course content.

How will small group discussions be managed by the instructor, especially in large courses? How much time should be spent in small groups?

Instructors will choose how best to incorporate small group discussions into their courses. These should be communicated on the course syllabus. Small groups are typically defined as less than 30. Depending on the total number of students in the class, these discussions could occur in large group setting with small group conversations that are later shared with the larger class. It is anticipated that resources will be provided on best practices related to managing small group discussions. In a three hour course, an average of approximately 20 minutes per week would be spent in small group discussions, but how this is accomplished would be left up to the instructor and communicated on the syllabus.

Additional Information

For additional information on this proposal, please contact:

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Texas A&M University

International and Cultural Diversity Course Request

Cover Sheet

1. Course prefix and number: **Click here to enter text.**
2. Complete course title: **Click here to enter text.**
3. This request is submitted by (department name): **Click here to enter text.**
4. Person submitting this information (name): **Click here to enter text.**
5. E-mail: **Click here to enter text.**

6. Indicate the semesters this course has been taught and the enrollment (including all sections) each semester taught:

Fall 2014 _____

Fall 2015 _____

Spring 2015 _____

Spring 2016 _____

Summer 2015 _____

Summer 2016 _____

7. Is this course currently included in the core curriculum? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, which core curriculum area? _____

8. Indicate how the course will address the ICD Learning Outcomes. Be sure to review the ICD rubric for requirements.

A student who graduates from Texas A&M University with a baccalaureate degree will have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to:

Live and work effectively in a diverse and global society (add text box)

Articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective (add text box)

Recognize diverse opinions and practices and consider different points of view (add text box)

9. Attach the course syllabus

Submitted by:

Date

Approval:

Department Head

Date

Course Approval Process and Rubric

Instructors will fill out the International and Cultural Diversity Course Request Cover Sheet and provide a syllabus for the course. Instructors should clearly explain how students will meet the spirit of the ICD requirement, as specified by the institution:

“As individual and national destinies become progressively more interconnected, the ability to survive and succeed is increasingly linked to the development of a more pluralistic, diverse, and globally-aware populace.”

The submitted materials will be reviewed by members of the Core Curriculum Council (CCC). The CCC will evaluate the materials based on rubric criteria and the spirit of the institutional requirement. Caution will be taken to interpret the rubric criteria in the broad sense. It is recognized that those submitting the materials should not be overly burdened, yet should be held to high standards. The CCC will maintain a balance of high standards while avoiding narrow interpretations. Before submitting a course, it is recommended that faculty review the ICD examples and resources.

Courses that meet the spirit of the ICD institutional requirement will be approved for three years. To continue as an ICD course, a semester prior to the end of the three years, the department teaching the course will request recertification. For example, if the course will expire at the end of Fall 2020, the course should seek recertification in Spring 2020. The recertification process will include a review of the syllabus (or syllabi if more than one section is taught by a different instructor) of the course to determine if the spirit of the institution ICD requirements is continuing to be met. The rubric used to evaluate the course will be provided to faculty prior to the recertification review.

After reviewing the ICD Course Request Cover Sheet and the course syllabus, does the course meet the following learning outcomes?

Learning Outcome	Insufficient (0)	Sufficient (1)	Excellent (2)	Score
1) Live and work effectively in a diverse and global society	Course has minimal opportunities for students to consider living and working effectively in a diverse and global society.	Course included at least one assignment or activity that requires students to consider living and working effectively in a diverse and global society.	Living and working effectively in a diverse and global society is clearly connected to this course in both content and assignments or activities. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
2) Articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective	Course has minimal opportunities for students to articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective.	Articulating the value of a diverse and global perspective is clearly connected to this course in both content and assignments or activities. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
3) Recognize diverse opinions and practices (including but not limited to economic, political, cultural, gender, and religious opinions) and consider different points of view	Course had minimal opportunities for students to recognize diverse opinions, practices, and points of view.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to recognize diverse opinions, practices, and points of view.	Recognizing diverse opinions, practices, and points of view is clearly defined in the course content and assignments or activities, with multiple opportunities for students to apply these concepts. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
Total Score				
Must earn an average score of 3 or better, with minimum rating of “sufficient” in all three categories, from those attending the Core Curriculum Council Meeting.				

Texas A&M University

Cultural Discourse Course Request

Cover Sheet

1. Course prefix and number: **Click here to enter text.**
2. Complete course title: **Click here to enter text.**
3. This request is submitted by (department name): **Click here to enter text.**
4. Person submitting this information (name): **Click here to enter text.**
5. E-mail: **Click here to enter text.**

6. Indicate the semesters this course has been taught and the enrollment (including all sections) each semester taught:

Fall 2015 _____

Spring 2016 _____

Summer 2016 _____

Fall 2016 _____

7. Questions about the course:

Is this course currently included in the core curriculum? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, which area? _____

Is this course open to all majors? Yes ___ (required for approval) No ___

Does this course have prerequisites other than classification? Yes ___ No ___ (required for approval)

8. Indicate how the course will address the CD Learning Outcomes. Be sure to review the CD rubric for requirements.

Texas A&M wants Graduates who:

1. Hold respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics
2. Understand self, including personal bias and prejudices
3. Understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole
4. Understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies
5. Understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society
6. Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints

9. Indicate how the course will address the following CD requirements:

Incorporates Cultural Discourse Modules into the course

Incorporates "Aggie Experience Activities" into the course

Incorporates small group discussions into the course

10. Attach the course syllabus

Submitted by:

Date

Approval:

Department Head

Date

Course Approval Process and Rubric

Instructors will fill out the Cultural Discourse Course Request Cover Sheet and provide a syllabus for the course. Instructors should clearly explain how students will meet the spirit of the CD requirement.

Texas A&M University strives to produce world class graduates who are well equipped to live and work in a diverse world. The cultural discourse (CD) requirement will prepare our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly diverse world. The topics below will be addressed while also developing skills in critical thinking, logic, and ethics.

In terms of the Baccalaureate Learning Objectives, a cultural discourse requirement will:

1. Reinforce the learning objectives related to Social, Cultural and Global Competencies
2. Impact critical thinking
 - a. Evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources
 - b. Develop critical, reasoned positions
3. Improve communication
 - a. Listen actively and critically
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4. Develop collaboration skills including,
 - a. Consider different points of view

More specifically, Texas A&M wants Graduates who:

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6. Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints

The submitted materials will be reviewed by members of the Core Curriculum Council (CCC). The CCC will evaluate the materials based on rubric criteria and the spirit of the institutional requirement. Caution will be taken to interpret the rubric criteria in the broad sense. It is recognized that those submitting the materials should not be overly burdened, yet should be held to high standards. The CCC will maintain a balance of high standards while avoiding narrow interpretations. Before submitting a course, it is recommended that faculty review the CD examples and resources.

The primary aim of the Cultural Discourse requirement is to ensure students are able to have difficult conversations with respect. There are essentially three additional aspects for courses approved as CD: 1) the inclusion of high quality modules that would be completed by students outside of class; 2) the inclusion of small group discussions incorporated into courses to foster true interaction and dialog; and 3) the inclusion of Aggie Experiences as appropriate to the course content. It is our hope that students can grow in their ability to have respectful discourse on difficult topics by discussing content learned in the modules and Aggie Experiences within the context of the content specific to the CD course.

Courses that meet the spirit of the CD institutional requirement will be approved for three years. To continue as a CD course, a semester prior to the end of the three years, the department teaching the course will request recertification. For example, if the course will expire at the end of Fall 2020, the course should seek recertification in Spring 2020. The recertification process will include a review of the syllabus (or syllabi if more than one section is taught by a different instructor) of the course to determine if the spirit of the institution CD requirements is continuing to be met. The rubric used to evaluate the course will be provided to faculty prior to the recertification review.

After reviewing the CD course request cover sheet and the course syllabus, does the course meet the following learning outcomes?

Learning Outcome	Insufficient (0)	Sufficient (1)	Excellent (2)	Score
1) Hold respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics	Course has minimal opportunities for students to hold respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics.	Holding respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics is connected to the course in both content. Course includes an average of 20 minutes per week of small group discussions.	Holding respectful discussions and discourse on difficult topics is clearly connected to this course in both content and assignments or activities. Course includes an average of 30 minutes per week of small group discussions.	
2) Understand self, including personal bias and prejudices	Course has minimal opportunities for students to understand self, including personal bias and prejudices.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to understand self, including personal bias and prejudices.	Understanding self, including personal bias and prejudices is clearly connected to this course in both content and assignments or activities. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
3) Understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole	Course had minimal opportunities for students to understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to understand power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole.	Understanding power structures, privilege, oppression and discrimination, and the many forms these take in the workplace and society as a whole is clearly defined in the course content and assignments or activities, with multiple opportunities for students to apply these concepts. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
4) Understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies	Course had minimal opportunities for students to understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to understand tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies.	Understanding tolerance and intolerance and have a knowledge of when it is appropriate to be intolerant of specific behaviors/activities that violate our core values as people and Aggies is clearly defined in the course content and assignments or activities, with multiple opportunities for students to apply these concepts. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
5) Understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society	Course had minimal opportunities for students to understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to understand how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society.	Understanding how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society is clearly defined in the course content and assignments or activities, with multiple opportunities for students to apply these concepts. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	

6) Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints	Course had minimal opportunities for students to Understand conflict from multiple viewpoints.	Course includes at least one assignment or activity that requires students to understand conflict from multiple viewpoints	Understanding conflict from multiple viewpoints is clearly defined in the course content and assignments or activities, with multiple opportunities for students to apply these concepts. Course includes at least three examples of this topic and provides reflection and feedback opportunities.	
7) Incorporates cultural discourse modules into the course	Course does not indicate module completion and/or how the modules are incorporated into the grading scheme.	The course indicates that the cultural discourse modules are to be completed as part of the course. This is evident in the grading scheme.	The course clearly indicates how the cultural discourse modules are incorporated into the course with clear connections to course content. This is evident in the course calendar and in the grading scheme.	
8) Incorporates "Aggie Experience Activities" into the course	Course does not indicate Aggie Experience Activities and/or how these experiences are incorporated into the grading scheme.	The course indicates that the Aggie Experience Activities are to be completed as part of the course. This is evident in the grading scheme.	The course clearly indicates how Aggie Experience Activities are incorporated into the course with clear connections to the course content. This is evident in the course calendar and in the grading scheme.	
9) Incorporates small group discussions into the course	Course does not indicate small group discussions and/or how these discussions are incorporated into the grading scheme.	The course indicates that the small group discussions are to be completed as part of the course. This is evident in the grading scheme.	The course clearly indicates how small group discussions are incorporated into the course with clear connections to the course content, modules, and Aggie Experience Activities. These are evident in the course calendar and in the grading scheme.	
Total Score				
Must earn an average score of 9 or better, with minimum rating of "sufficient" in all categories, from those attending the Core Curriculum Council Meeting.				