**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSEPCTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number: HS 292: African American History**

**Home Department: History**

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Keith Kendall (x-1648; kkendall@nmu.edu)

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): Within a three year period

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

A. Overview of the course content: Overview of African American History from 17th Century to the Present

B. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes: The course addresses a variety of social structures (though they are analyzed, not synthesized since I have no idea how a student would synthesize a social structure): this includes analyzing the social structures of a slave society and the transition from a society with slaves into a slave society, the establishment and eventual disestablishment of structures enforcing economic and social oppression (typically discussed under the umbrella term “segregation” but of which segregation is only one structure) and the continuing legacies of these structures. The questions of the rights of human beings within civil society is the fundamental ethical issue in society. As a history course, this traces a variety of themes in the development of human societies, including economic changes, political changes, social changes, and religious changes. Finally, all of this analyzed through a combination of appropriate primary and secondary sources which are evaluated and then used in the creation of arguments according the established rules of the historical method and incorporated into papers My assumption is that most students will have some familiarity with the fact that there had been slavery and segregation in the United States and that this course will add depth of understanding regarding the meanings and implications of those social structures. This covers the entirety of the course.

C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.): This is a 200-level course with no prerequisites; everyone is welcome.

D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.): this course is an elective within the history major.

E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC: thus far the course has only been taught in person; it is taught by only faculty member: Alan Scot Willis

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | Type: Document analysis worksheets; four short answer sets  Frequency: Multiple document worksheets (no fewer than 6 across a semester) 4 sets of short answer questions  Projected submission: two sets of short answer responses; last two document analysis worksheets  Importance: document analysis worksheets account for ¼ class time minimum; short answer sets account for ½ of graded work; This is also covered on the tests and is expected as part of the timeline project; hence it is addressed in roughly 100% of the graded materials as well as ungraded work which the department had specifically been told was acceptable for assessment.  Projected Success: 85-90% success rate by the end of the semester based on prior experience |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with previous understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | Type: four short answer sets, two papers  Frequency: 6 events across the course of the semester  Projected submission: one paper set, two short answer sets  Importance: papers and timeline project, the bulk of the online short essays and tests, all address this dimension and, hence, this is directly incorporated into somewhere in excess of 85% of the graded material and likely, given the nature of discussions, nearly 100% of the graded materials  Projected Success: 85-90% by the end of the semester; based on prior experience |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | Type: Document analysis, four short answer sets, two papers  Frequency: no fewer than 6 document worksheets, 6 additional events  Projected Submission: two short answer sets, last two document analysis worksheets, second paper  Importance: in combination, this is nearly the whole course; this is incorporated into roughly 100% of the graded materials  Projected Success: 85-90% by the end of the semester; prior experience |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*Attainment of the PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **DIMENSION GUIDANCE** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Analysis of society** | Synthesis and analysis of social structures and processes or events | Type: Document analysis, four short answer sets, two papers  Frequency: no fewer than 6 document worksheets, 6 additional events  Projected Submission: two short answer sets, last two document analysis worksheets, second paper  Importance: This is the whole point of history; this is incorporated into papers, tests, the timeline project and class discussions and, hence, is part of roughly 100% of the graded materials  Projected Success: 85-90% by the end of the semester; prior experience |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | Type: Document analysis, four short answer sets, two papers  Frequency: no fewer than 6 document worksheets, 6 additional events  Projected Submission: two short answer sets, last two document analysis worksheets, second paper  Importance: Every aspect of a history course—especially a course focused on an oppressed minority--addresses ethical issues in a society; hence this would be part of every graded assignment in the course.  Projected Success: 85-90% by the end of the semester; prior experience |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | Type: Document analysis, four short answer sets, two papers  Frequency: no fewer than 6 document worksheets, 6 additional events  Projected Submission: two short answer sets, last two document analysis worksheets, second paper  Importance: virtually unavoidable in a history course; part of every graded assignment in the course; exclusive of participation points this maybe 80-100% of the grade.  Projected Success: 85-90% by the end of the semester; based on prior experience |

*History: Studying the Past, Preparing for the Future*

**HS 292**

**African American History**

Dr. Alan Scot Willis

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A Recipe for Success (and not just in class)

Be Present: of course you *will* come to class, but you should also be present in class. Class is not taking place on your iPad nor is being text-messaged to you. It's happening in real-life.

Be Open: some of the ideas and topics we will discuss will conform to ideas you've already held; but, some will be brand new and others will conflict with beliefs you already hold. Be as open to the new and the contrary as you are to the old and comfortable.

Be Careful: accept that unknowns will always exist, that it is impossible to know even most things, much less everything; in that knowledge of limitations, weigh the available evidence and arguments with care and caution.

Be Mindful: attend to the matters of the class, think them through, consider what they mean *and*what they could mean. Allow what you learn to become a part of you and a part of your life.

Be Challenged: challenges make life interesting and exciting. No matter how difficult or easy you find a task, you should always allow yourself to be challenged, and to challenge yourself. No one thinks twice when they hear "no pain, no gain" for physical fitness, yet few realize that the same is true in intellectual pursuits.

This Moment Matters: everyone will be something later, we all have the *next* thing to do; but let that wait until its time comes. For now, pay attention to what is *now*not what is *next*.

Course Description:

History 292 offers an overview of the African American experience, with particular emphasis the slave experience, Reconstruction and the New South, northward migration, and civil rights. This course will examine both the particularities of individual people’s lives as well as general trends in African American history. It will, therefore, engage students in an understanding of how people shape their times and, in turn, are shaped by their times. The course emphasizes the analysis of documentary evidence and scholarly essays and requires students not only understand African American history but also the nature of historical analysis.

Required Book

Countryman, *How Did American Slavery Begin*

Gates, *The Classic Slave Narratives*

Smith: *Origins of Racial Segregation (Historians at Work)*

Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

Malcolm X, *The Autobiography*

Franklin, *The Color Line*

Departmental Objectives for a 200-level History Course

Use of Evidence

Ability to integrate evidence into an historical argument

Critical Thinking and Argumentation

Ability to develop a thesis

Recognition of contemporary influences on historical arguments

Critical Writing

Ability to write an evidentiary, thesis-driven essay

Command of Standard Written English

These goals are accomplished through the examination of both primary and secondary sources, assessments designed to encourage the analysis of those source and the development of arguments based upon those sources, and (finally) papers in which students present and defend a thesis based on both primary and secondary sources.

Liberal Studies:

HS 292 qualifies as a Humanities course in the Liberal Studies program.

Through the Liberal Studies program, the Faculty of Northern Michigan University seeks to develop in our students the skills necessary for becoming independent life-long learners and effective citizens of a challenging and rapidly changing world. In order to complement a student’s academic major, the Liberal Studies program promotes the integration of knowledge derived from multiple perspectives and stresses the development of problem-solving skills and intellectual creativity through the exploration of a broad range of disciplines and fields.  In pursuit of these goals, we encourage our students to be rigorous and systematic in their thought and reflective about their learning, their lives, and their world.

The course directly address the following Liberal Studies goals:

Ability to write and communicate clearly and effectively

The course requires several papers and essays

Ability to evaluate various forms of evidence and knowledge

The course uses multiple types of sources, including scholarly works, court documents, autobiographies, political cartoons and photographs

Ability to engage in analytical reasoning and argumentation

All papers and essays are expected to be analytical and argumentative in nature

Understanding cultural diversity within the United States

The course seeks to explore the diversity within the United States by focusing on the history of one of the nation’s most important minorities; the course also seeks to explore the complex diversity within African American society

Understanding the relationship of the individual to society and its culture and institutions

The relationship of the individual to the broader social and cultural institutions is an fundamental aspect of history; this course seeks to examine the lives of particular individuals (Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Anne Moody) and their relationship with the power structure and with cultural institutions like churches and civil rights organizations.

Understanding the role of the fine and performing arts and the humanities in shaping and expressing a culture’s values and ideals

The course explores the humanities in multiple ways, such as stressing the role of literature in shaping the anti-slavery movement and the role of religion and religious ideology in shaping African American thought

General Course Policies:

Students are expected to come to class on time and stay through the entirety of the class period; any exceptions should be cleared with the instructor in advance. Medical emergencies (hopefully few and far between) are the only acceptable exceptions to this general rule.

The student is responsible for knowing what the assessment and the assignments are, and when they are due.

The student is responsible for making absolutely sure that they have successfully completed and submitted all work for the course. Students must complete all the assessments and assignments in order to pass the class.

If you do not get a paper or test back that you expect to get back, you should notify the professor immediately, not at the end of the semester.

Students are expected to turn off the ringers/beepers of all cell phones and pagers.

Please do not use your laptops in this class unless specifically directed to do so.

Tests

Each of the courses four main sections (the Colonial Era, The Ante-Bellum Era, the New South and Great Migration Era, and the Civil Rights Era) will have a test covering *both* class lecture/discussion and readings. Student will be expected to be able to analyze documents on the tests, including documents *not* directly discussed in class.

Assignments:

Specific assignment instructions will be posted on EduCat and students will be expected make themselves aware of those instructions and the appropriate deadlines.

Students are expected to turn in papers on time. Problems must be dealt with prior to the due date.

General Overview of the Assignments

You have four essays: one on the colonial experince, one on ante-bellum slavery, one on the New South and Northbound Migrations, and one of civil Rights.  These essays *must* be handed in on paper!

You will build a timeline concerning a major aspect of African American History; this is a semester-long project.

Getting Help on Assignments:

I am *always*willing to help students with their assignments. I am not, however, so willing to help those students who have done nothing on their own to work on the assignment. As a result, I have two simple policies:

1) When you come for help, you **must** first show me what you have attempted up to that point;

2) If you come for help within three class-days of the assignment's due date, you **must**have a draft with which we can work.

Students with Disabilities:

University Statement:

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Offices at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock (227-1700; TTY 227-1543). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state and university guidelines.

My Statement:

I am happy to work with you and with the Disability Services Office; however, you need to notify me of the situation as early in the semester as possible. I will not lower standards or eliminate assignments as these are not *reasonable*accommodations.

EduCat:

Links to documents and readings will be posted on EduCat, these are required.

Reading Updates and Assignment instructions will be posted on WEB CT in as timely a manner as possible.

Participation:

Participation means, perhaps obviously, regular attendance in class. It also requires regular and informed participation in class discussion. Furthermore, there may be any number of exercises undertaken during class time; these will be part of your participation grade and there is no way to predict when such an exercise may take place. Additionally, you may wish to contribute to the WEB CT discussion boards

Grades, etc…

Students generally worry about grades far too much. Were it entirely up to me, there would be no grades in this or any other class. It is not, however, entirely—or even somewhat—up to me, as Northern Michigan University will expect me to assign each of you a grade at the end of the semester. All of us will be much happier people if you give grades the minimal due they are worth – your grandchildren simply will not care what you got in this course, if you even remember after graduation. Still, the university does require me to post grades for all students who remain in the course.

The following calculations will determine your grade:

Main Essays (of which there are 3) 50 points each

Online short writings (of unknown quantity) 10 points each

Time Line (a single, semester long project) 100 points

Participation (determined in four periods) 100 points total

Special Note on Grades and Grading:

You should keep all returned papers at least until grades are mailed out. You may wish to keep them forever, but that is up to you.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. There are several possible responses to cheating and plagiarism:

The failure of the assignment with a grade of 0 points

The above plus failure for the entire course

Either of the above options plus a letter to the dean

*Identifying Plagiarism*

A student will have plagiarized if they use three or more words in sequence from a source without both quotation marks and a full citation. A student will also have plagiarized if they paraphrase two or more sentences without a full citation. Furthermore, any unique word or sequence of words, no matter the length, must be enclosed in quotation marks and given a citation else their use will constitute plagiarism. Extended paraphrasing in successive paragraphs is unacceptable even with a citation.

Plagiarism also includes the borrowing of ideas without proper citation even if the information is not directly quoted.

If you are unsure if your actions constitute plagiarism, you should ask before handing in the work. Once the work is handed in, a plea of ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse and the appropriate penalties will be invoked.

All papers are subject to random checking for plagiarism. This may include, but will not be limited to, checking for key phrases through various internet search engines and the searching of professional “paper writing” services. If I discover that you have purchased a paper, I will not only recommend immediate expulsion from Northern Michigan University, I will suggest the revival of various Medieval torture techniques.

Remember, if you are borrowing a paper from a friend (plagiarism in and of itself), that friend might have downloaded if from an internet cite! I have caught many-a-plagiarizer in such a manner.

*Avoiding Plagiarism*

Most obviously, write your own papers!

Get a sufficient start on the papers that you do not feel pressured as the deadline approaches. This will be much easier to do if you stay current with the readings and class discussions.

Seek help from the professor as soon as you sense trouble.