**List of Revisions Corresponding to the August 20th Memo**

1. In the Plan for Assessment of the Perspectives on Society outcome, there is no assessment artifact listed for the Ethical Issues dimension. We are not sure how class discussions would be assessed. We would also like to see some specifics about activities that would be used, how they would be assessed, and how they link to the dimension.

Revision: The Plan for Assessment of the Perspectives on Society outcome were re-written based on the suggestions in the memo.

2. Just a note, the Analysis of Society dimension lists an optional final paper as one of the assessment types. We want to point out that you should only be using assignments that all students complete for assessment purposes.

Revision: Optional final paper has been removed.

Thank you! (August 20th, 2015)

**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSPECTIVES 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:** SO113 Social Problems

**Home Department:** Sociology and Anthropology

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Alan McEvoy, 227-1687 amcevoy@nmu.edu

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): Every Semester

**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

B. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes

C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC

**A: Overview of Course Content**

This course introduces students to basic concepts, perspectives, and analysis of some major issues of contemporary society, including the social causes of these problems, consequences, and the proposed solutions. Our survey of social problems will include four broad areas:

1. Major sociological theories and methods used to explain and understand social problems;
2. Problems related to social inequality (e.g. poverty and other problems related to social class, gender pay gap and other problems related to gender, discrimination and other problems related to race, and issues related to sexual orientation)
3. Problems related to social institutions (e.g. family violence, educational inequality, problems related to media)
4. Problems related to our social and physical worlds: (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse, crime).

**B. General Education Course Learning**

This course is designed to satisfy both the *Critical Thinking* and *Perspectives on Society* learning outcomes as defined by NMU’s General Education requirements. The overall objective of this course is to provide students with a variety of conceptualand analytical tools to critically examine major social issues. More specifically, students will learn to:

1. Understand the subjective as well as objective realities of social problems.
2. Apply the major sociological theories such as functionalism, critical theory, and symbolic interactionism to understand a range of social problems.
3. Critically examine a range of social problems including their current state, causes, and consequences.
4. Know the current debates over a range of social problems and evaluate/critique the arguments based on credible source of data and reasoning.
5. Access and interpret data from credible sources such as US Census, GSS, Pew Research Center, Bureau of Labor Statistics, etc.
6. Critically examine multiple approaches for solving a range of social problems and suggest the best possible remedy.

**C & D:** This is an introductory course that serves the general student population in that it fulfills a GenEd requirement. It also is a required course for Sociology majors and minors. Most often sections are filled to capacity or near capacity.

**E:**  Not only the curriculum is designed to fulfill the dual objectives of Critical Thinking and Perspectives on Society, but the teaching pedagogy used in this class is carefully designed to foster collaborative learning, empathy, multiple perspectives, and critical thinking. This pedagogy is developed by Dr. Yan Z. Ciupak termed “concerted active learning”, as it includes a series of carefully planned student-centered activities. This method includes the following characteristics:

1) A combination of types of activities—(interactive mini-lectures; short video clips, group discussions, online lecture quiz, jeopardy, summative group proposal activity/ elevator pitch)

2) Problem-solving based teaching and learning

3) Team based collaborative learning

3) Incorporation of elementary data analysis

4) Media literacy

**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** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | Exams (3) /class exercises (frequent) / written assignments (occasionally~~)/ optional final paper~~ will assess students’ ability to critically evaluate various data and information, and their ability to apply sociological theories to the study of social problems.  Assessments will be ongoing and will include a summative evaluation at the end of the semester. The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | Exams (3), presentations, class exercises, elevator pitches (frequent), and written assignments (occasionally) ~~and an optional final paper~~ will emphasize the interconnectedness of theory and research in making generalizations about social problems. Students are expected to explain/ define a social problem, present some current debates on these issues, take a position and defend their perspective regarding the social problem. Additionally, students critically examine possible solutions, suggest what they consider is the best remedy to a particular social problem.  Assessments will be ongoing and will include a summative evaluation at the end of the semester. The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | Exams (3), presentations, class exercises, elevator pitches (frequent), ~~and~~ written assignments (occasionally) ~~and an optional final paper~~ are used to help students develop their skills to critically evaluate information and ideas. These also serves as ways to assess these skills.  Core concepts, theories, research, and sociological methods are embedded in exams, assignments, and all activities throughout the course. A pre-test and post-test will be used to assess mastery of core concepts. The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |

**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** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Analysis of society** | Analysis of social issues, structures and processes or events | Three non-cumulative exams, one cumulative exam, frequent class exercises, and occasional written assignments will be used to assess students’ analytical skills.  Assessments will be ongoing and will include a summative evaluation at the end of the semester. The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion.  In addition, students will be given a pre-test and post-test to measure a change in mastery of core concepts and theories applied to social issues. Also tested is students’ quantitative skill such as reading and interpreting graphics.  The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | Regular class discussions and occasional paper assignments (usually three) throughout the semester address ethical issues related to a range of social problems, especially problems related to inequality and injustice. Students will be assessed based on their proficiency to frame their analysis along the ethical dimension. Examples of assignments includes short APA style papers on gender pay gap, media objectification of women, race and law enforcement, ethical issues related to social media, etc.  The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | Class discussions, activities, exams, and a pre-test/post-test will include perspectives on social change, elements that foster development and change in a society. The department expects 75% or greater student proficiency upon course completion. |