**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD**

*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:** SO322 Social Class, Power, and Mobility

**Home Department:** Sociology and Anthropology

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

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

**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 & B: Overview of Course Content General Education Course Learning Goals**

The study of social class and class division lies at the heart of the sociological enterprise. This course is meant to provide students with a critical understanding of social class and class division, one of the most enduring and consequential social problems of our time. Furthermore, we will examine how class intersects with other dimensions of inequality. In the course, we will examine the various meanings of the term “class” and turn a critical eye on ideologies that obscure the realities of class inequality. We will study classical and current theories/explanations of the causes and consequences of class inequality and examine a number of areas of empirical research on the structure of wealth, income, prestige, opportunity, and power. In addition to exploring its “objective” aspects, we will study the “subjective” dimensions of class, e.g. how individuals perceive the class structure and their own place in it. More importantly, we will conduct our own research throughout the semester of how individuals talk about social class and class division.

This course is designed to satisfy both the *Critical Thinking* and the *Social Responsibility in a Diverse World* learning outcomes as defined by NMU’s General Education requirements. These two learning outcomes overlap; together they form the bedrock of a critical analysis of class inequality and stratification in general. The following is a specific set of learning goals for this course consistent with General Education. Students are expected to:

* Understand that class is the defining stratifying principle of capitalist societies and that class inequality is one of the defining issues of our time.
* Understand that sociology as a discipline is largely centered on the study of class inequality.
* Comprehend the importance of class inequality for shaping life chances, that is, people’s opportunities to improve the quality of life.
* Comprehend that class inequality manifests differently in different national contexts and is shaped by various cultural, social, and political factors.
* Overview of what measures different countries take to ensure social justice in terms of equality of condition and opportunity and how they are shaped by cultural, social, and political factors.
* Understand that class has cultural and social dimensions in addition to the well-known economic dimension.
* Understand that class differences in association and socialization give rise to class sub-cultures. Understand the importance of cultural relativity when it comes to class issues.
* Understand that class has a subjective as well as an objective dimension, that is, individuals may perceive and react differently to their objective class position.
* Understand the basic tenets of classical and contemporary theories of class.
* Develop a deeper understanding of sociological methods as they relate to class analysis.
* Sharpen their critical thinking by getting a better grasp of the “sociological perspective/imagination” as applied to the study of class inequality.

The main sections and foci of this course include the following:

* A critical examination of social stratification from a cross-cultural and comparative perspective, with a primary emphasis on class stratification.
* An emphasis on intersectionality, that is, emphasizing that class intersects with other forms of inequality such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.
* An overview of classical and contemporary theories of class.
* An overview of the American class structure and how it has changed over time.
* A critical examination of high levels of economic inequality (income and wealth) in the United States from a cross-national perspective.
* An overview of the extremes of the class structure, with an emphasis on poverty and policy.
* A special emphasis on the cultural and a social dimension of class, especially class cultures.
* An emphasis on the need to develop an interpretative understanding (g. verstehen) of class cultures, which cultivates in students greater cultural relativism and understanding of diversity.
* An emphasis on the subjective as well as the objective dimensions of class.
* A critical examination of education, social mobility, and (in)equality of opportunity.
* An emphasis on how politics shape class inequality in different “welfare regimes.”
* A critical examination of ideologies that obscure the realities of class division.
* An analysis of class discourse in U.S. national newspapers.

**C & D:** This is an upper-level 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. Enrollment is capped at 30 students per section. Most often sections are filled to capacity or near capacity.

**E:** This course is taught by all members of the Sociology faculty.

**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 | Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online quizzes (10 questions from each week’s course material). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Comprehensive exams (three over the course of the semester). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Individual research assignment. Completing this assignment consists of doing original research and involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 10%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online quizzes (10 questions from each week’s course material). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Comprehensive exams (three over the course of the semester). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Individual research assignment. Completing this assignment consists of doing original research and involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 10%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online quizzes (10 questions from each week’s course material). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Comprehensive exams (three over the course of the semester). Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Individual research assignment. Completing this assignment consists of doing original research and involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 10%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD**

*Attainment of the SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD 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** |
| **Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks** | Knowledge of elements important to members of another culture | Task Type: Students will be given a pre-test and post-test to measure a change in mastery of core concepts applied to social issues.  Frequency: 2  Grading Weight: 0%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Exams (3 per semester). These exams are designed to assess factual and theoretical knowledge of elements of history, values, beliefs and politics related to class inequality and other intersecting forms of inequality that are important in other (national) cultures.  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online quizzes (10 questions from each week’s course material). These exams are designed to assess factual and theoretical knowledge of elements of history, values, beliefs and politics related to class inequality and other intersecting forms of inequality that are important in other (national) cultures.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Intercultural Awareness** | Awareness of multiple cultural perspectives | Task Type: Exams (3 per semester). These exams are designed to assess students’ knowledge of their own and others’ cultural biases; have them apply cultural relativity; and to recognize and identify (class) cultural complexities  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Completing these involves reflecting carefully on different (class) cultural perspectives.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Intercultural Engagement** | Being willing to engage with cultures other than one’s own | Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Completing these requires students to demonstrate cultural relativity and a multicultural perspective in action by suspending judgment, ethnocentrism, and “middle class centrism” when discussing other cultures, whether they are national cultures or intra-national class cultures.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Ethical Issue Recognition** | Awareness of ethical issues as they relate to cultures | Task Type: Exams (3 per semester). These exams are designed to assess knowledge about fundamental ethical issues related to class inequality and other intersecting forms of inequality. Students are expected to recognize that ethical issues complex situations and to realize that cultural relativity is not the same thing as moral relativity.  Frequency: 3  Grading Weight: 60%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online quizzes (10 questions from each week’s course material). These quizzes are designed to assess knowledge about fundamental ethical issues related to class inequality and other intersecting forms of inequality. Students are expected to recognize that ethical issues complex situations and to realize that cultural relativity is not the same thing as moral relativity.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Task Type: Weekly online discussions (minimum: one original answer to the teacher’s question and reflections on two other student posts). Students are expected to identify and evaluate fundamental ethical issues related to class inequality and other intersecting forms of inequality. Students are expected to recognize that ethical issues in complex situations and to realize that cultural relativity is not the same thing as moral relativity. Students will be judged proficient to the extent they can frame analyses along an ethical dimension.  Frequency: 11  Grading Weight: 11%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |