

From: Academic Affairs Committee
To: Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
Date: March 25, 2021

RE: Academic Affairs Committee Recommendation for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access in U.S. Society (IDEAS) Graduation Requirement.

Recommendation

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) brings to the Academic Senate their recommendation for a proposed new graduation requirement on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access in U.S. Society (IDEAS). Upon reviewing the recommendations from the U.S. Diversity Ad Hoc Committee and the University Curriculum Committee (see attached documents), and after deliberations on the benefits and potential challenges of implementing the IDEAS graduation requirement, the AAC voted to **support** the proposed graduation requirement by a vote of **ten (10) in favor** and **zero (0) opposed** during its March 24, 2021 meeting.

Our recommendation is consistent with the Final Report and Recommended Actions by the ISU Climate Assessment Task Force (May 22, 2017) to *create an inclusive classroom and curriculum* and with the core value of Illinois State's Strategic Plan (Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State – The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University 2018-2023) to nurture diversity and inclusion including to *infuse diverse perspectives into the curriculum, co-curriculum, and other programs and initiatives*. One of the main strengths of the graduation requirement is to contribute to an inclusive and diverse learning environment to distinguish ISU from practices in other universities. To this end, the AAC examined graduation requirements in a sample of eleven public universities in Illinois. Among this group, three (3) universities do not require a domestic diversity course (Governors State University, Northeastern University, University of Illinois Springfield), six (6) universities refer to cultural or diversity studies but they do not limit the courses to domestic studies (Chicago State University lists a set of diversity courses under general education; Eastern Illinois University does not require a diversity course, but it is an option among civics, ethics, and diversity; Northern Illinois University refers to a course or a non-course based experience that is designated as human diversity; Southern Illinois University Carbondale does not specify that it is within the U.S.; Western Illinois University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign do not require the course to focus on U.S. society); and two (2) universities explicitly refer to the U.S. context (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville does not limit it to a course but it can be an activity or project; University of Illinois at Chicago requires a course on Understanding U.S. Society). Among these public universities, University of Illinois at Chicago is the most consistent with the proposed IDEAS graduation requirement. Even though not all eleven universities require the diversity graduation requirement to be within the U.S. context, 73% of them have a cultural studies graduation requirement.

The proposed IDEAS graduation requirement is also consistent with the commitment of the Illinois Board of Higher Education to diversity and inclusion which, according to the 110 ILCS 205/9.21 Board of Higher Education Act, requires public institutes of higher education to include in their General Education requirements coursework on improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment:

(110 ILCS 205/9.21) (from Ch. 144, par. 189.21)
Sec. 9.21. Human Relations.

(a) The Board shall monitor, budget, evaluate, and report to the General Assembly in accordance with Section 9.16 of this Act on programs to improve human relations to include race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations. The programs shall at least:

(1) require each public institution of higher education to include, in the general education requirements for obtaining a degree, coursework on improving human relations to include race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment on their campuses, through existing courses;

Process

The IDEAS graduation requirement was developed by the U.S. Diversity Ad Hoc Committee (hereafter, ad hoc committee), revised by the University Curriculum Committee after receiving feedback from faculty, staff, and students during two public forums and a university survey, and reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee. The *timeline of the process* is as follows:

- **Summer 2016:** President Larry H. Dietz appoints the Campus Climate Task Force to address the Campus Climate Assessment Report for ISU.
- **June 5, 2017:** The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost appoints a U.S. Diversity Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations for a diversity graduation requirement for undergraduate students.
- **January 11, 2018:** The ad hoc committee submits their recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
- **April/May 2018:** The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) holds public forums and conducts a survey to gather feedback from the university community for the proposed graduation requirement.
- **November 2018, February 2019, March 2019:** The UCC discusses the analysis of the survey results.
- **April 2019:** The UCC votes to approve the proposed graduation requirement with 12 members in favor and 3 members opposed.
- **April 30, 2019:** The UCC forwards their recommendation to the Academic Senate office.
- **August 2019:** The UCC recommendation is distributed to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate and is added to the Issues Pending List of the Academic Affairs Committee.
- **Fall 2019:** The AAC reserves their Spring 2020 meetings for discussion of the IDEAS graduation requirement.
- **Spring 2020:** The discussion of the IDEAS graduation requirement is interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Fall 2020 and Spring 2021:** The AAC allocates the majority of their meetings for discussion of the IDEAS graduation requirement.
- **March 24, 2021:** The AAC votes to approve the proposed IDEAS graduation requirement with ten (10) members in favor and zero (0) members opposed.
- **March 25, 2021:** The AAC forwards their recommendation for the IDEAS graduation requirement to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate.
- **March 29, 2021:** The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate places the IDEAS graduation requirement on the agenda as an information item for the next Academic Senate meeting on April 7, 2021.

Learning Outcomes

Courses in the IDEAS category should address some significant aspects of U.S. society as their central focus. They should be designed to facilitate the students' ability to accomplish the following learning objectives:

1. Analyze the influence of power among social groups in the United States. Discuss how markers of difference (e.g., class, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, language) interact in the formation, experiences, and transformations of individual actors and complex group.
2. Identify the strengths and contributions of diverse groups within the U.S.
3. Analyze the sources of preconceptions and bias influencing the experiences of diverse social groups in the U.S.
4. Articulate the historical, social, and economics contexts that shape inequality, marginalization, and exclusion within U.S. society.
5. Reflect on one's own cultural identity, beliefs, biases, and privilege within dynamic socio-historical contexts.
6. Examine how individuals from diverse groups express their identities and shape society in the U.S. through the arts, sciences, cultural practices, political and civic engagement, etc.

The Academic Affairs Committee is in support of the above learning objectives as recommended by the ad hoc committee. Specifically, the AAC is in favor of the original language for outcome 5 to "*Reflect on one's own cultural identity, beliefs, biases, and privilege within dynamic socio-historical contexts*" rather than the alternative language suggested by the UCC to "*Reflect on the complexities of identity, beliefs, biases, and privilege within dynamic socio-historical contexts.*" The AAC members thought that the UCC's alternative wording (*on the complexities of*) is vague and not consistent with best practices in terms of cultural competence development. In combination with the UCC proposal not providing justification about the change in the language for item 5, the AAC members voted in favor of the originally proposed language from the ad hoc committee.

The AAC consulted with President's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council (DIAC), formed since the origination of this proposal, and the ad hoc committee and determined that the above learning objectives are consistent with the definitions of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access currently used by the

University. See Appendix A (“IDEAS Definitions”) for these definitions, approved by President Dietz on February 25, 2021.

Catalog Copy

The proposed Catalog Copy follows the existing AMALI graduation requirement that focuses on cultures and traditions outside of the U.S. (Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, or Indigenous Peoples of the World), whereas the IDEAS graduation requirement focuses on the U.S. society.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access in U.S. Society (IDEAS) Graduation Requirement

Each student must complete at least one course in “IDEAS.” These are courses designed to recognize the benefits and challenges of living in a diverse society and to address the influence of power among social groups within the United States.

IDEAS designated courses may count both towards this graduation requirement and general education requirements; however, IDEAS courses cannot count towards both the IDEAS graduation requirement and the AMALI graduation requirement.

The courses on the following list meet the graduation requirement for IDEAS.

Implementation

Students can satisfy the IDEAS graduation requirement in three ways:

1. Complete an IDEAS-approved course at ISU.
2. Complete an approved course in the Illinois Articulation Initiative General Education Core Curriculum with “D” designation.
3. Complete a baccalaureate Associates Degree at an Illinois community college.

Upon approval of the IDEAS graduation requirement by the Academic Senate, the IDEAS graduation requirement will follow the approved curriculum processes and deadlines for changes in the undergraduate catalog.

The IDEAS graduation requirement will fall within the scope of the Council on General Education Committee (CGE), an external committee of the Academic Senate. A sub-committee of the CGE will consist of 5-7 faculty members with expertise in the IDEAS subject matter. The IDEAS sub-committee of the CGE will:

- Develop procedures for the evaluation of course proposals for IDEAS credit;
- Review and approve or disapprove all IDEAS-specific proposals for new courses and for revisions in existing courses;
- Review courses every 5 years to ensure courses meet the IDEAS learning objectives;
- Review IDEAS learning objectives and the overall graduation requirement to ensure it meets the purpose of the requirement; and
- Review assessment data collected on the graduation requirement.

Courses proposed for IDEAS credit will follow a process similar to the review of AMALI credit courses. Department and college curriculum committees review courses proposed for IDEAS credit, the CGE sub-committee reviews these courses, and the CGE approves or disapproves them. Once approved, the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education finalizes the approval process. Administrative responsibilities of the IDEAS graduation requirement fall within the office of the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education.

A sample list of existing courses in the Undergraduate Catalog that could satisfy the IDEAS graduation requirement are included in Appendix B – Sample Courses for IDEAS Graduation Requirement. The expectation is that some faculty will revise their syllabi to more explicitly demonstrate how they address the learning outcomes to count for IDEAS credit, so the list of courses is non-exhaustive. A sample list of already approved IAI courses that would satisfy the requirement are included in Appendix C – IAI Courses with Designation “D.”

One of the main concerns expressed in the survey conducted by the UCC was the possibility that the IDEAS graduation requirement might increase required credit hours towards graduation and increase time to degree. The AAC requested information from the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education on the number of unique students who already enroll in courses identified as courses that would satisfy the IDEAS designation (see Appendix B). The data showed that there are 17,803 unique students who enroll in an IDEAS course during a four-year period (2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021 for Fall and Spring semesters). This suggests that, at most, approximately 2,900 students would need to enroll in a course to meet the IDEAS graduation requirement. This number is expected to be even lower because it does not account for other (existing) courses that may also count towards IDEAS but were not included in the initial list of sample courses in Appendix B. For example, according to a Diversity Course Survey distributed to advisors, AGR, BSC, COM, ECO, KNR, NUR, and all 28 teacher education programs have either required or elective courses with a significant diversity component which could meet the graduation requirement. Therefore, we expect that implementation of the new graduation requirement would not increase the required course load among undergraduate students since the majority of our students already complete diversity-related courses.

APPENDIX A – IDEAS Definitions

President’s Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council (DIAC)

Diversity is the presence and acknowledgement of differences that includes a spectrum of intersecting identities such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender/gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, country of origin, language, ability, veteran status, religious affiliations, and life experiences. Diversity in higher education acknowledges that some populations have been—and remain—underrepresented.

Equity includes a commitment to restorative practices that promote equitable treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement among historically marginalized groups and individuals. Such restorative practices include identifying and eliminating barriers that prevent historically underrepresented and underserved groups from having access to resources, information, and social influence. Equity goes beyond acknowledging diversity, and advocates for justice regarding historically unbalanced conditions.

Inclusion recognizes diversity, advocates for a commitment to equity, and works to create an infrastructure that work to ensure shared power, opportunities, and resources. Inclusive practice involves carving and sustaining pathways to ensure traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups have agency in decision making and are viewed as valuable and necessary for the organization to thrive.

Access refers to the identification and removal of visible or invisible barriers within institutions such as higher education, while providing inclusive opportunities for individuals to fully participate in society.

APPENDIX B – Sample of Existing Courses to meet IDEAS Graduation Requirement

Course	Title	Influence of Power	Diverse Group Contribution	Sources of Bias	Context of Inequality	Self-Reflection	Expression of Identity	Set in U.S.	Focus on Diversity	Meets SLOs	Comments
ANT 176	Culture, Power, and Civic Life	x	x	x	x		x	?	x	?	Course description implies more of a global/international focus; readings and topics seem relevant to US.
ANT 272	North American Indians	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
ANT 278	Introduction to Asian America	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
CJS 308	Race, Ethnicity and Justice	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
CSD 375	Cultural Diversity in CSD		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
EAF 228	Social Foundations of Education	x		x	x	x				x	
EAF 231	Intro to Philosophy of Education	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	Hard to tell how much the focus is. It is in the course objectives.
EAF 235	Historical Foundations of Education	x		x	x	x				x	
ENG 165	Intro to African-American Literature and Culture	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
ENG 265	Foundations of African-American Lit and Culture	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	
ENG 266	Native American	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

	Literature & Culture										
ENG 267	Foundations of US Latino/a Cultures	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
ENG 365	Movements and Periods in African American Literature and Culture: The Harlem Renaissance	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
FCS 112	The American Family: change and Diversity		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	Did not address power/inequality.
HIS 104.06	Native American History	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
HIS 111	American Diversity	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
HIS 112	American Family		x	x	x	x	x			x	Weekly topics qualify, not overall description.
HIS 217	American Religious History II	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	Weekly topics qualify. Focus on religion and second on race.
HIS 257	Afro-American History to 1877	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
HIS 258	Afro-American History since 1865	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
HIS 261	History of Women in the US to 1865	x		x	x	x	x			x	History of women.
HIS 262	History of Women in the US since 1865	x	x		x			x		x	Historical focus.

HIS 264	History of Women in North America	x	x		x		x	North America and Caribbean	x	x	Note entirely US, but seems to meet the spirit of the requirement and comparative perspective seems to allow for interrogation of national identity to some extent).
HIS 310	Native American History	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
HIS 315	Slavery and the Old South	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	Slavery and Old South
IDS 121.29	Native Writers on Native Issues	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
IDS 121.37	Theatre & Film: Exploration of the Black Identity in America	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
LAL 109	Introduction To Latina/O Studies	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	With a more detailed syllabus, more of the SLOs might be met.
MUS 153	Black Music I	x	x	x	x		x	1/3	x	x	About 1/3 of class focuses on U.S. experience.
MUS 154	Black Music II		x			x	x		x	x	Not sure this course is centered in US.
PHI 246	Feminist Philosophies	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	
POL 334	The Politics of Race, Ethnicity and Inequality	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
POL 337	Gay and Lesbian Politics and Theory	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	
PSY 327A01	Cultural Psychology: Latino/a Psychology	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	Objectives are heavily tied to research. Assignments support discussion issues/impact.

PSY 327A02	Cultural Psychology: Black Psychology	x	x	x	x	x		US+	x	x	
SED 205	Family, Professional, & Community Collaboration	x	?	x	x	x	?	x	x	x	
SED 205A01	Family, Professional, & Community Collaboration: Early Childhood	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
SOC 109	Introduction To Latina/O Studies	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	
SOC 111	American Diversity	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
SOC 112	Change and Diversity	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	
SOC 264	Race, Class, and Gender	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
SWK 310	Understanding Diverse Populations	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
TCH 110	Cross Cultural Teaching and Learning	x		x	x	x				x	
THE 154	Introduction to Black Drama and Theatre	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	Information from goal and learning outcomes includes analysis/impact.
WGS 120	Women's and Gender Studies 120: Gender, Sex, and Power	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
WGS 292	Introduction to LGBTQ Studies		x			x			x	x	Information on Reggienet could be helpful
WGS 392	Queer and Trans* Theory		x						x	x	Need objectives, additional information

APPENDIX C – IAI Courses with Designation “D”

According to the Illinois Articulation Initiative, category “D” designates IAI courses designed specifically to examine aspects of human diversity within the United States. A list of these courses at Illinois State University is as follows:

- H3 910D [ENG 165](#) – Introduction to African-American Literature & Culture (3)
- H3 911D [ENG 160](#) – Introduction to Studies in Women's Writing (3)
- H3 911D [COM 128](#) – Gender in the Humanities (3)
- H3 911D [ENG 128](#) – Gender in the Humanities (3)
- H3 911D [LAN 128](#) – Gender in the Humanities (3)
- F1 905D [MUS 153](#) – Black Music I (3)
- F1 905D [MUS 154](#) – Black Music II (3)
- F1 905D [THE 154](#) – Introduction to Black Drama and Theatre (3)
- S7 904D [WGS 120](#) – Gender, Sex, & Power (3)
- S7 905D [SOC 264](#) – Racial, Social Class, And Gender Inequality (3)

These courses are distinct from IAI courses designated as “N” which specifically examine aspects of human diversity from a non-U.S./non-European perspective and satisfy the AMALI graduation requirement. A list of these courses at Illinois State University is as follows:

- H2 903N [HIS 104A01](#) – History of Africa (3)
- H2 903N [HIS 104A02](#) – History of East Asia (3)
- H2 903N [HIS 104A03](#) – History of Latin America (3)
- H2 903N [HIS 104A04](#) – History of the Middle East (3)
- H2 903N [HIS 104A05](#) – History of South & Southeast Asia (3)
- F2 903N [ART 275](#) – World Arts: Visual Arts (3)
- S1 901N [ANT 185](#) – Cultures of the World: An Intro to Cultural & Linguistic Anthropology (3)
- S4 900N [GEO 135](#) – World Geography (3)
- S4 900N [GEO 142](#) – Human Geography (3)