

Introducing UO's Multicultural Requirement

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Current Policy, in place since **1994**

Students select courses from **two of three categories...**

| | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| American Cultures | Courses study race and ethnicity in the United States from a historical and comparative perspective. | ~59 courses |
| Identity, Pluralism, & Tolerance | Courses explore how group identities are formed based on ethnicity, class, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. | ~154 courses |
| International Cultures | Courses examine world cultures by focusing on how they create group identities and approach tolerance or by analyzing a particular culture that differs significantly from more familiar cultures in contemporary America. Can be fulfilled by study abroad. | ~229 courses |

Fall 2015: The **UO Black Student Task Force** released a **list of demands** meant to achieve greater faculty and student diversity and equity as a matter of urgency and improve the social and intellectual climate on campus for students and faculty of color. Demands included making **Ethnic Studies 101 a graduation requirement**.

The new “requirement will require students to learn about the **importance of United States history in the context of social inequality and injustice**, while emphasizing the often overlooked histories of African-American as well as the histories of other underrepresented sub-groups in the United States.

Offer students ***“skills to navigate the diversifying world.”***

—*Black Student Task Force Memo,*
17 November 2015

| Examining Body | Key Findings | Recommendations |
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| <p data-bbox="28 201 861 482">Joint Committee Undergraduate Council and University of Oregon Curriculum Committee</p> <p data-bbox="28 579 377 629"><i>Winter 2016</i></p> | <p data-bbox="861 201 1686 482">Expressed “dissatisfaction with the current categories and structure” of the multicultural requirement.</p> <p data-bbox="861 579 1686 786">Identified a “diluting of the purpose and coherence of the requirement.”</p> | <p data-bbox="1686 201 2514 1322">Update the multicultural requirement category titles and descriptions to reflect <i>“current scholarship in the field of critical multicultural education”</i> & address an <i>“imbalance in the categories”</i> that means most UO students do not take American Cultures (AC) courses and, thus, <i>“are not exposed to the critical conversations occurring in AC courses addressing a critical analysis of students’ cultural context and assumptions.”</i></p> |

| Examining Body | Key Findings | Recommendations |
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| <p data-bbox="25 228 856 371">Ethnic Studies 101 Working Group</p> <p data-bbox="25 456 856 528"><i>Winter, Spring 2016</i></p> | <p data-bbox="856 228 1686 671">“The current MCR does not embody [a] coherent institutional commitment” and fails to adequately articulate student learning outcomes.</p> | <p data-bbox="1686 228 2517 442">Require a U.S. focused course on “<i>difference, power, discrimination & resistance.</i>”</p> <p data-bbox="1686 528 2517 742"><i>Share its teaching across</i> the university’s <i>schools and colleges.</i></p> |

| Examining Body | Key Findings | Recommendations |
|---|--|--|
| <p data-bbox="38 214 726 428">Faculty Working Group on Intercultural and Inclusive Teaching</p> <p data-bbox="38 514 394 571"><i>AY 2016-2017</i></p> | <p data-bbox="866 214 1617 349">The teaching of MCR courses has distinctive challenges.</p> <p data-bbox="866 442 1630 949">A shared core of content, transferrable capacities students are developing, and optimal classroom culture for teaching and learning should provide coherence to these courses.</p> | <p data-bbox="1694 214 2484 728">Faculty should be offered ongoing <i>teaching development and support</i> activities, and <i>leadership roles</i>, related to the <i>teaching of difference, power, and agency across the curriculum</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="1694 821 2484 1028">University systems around this teaching—like course evaluations—needs attention.</p> |

- ***Simplify*** the structure.
- ***Require*** sites of focus: 1) United States, 2) Global contexts.
- ***Be transparent*** about the relevance of these courses.
- ***Articulate*** valuable and transferrable skills, especially around:
 - listening,
 - self reflection, and
 - civil participation in cross-perspective dialogue.
- ***Develop***: Give meaningful opportunities for faculty teaching development and leadership across disciplines—let this be a model for other core education initiatives.
- ***Cohere, Update***: Articulate a clear, shared set of student learning outcomes and rationale statement that can be used on syllabi and updated periodically.

“In the class, we discussed power, inequality, and race. It was a valuable course because it ***directly addressed the world that we live in***. We explored differences and tried to understand experiences that many of the students in the class had never lived. The class ***broadened my perspective...*** An essential part of college is ***learning how to think***. Our discussions ... improved my ability to think critically and consider different perspectives and sides to a problem.”

—Student Course Evaluation, Writing 123, Winter 2017

Upcoming Ways to Get Involved...

Multicultural Requirement Conversations, Feedback Sessions

Thurs, Mar 1, 4-5pm

EMU Miller Room (107)

All faculty are warmly welcome!

Fri, Mar 2, 4-5pm

Knight Library Browsing Room

Session specially for students

Submit ideas to:

vpugs@uoregon.edu