**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:** SO351 Social Change

**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 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**

This class is a 300 level course with a lot of material and it moves VERY quickly. We will examine at the global level social changes driven by the interactions between population, technology and our environment. The first half of the course focuses on social evolution linked to how the interaction between a society’s technology and their environment determines societal organization. We will take the long view: the transition from hunting and gathering, to horticultural, to agrarian, herding, and fishing societies and on to industrial and post-industrial, globalized societies. We will consider the human footprint on the environment as a consequence of energy sources and production technology, population growth and the rate of consumption (affluence). Cultures for special focus: the Kung in Botswana, the Sami in Finland, and the Sateré-Mawé in Brazil and the Inuit in Canada.

During the second half we will look at the depth and extent of interaction between different societies: the phenomenon of globalization and its consequences for populations, technological transfers and the global environment. Industrialization combined with information technology leaps has accelerated the rate of globalization and this is creating oppositional social movements: anti-globalization, anti-immigration, and even anti-science. The rise of the digital economy and the development of huge multi-national corporations have caused extensive de-industrialization and the collapse of cities like Detroit and Newark. The Lakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation, migrant farm workers in Florida and mountain top removal mining in West Virginia are covered.

As a result of significant and traumatic historical change some societies are locked into ongoing violent conflicts that the globalized, Internet media spreads around the world. Hence, parties engaged in conflict are spinning both academic and popular knowledge of their history and present circumstances to solicit support from a global audience. Societies in focus: Israel and Palestinians.

This course is designed to satisfy both the *Critical Thinking* and the *Perspectives on Society* 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 social structures and social change. The following is a specific set of learning goals for this course consistent with General Education. Students are expected to:

* Recognize and understand the principles of the scientific method as it applies to the social sciences and the study of the social universe.
* Understand methodologies applied to the study of social change.
* Comprehend commonalities and differences among various social science disciplines.
* Comprehend the origins of the discipline and how sociology is a distinctive social science.
* Master sociological concepts as they relate to the study of social change.
* Demonstrate an understanding of the role of social science theories and perspectives in investigating and explaining social phenomena.
* Apply and critique sociological theories applied to the study of social change.
* Be able to distinguish between knowledge supported by social science scholarship and “common sense” assumptions and similar forms of “conventional wisdom.”
* Express an understanding of one’s place in society’s culture, history, and political and economic systems.
* Sharpen their critical thinking by getting a deeper understanding of the “sociological imagination/perspective.”

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

* The interaction of technology and environment and social organization.
* The transition from hunting and gathering, to horticultural, to agrarian, herding, and fishing societies and on to industrial and post-industrial, globalized societies.
* Environmental impact as a consequence of energy sources and production technology, population growth, and hyper-consumption.
* Globalization and its consequences for populations, technological transfers, and the environment.
* Social movements in the context of rapid globalization.
* Violent conflicts in the global age.

**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: Exams for each part of the course. Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  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: Exams for each part of the course. Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  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: Exams for each part of the course. Completing these involves analyzing evidence, integrating ideas, and evaluating arguments.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |

**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 | 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 for each part of the course. Exams are used to assess the analysis and application of the sociological perspective.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | Task Type: Exams for each part of the course. These exams are designed to assess knowledge about fundamental ethical issues related to the study of social change.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | Task Type: Exams for each part of the course. These exams are designed to assess knowledge about social and cultural diversity across time and space as well as understanding of core concepts associated with human social organization.  Frequency: 6  Grading Weight: 100%  Expected Proficiency Rate: 80%  Rationale: Experience suggests that it is reasonable to expect an 80% proficiency rate. |