

## CORE Diversity Intergroup Dialogue Option

This proposal for CORE diversity course status integrates a one-credit, eight-week dialogue experience into the existing three-credit course in a discipline-appropriate manner. Thus, future students who enroll in this course would earn a total of four academic credits, as well as satisfy their CORE diversity requirement. Currently, the three-credit course has diversity content, but that content has not been highlighted in such a way as to warrant CORE diversity approval of the course.

In seeking the CORE diversity approval, the three-credit course will: 1) augment attention to its diversity content; 2) require students to complete an intergroup dialogue; and, 3) draw meaningful connections between the theory (from the three-credit lecture) and practice (from the one-credit dialogue) of diversity.

### 1) Augment Diversity Content

In augmenting its diversity content, this course will enable students to *investigate major issues and scholarly approaches related to diversity*. This will be accomplished in the following ways:

The faculty member teaching the three-credit course will insert appropriate content here.

### 2) Intergroup Dialogue Requirement

By adding the intergroup dialogue requirement, this course will enable students to *communicate effectively, through written, oral and other forms of communication* (e.g., structured partnered and small group activities); to *analyze concepts and implications of diversity*, and, to *understand and articulate the importance of diversity within and among cultures and societies AND articulate how diversity helps shape the role of the individual and the interconnections and relationships within and among groups across societies and cultures* (including non-Western societies and cultures). These will be accomplished in the following manners:

For this three-credit course, the intergroup dialogue experience will be conceptualized as a major course requirement—in the vein of a lab experience—through which students will have the opportunity to apply and practice the theoretical principles of diversity embedded in course lectures (i.e., the augmented diversity content discussed under #1, above).

*Communicate effectively, through written, oral and other forms of communication*

By definition, intergroup dialogue engages students from one, two, or more “social identity groups” (i.e., based on race, ethnicity, geographic origin, socioeconomic class background, religious or spiritual affiliation, sexual orientation, gender or sex, gender identity or expression, and disability status, among others) in a collaborative learning experience. More specifically, intergroup dialogue is a collaboratively structured form of *group conversation* characterized by students’ willingness to “listen for understanding.” It is different from discussion, where students generally engage in serial monologuing—each offering their perspective on a given topic, as well as from debate, where students typically learn to “listen to gain advantage”—each seeking to trump the perspectives offered by others on a given topic. The goal of intergroup dialogue for students is to build increased intra- and cross-group awareness, knowledge, and understanding leading to collective engagement in action. Each student is expected to *verbally contribute to each dialogue session and to engage in all related interactive activities (which require, in varied measure, verbal communication, brief writing, brief reading, and intermittent physical movement in pairs, trios, smaller groups, larger groups, and as an entire dialogue group)*.

At the conclusion of each dialogue session, students are given fifteen minutes to *hand-write a reflection* on their experience of the session. The length of these reflections is determined by the content, not the reverse. Reflections weave the students’ personal narratives on the session with their critical analysis of the readings discussed in it. Reflections are thoughtful; students are expected to engage in self-critique, to comment on or critique the contributions of other students in the session, to bring in related narratives from other sources (e.g., comments from friends or family with whom

they discussed the dialogue, examples they can relate from popular culture, appropriate issues mentioned in the media, relevant conversations overheard at the gym or on the bus, etc.) in a critically conscious manner, as well as to integrate relevant learnings gleaned from other academic sources (e.g., readings from a class or another dialogue, independent research, etc.).

At the conclusion of the entire dialogue experience, students will demonstrate, in *final type-written reflection*—that uses formal APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines as is appropriate for its content—that they have developed increased communication and conflict exploration skills, as well as growth in perspective taking, complex thinking, and their abilities to juxtapose as well as integrate personal narrative and critical academic analysis.

### *Analyze concepts and implications of diversity*

In intergroup dialogue, students are expected to engage in reflective inquiry (analysis) of key diversity concepts (and the relevant implications of these concepts) by responding to dialogic questions. Through the process of problem-posing questioning that characterizes dialogue facilitation, students examine the implications of diversity by considering the following key questions:

1. What pre-existing attitudes and beliefs do I hold about myself, others around me, and the world as a whole?
2. What kinds of *personal* transformation might I need to embrace in order to become a better democratic citizen in the context of a multicultural society? What kinds of knowledge bases do I need to develop to foster this personal change? What kinds of personal, academic, and professional experiences do I need to have to become adept in cross-cultural interaction?
3. How do I define diversity? What are the specific dimensions of it?
4. How can I think critically about my own conceptions of diversity, as well as the social implications of my ways of knowing (of having come to those conceptualizations)?
5. Is there a relationship between diversity, inequality, and/or inequity? If so, what is it?
6. What are my conceptualizations of privilege and marginalization? How complex are these conceptualizations and how do I assess this?
7. What are my own personal experiences with privilege and marginalization?
8. What are my conceptualizations of equity, inequity, equality, inequality, multicultural education, dimensions of difference (related to race, ethnicity, geographic origin, language, socioeconomic class background, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical/developmental/psychological ability, age/generation, physical appearance, among others), and, individual, cultural, and institutional demographics? How complex are these conceptualizations and how do I assess this?
9. How can I deepen my understandings of the dimensions of difference as intersecting sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical systems of privilege and marginalization in the United States as well as beyond U.S. borders?
10. How can I identify and shape my own life philosophies as these pertain to dimensions of difference, and do so in a manner that honors the complexity of these dimensions?

*Understand and articulate the importance of diversity within and among cultures and societies AND Articulate how diversity helps shape the role of the individual and the interconnections and relationships within and among groups across societies and cultures*

The intergroup dialogue experience focuses students on the exploration of individual and group identities as they relate to various *dimensions of difference* (also conceptualized as cultural and/or societal differences). These dimensions include, but are not limited to, race; ethnicity; language; geographic origin; socioeconomic class; sex, gender, gender identity or expression; sexual orientation; physical, developmental, and psychological ability; religious, spiritual, faith-based, and secular affiliation; age and generation; and physical appearance. In intergroup dialogue, students explore these dimensions individually, as well as in terms of how they interface with one another. Further, intergroup dialogue engages students in the examination of the *sociopolitics* or *power dynamics* that operate within and between these dimensions, and the resultant differential access to full participation in democracy of individuals and groups (based on cultural and/or societal group membership).

Students in intergroup dialogue also explore the discrimination and oppression that impacts individuals based on their various identity (or cultural and/or societal) group memberships from both an historical and a present day lens. Intergroup dialogue creates a new context for verbal

interaction in which diverse groups of students *work through* circumstances that have kept them isolated from each other and, thus, injustice persisting.

In engendering the deep exploration and examination of difference, broadly conceptualized, intergroup dialogue facilitates the building of *meaningfully collaborative* relationships among and across students of varied identity (or cultural and/or societal groups). Through these relationships, intergroup dialogue encourages new parameters for the equitable organization and distribution of resources in society, locally and globally, to be established.

At the conclusion of the intergroup dialogue experience, students are expected to have developed greater insight into their own cultural and social identities in relationship to those of others like and unlike themselves, decreased propensity for stereotyping, reduced intergroup interaction anxiety, increased comfort with diversity, greater appreciation for difference, and increased motivation for cross-group bridge-building.

### 3) Bridge the Theory-Practice Gap

In bridging the gap between the theory and practice of diversity, this course will enable students to *use appropriate technologies to conduct research on and communicate about diversity and to access, evaluate, and manage information to prepare and present their work effectively*. This will be accomplished in the following manners:

The faculty member teaching the three-credit course will insert appropriate content here.