Division of Student Affairs  
High Impact Practices (HIP)  
Cover Sheet 2013 - 2014  

Contact Name: Marisa E. Suhm  
Department(s): Multicultural Services  
Email: msuhm@tamu.edu  

Name of HIP: Diversity Certificate  
Approximate # of TAMU students involved in the HIP: 100  

Please check the TAMU learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:  

Bachelor’s:  
☐ Master the depth of knowledge required of a degree  
✓ Demonstrate critical thinking  
✓ Communicate effectively  
✓ Practice personal and social responsibility  
✓ Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence  
✓ Prepare to engage in lifelong learning  
✓ Work collaboratively  

Master’s:  
☐ Master the degree program requirements  
☐ Apply subject matter knowledge  
☐ Communicate effectively  
☐ Use appropriate technologies  
☐ Develop clear research plans  
☐ Choose ethical course of action  

Doctoral:  
☐ Master the degree program requirements  
☐ Apply a variety of strategies and tools  
☐ Communicate effectively  
☐ Develop clear research plans  
☐ Use appropriate technologies  
☐ Teach and explain the subject matter  

Please check the QEP learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:  

✓☐ Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for lifelong learning — Curiosity, Initiative, Independence, Transfer, Reflection  
✓☐ Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for integrative learning — Connections to experience, Connections to discipline, Transfer, Integrated communication, Reflection and self-assessment
High Impact Practices  
Division of Student Affairs  
The Diversity Certificate  
Department of Multicultural Services and the Colleges of Geosciences and Liberal Arts

Abstract

The Department of Multicultural Services in conjunction with the College of Geosciences and the College of Liberal Arts offers two academic Diversity Certificate Programs. Drawing from existing courses within the university, the Diversity Certificate Program will enable its students to create, synthesize and integrate academic coursework, co-curricular experiences, and service learning to demonstrate their preparedness to participate in the modern global economy. Guided by frequent individualized advising, the student will create a portfolio and a capstone presentation to demonstrate their competence.

Program Description

Justification

There are numerous threads of evidence that support the notion that Texas A&M students would be well served to have more ways in which to demonstrate multicultural competence. The university mission statement and the Vision 2020 imperatives recognize the importance of understanding and respecting other cultures, while acknowledging that this is an area which needs improvement.

While this university is perceived as creating competent professionals in a technical sense, our graduates are also perceived as lacking in diversity awareness and multicultural sophistication (Murdock Report, 1998). The certificate program would be a sign to future employers that the holder of such a certificate is coming to them with the skills and willingness to function in a pluralistic society.

There are multiple efforts across campus to promote diversity and multiculturalism. The purpose of this certificate program is to bring together these efforts into a cohesive whole. The various components recognize, and utilize, these efforts, and consolidate them into a meaningful and enriched undergraduate experience.

Components

The Diversity Certificate program has the following components:

1) **An orientation session** during which the purpose, structure and requirements of the certificate will be explained. Included in this orientation will be an introduction to the terminology of diversity education, the principles of social justice and inclusion, and a guiding philosophy for the certificate. An advisor from Multicultural Services will be assigned to each student, and they will meet regularly (at least bi-monthly) to assess progress and involvement in the program. There will be an overall coordinator for each college.

2) **The academic component**, which will consist of the completion of a minimum of twelve hours of diversity related courses. Students will be provided with a sample list of courses, and advice about the most appropriate choices for their long term goals. Certificate advisers may approve additional courses not on the sample list to count towards the completion of this requirement. The core courses required for this certificate may also count towards other degree requirements. Students should maintain a GPA of 3.0 in certificate courses.
3) **A co-curricular component**, which will consist of a minimum of 10 hours of participation in diversity related co-curricular activities such as the ones provided by diversity education in the Department of Multicultural Services, or in multicultural/social justice organizations on or off campus. Attendance at national or local diversity conferences could also count towards this requirement. Certificate advisers will supply a preapproved list of activities to participants at the beginning of each semester. Additional activities will need to be approved by certificate advisers.

4) **A service learning component**, which will consist of at least 20 hours of involvement in an approved project. This component will draw upon existing programs, such as the International Service Project sponsored by the L. T. Jordan Institute, the various opportunities offered by the Study Abroad Programs Office, or many of the local service opportunities provided by many departments at Texas A&M and in the local community.

5) **A capstone retreat** will be offered at the end of the fall and spring semesters. During this retreat, participants will demonstrate how they have integrated and made sense of their experiences by sharing their portfolios containing academic work and reflections on co-curricular and service learning opportunities. They will also be guided to reflect on how the process will allow them to participate more fully in a global society.

**Learning Outcomes**

1) Students will be able to articulate the complexity and multiplicity of issues that surround global diversity.

2) Students will be able to explain how the behavior of individuals, groups, and nations affects others, in terms of human rights and environmental, social and economic well-being.

3) Students will be able to perceive and articulate any given event from more than one cultural viewpoint.

4) Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of appropriate discourse when addressing issues of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, and socio-economic status.

**Elements of High Impact Practices in the Diversity Certificate**

The Diversity Certificate Program has characteristics of High Impact Practices, as explained below:

a) **Students invest time and effort to purposeful tasks.** Every activity in the diversity certificate is efficient and purposeful. For example, the essays they must write for every component are two-pages long and serve the purpose of summarizing, forming opinion, integrating knowledge, the 10 hours of co-curricular activities expose them to areas of diversity that their classes may not cover, the 20 hours of service learning has the objective of using academic knowledge in a real context and critically reflect on the experience.

b) **Students interact with staff, advisors, and/or faculty about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time.** Participants are asked to meet with their certificate advisor several times a semester to discuss their progress, classes and portfolio and to review their reflection essays, listen to their opinions, and discuss issues of how their discipline interacts with culture.
and diversity. The participation in the diversity certificate and their relationship with the advisor extends from 1 to 4 years.

c) **Students interact with peers about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time.**
Students meet each other during the orientation retreat and are encouraged to continue to meet in substantive ways. Because they are in the same college, they frequently take similar classes, share service opportunities, study abroad, and co-curricular activities. The capstone retreat and the service project are other opportunities to share what each participant has learned during their time in the certificate program.

d) **Students experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves**
The co-curricular component and the service learning components are specifically designed to interact with people different from themselves. The service learning requires that the beneficiaries of the project be underrepresented, and the co-curricular component must be on areas of diversity not covered in their academic classes.

e) **Students receive frequent feedback about their performance – both formal and informal – in settings that allow them to respond to that feedback.**
Students receive frequent feedback in formal ways through their professors (they must get a 3.0 in those classes) and in their reflection essays; but also in informal ways in conversations with the advisor, their peers, and the people to whom they provide service. Participants are encouraged to respond to feedback, express their opinions and be active in their own life-long learning and interests.

f) **Students are provided opportunities to integrate synthesize and apply knowledge gained from their classroom/discipline to their co-curricular experience and vice versa and are provided opportunities to discover the relevance of learning through application and practice in a range of contexts.**
The portfolios and reflection essays, the co-curricular and service learning requirements are perfect ways to integrate, synthesize knowledge in a variety of contexts. Their capstone again is the final opportunity to bring all the pieces into a cohesive and meaningful whole.

g) **Students are provided opportunities to become aware of their values and beliefs and thus to better understand themselves in relation to others and the larger world.**
These opportunities for self-reflection, values clarification and understanding of other’s values are at the core of the diversity certificate, starting with the orientation and ending with the capstone.

**Assessment**

In addition to the GPA requirement of 3.0 for certificate courses, progress towards the certificate will be assessed by program advisors using the following methods:
1) portfolios, consisting of materials produced in courses, journal entries, and reflection papers about their service learning and co-curricular activities. Portfolio materials will be evaluated using criteria derived from certificate learning outcomes.
2) attendance records, sign in sheets for conferences and/or co-curricular participation, and participation in a service learning program.
3) participation in the orientation and capstone experiences.
4) attendance at bi-monthly meetings with certificate adviser.
Service Learning

Service-learning is an educational approach that combines service to the community with classroom curricula. It is a hands-on approach to mastering subject material while fostering civic responsibility. The goals of service learning include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) To enhance student learning by joining theory with experience and thought with action.
2) To assist students to see the relevance of the academic subject to the real world.
3) To expose students to societal inadequacies and injustices and empower students to remedy them. To enable students to help others, give of themselves, and enter into caring relationships with others.
4) To develop a richer context for student learning.

Examples of Service Learning

- **Environmental Programs** students help a non-profit organization write manuals/brochures and/or organize a contest on civic responsibility and recycling for high school students.
- Atmospheric Science students tutor elementary school students in mathematics in a four-week timeframe. Some of the objectives that are met through their service-learning include: enhancing and expanding their math confidence; improvement in fluency in math reasoning; practice in problem solving, and enhanced critical thinking skills. Students write a reflective essay which details their first impressions of the project, their expectations, the benefits/drawbacks of the project, what they learned, how they applied the skills learned in their math career, how the experience related to the course objectives, their recommendations about the experience, and how/if the experience affected their life goals.
- **Geography** students work with a community program to provide mapping and other technological services to assist in achieving their goals. They become locational experts and practice developing databases to manage large amounts of spatial data.

Resources for service learning at Texas A&M University are found at: http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/leadandserve/resources/servicelearning

Co-curricular Component

The co-curricular component of the Diversity certificate consists of attendance to 10 hours of educational and experiential diversity education opportunities offered outside of the classroom by various constituents on or off campus.

To fulfill the co-curricular requirements of the certificate, the students must document their participation in the event, receive the approval of their advisor (prior or after the event), and write a reflection piece in their portfolio. Students are expected to cover an array of events and not simply concentrate on a specific area.

Examples of Co-Curricular Activities

- Presentations, workshops and lectures by Department of Multicultural Series
- Student Government Association Diversity Symposium
Orientation Session

Every student wanting to enroll in the certificate program needs to participate in an orientation and a capstone session. The orientation session will be offered a few times during and prior to the semester as needed.

Objectives

1) To introduce students to the requirements and logistics of the program
2) To introduce students to the diversity certificate staff and other students
3) To familiarize students with resources and co-curricular offerings
4) To explain how to build a portfolio
5) To introduce concepts of multicultural competence, social justice, privilege, diversity education and the connection to their academic and professional careers.
6) To develop a common terminology.

Capstone for Diversity Certificate

Upon completing all other requirements of the certificate program, students will register for a capstone program, which will be offered 2-3 times a semester, and capped at 4 presentations. The capstone presenters will have the opportunity to:

1) To make connections between classroom and co-curricular activities
2) To provide the opportunity to publically present the work done towards the certificate
3) To reflect on the implications of this work, both personally and globally
4) To demonstrate how their opinions and world view have evolved and been shaped by the certificate experience.
### Examples of Courses for the Diversity Certificate

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liberal Arts</th>
<th>Geosciences</th>
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| - ANTH 300. Cultural Change and Development  
- ANTH 301. Indians of North America  
- ANTH 314. Agrarian Peasant Societies  
- ANTH 315. Peoples and Cultures of Africa  
- ANTH 319. Indians of Mexico and Central America  
- ANTH 404. Women and Culture.  
- HIST 258. American Indian History  
- HIST 301/AFST 301. Blacks in the United States Since 1877  
- HIST 305. Mexican-American History 1848-Present  
- HIST 307. Latino Communities of the U.S.  
- HIST 345/AFST345 Modern Africa  
- HIST 346. History of South Africa  
- HIST 348. Modern Middle East  
- HIST 352. Modern East Asia  
- HIST 355. Modern China  
- HIST 356. Twentieth Century Japan  
- HIST 451. The New South, 1876 to the Present  
- HIST 455. History of the American City  
- HIST 460. American Society and Culture Since 1877  
- HIST 461. History of American Women  
- HIST 473. History of Modern American Women  
- AFST 317 Race & Ethnic Relations  
- AFST 323 Sociology of African Americans  
- AFST 357 The Black Diaspora and the Modern World  
- HLTH 236. Race, Ethnicity and Health  
- MODL 352. Hispanic Literature and Film  
- MODL 362. Hispanic Literature in the United States  
- MODL 363. Borderlands: U.S. and | - GEOS 484 (mandatory)  
- GEOG 202 Global Village  
- GEOG 305 Geography of Texas  
- GEOG 306 Urban Geography  
- GEOG 311 Cultural Geography  
- GEOG 320 The Middle East  
- GEOG 321 Geography of Africa  
- GEOG 323 Geography of Latin America  
- GEOG 326 Geography of East Asia  
- GEOG 327 Geography of South Asia  
- GEOG 402 Interpretation of Cultural Landscapes  
- GEOG 430 Environmental Justice  
- GEOS 444 Science & Politics of Global Climate Change |
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<tr>
<td>- MUSC 324. Music in World Cultures</td>
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<td>- POLS 324. Politics of Global Inequality</td>
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<td>- SOCI 207. Introduction to Gender and Society</td>
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<td>- SOCI 316. Sociology of Gender</td>
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<td>- SOCI 317. Minority Groups</td>
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<td>- SOCI 321. Urban Sociology</td>
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<td>- SOCI 323. Sociology of Black Americans</td>
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<td>- SOCI 324. Social Change</td>
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<td>- SOCI 403. Sociology of Mexican Americans</td>
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<td>- SOCI 419. Social Class in Contemporary Society</td>
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<td>- SOCI 423. Globalization and Social Change</td>
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<td>- SOCI 424. Women and Work in Society</td>
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<td>- WGST 316. Sociology of Gender</td>
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<td>- WGST 333. Gay and Lesbian Literature</td>
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<td>- WGST 407. Women, Minorities and the Mass Media</td>
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