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Revision of General Education Task Force Proposal on Diversity Intensive Course Requirement
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Diversity Intensive Course Requirement Proposal

A. RATIONALE FOR A “DIVERSITY INTENSIVE” COURSE REQUIREMENT

MU’s Core Learning Objectives describe what all students should learn from general education courses, degree program-specific courses, and co-curricular experiences, that is, from the sum of their educational experiences at the University. One core objective is for students to be able to “observe and critically analyze the diverse human experience.” MU’s Diversity Intensive (DI) courses are integral to the Campus’ efforts to achieve this objective. The incorporation of a DI course requirement into our undergraduate curriculum fosters collaborative, creative and innovative learning within a campus climate of respect and equity, and one that prepares our students to competently function in diverse and competitive global societies.

Therefore, we recommend that the current general education breadth requirement be modified to require that one course be chosen from a list of DI courses—taken from new and existing courses within our undergraduate curriculum—to fulfill this requirement. Further, that DI courses will be taught through multiple and varied disciplines, theories, methodologies, and pedagogical approaches. The DI course requirement is an important cornerstone in the advancement of MU’s existing commitment to diversity.

B. LEARNING OBJECTIVES
DI courses will meet two fundamental criteria as follows:

1) DI courses will focus on understanding differing social groups (locally, nationally, and/or internationally).

2) DI courses will explore social inequalities broadly defined to include class, race, age, ethnicities, disabilities, genders, veterans, rural and urban communities, economic and/or resource disparities, indigenous cultures, among others.

Importantly DI courses will help students to:

- Describe and explain complex worldviews, policies, and issues from multiple perspectives;
- Critically analyze cultural myths and stereotypes about underrepresented groups through an in depth analysis of other cultures and life experiences;
- Communicate and work effectively, reasonably, and with an open mind with people of varied backgrounds, points of view and cultures;

C. DI COURSE CURRICULUM

1 All undergraduate students at MU would be required to take 3 credit hours designated as “Diversity Intensive.”

2 DI courses could be fulfilled within courses counted in the Distribution Requirement in the current general education architecture (GEA) such as humanities, social and behavioral sciences and science requirements, and thus would not require any additional credit hours for any degree in any college.

3 The DI course requirement can be fulfilled through courses within departments through which they are offered.

4 Courses would go through a process of approval to become DI courses, similar to the way courses are submitted online for approval for WI designation. A new DI
subcommittee of the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) will be created to approve DI courses. The DI subcommittee’s membership will consist of faculty members with expertise in diversity issues as defined in this proposal as well as representation from MU’s diversity office. The DI subcommittee will include qualified faculty members from at least three different MU colleges.

This CUE subcommittee is charged with developing criteria that will be used to assess which courses will be credited as DI through asking the following questions (among others):

1) Does the course focus on differing social groups (locally, nationally, and/or internationally)?
2) Does the course explore social inequalities broadly defined to include class, race, ethnicities, disabilities, genders, veterans, rural and urban communities, global economic and/or resource disparities, indigenous cultures, among others?
3) Does the course challenge cultural myths and stereotypes about underrepresented groups through an in depth analysis of other cultures, beliefs and life experiences?

The CUE subcommittee will oversee the construction of a DI website where courses can be easily submitted by faculty for approval. Once the DI subcommittee has expanded and established criteria for DI courses it will present these criteria to Faculty Council for approval.