

Self, Society and Values: An illustration of how the categories of the grid could be developed

The capacity to articulate and discuss issues of value is an essential prerequisite to effective and satisfying personal, professional and citizen participation in a democracy. The developmental trajectory of this column begins with a focus on the self and the information, beliefs and values the individual uses to manage his or her life, with an appreciation that our values and beliefs have serious consequences for ourselves and others. These consequences will then be examined further in the broader context of how issues of race, class, and gender impact the rights and experiences of others. This understanding will then be pursued through the examination of the variety of ethical and aesthetic values and belief systems across history and across cultures in today's world. This study of the relationships of self and society will prepare students for selecting and articulating the values and beliefs that best reflect their interests, lead to a better understanding and respect for others, and motivate them for more effective citizen participation locally and globally.

Goal:

Exhibit competencies, attitudes and behaviors indicative of self-knowledge, integrity and commitment to personal and professional development as a life-long process

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- A. Identify potential consequences that personal choices as well as political, economic, and other social forces may have on individual, societal, and environmental health
- B. Apply moral reasoning skills to an array of ethical issues confronted by individuals, groups, and communities
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues related to gender, ethnic and cultural diversity in the United States and other areas of the world
- D. Apply principles of responsible community membership within and beyond the campus community
- E. Better understand how the human body works; Recognize and practice healthy lifestyles
- F. Converse about aesthetic issues in art, literature or music

Personal Wellbeing

.Our values, beliefs and habits inform our lifestyle behaviors, having consequences for both for our own well being and that of those around us. Student well-being issues are a main reason for lowered undergraduate performance and dropping out, as well as for similar personal and professional problems after college. Discovering and maintaining physical, mental/emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual mental well being is a difficult task amid the competing claims of living in residence halls (50% of freshman), personal and cultural habits, peer groups, popular culture and an overload of unregulated information from the internet. Courses in this area will provide opportunities to critique information, examine values, attitudes and beliefs that govern personal behavior, and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to support life long well-being for undergraduate, personal and professional success. In a survey conducted by the American College Health Association, stress was the number one impediment to student's academic performance. ¹ Courses in this area will incorporate participation in programs, workshops and activities appropriate to the category.

Examples of courses that might be adapted or developed in this category:

Fitness for Life PEGE 150

Current Health Issues PBHL 120

Women's Health Issues PBHL 210

Personal Finance (Indiana University)

Body, Mind and Well-Being (Wisconsin- Lacrosse, Honors)

Stress Management (University of South Dakota)

Interdisciplinary course aimed at wellbeing issues for the non-traditional student (not offered)

Outcomes (To be developed)

Knowledge Outcomes

Skill Outcomes

Co-curricular activities/experiential components

¹American College Health Association- National College Health Assessment Spring 2007 Reference Group Data Report, Journal of American College Health, Volume 56 (no. 5), March/April 2008.

Identity, Diversity and Equity

We each identify ourselves through membership in many different groupings, such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, neighborhood, area of study, etc. All of these identities have consequences for the rest of our lives. The relations among these groups may not always be transparent, especially where one group enjoys advantages over another. Courses in this area will examine such dominant relationships both in the United States and the world, promote an open discussion of the consequences of these advantages, and examine ways to achieve greater group and personal equality. For more examples of curricular development in this area, see Diversity Web, www.diversityweb.org.

Outcomes (To be developed)

Knowledge Outcomes

Skill Outcomes

Examples of courses that might be adapted or developed in this category:

Racism & Sexism in the United States AACS 150

Understanding Culture ANTH 230

Women's Changing Roles WS 110

American Ethnic History HIST 325

Images of Women in Modern Literature ENG 217

Encountering Global Diversity (course offered at Wesleyan)

Law, Society and Difference (course at San Francisco State University – deals with disabilities)

Indigenous People in Comparative Perspective (course offered at Arizona)

Race and Citizenship in the United States (UC-Irvine)

Diversity in the United States: Moral and Civic Competencies for the 21st Century Democracy
(Fort Hays State University)

Outcomes (To be developed)

Knowledge Outcomes

Skill Outcomes

Comparative Values in the Arts

Courses in this area will give students a broad understanding of the variety of approaches to understanding aesthetic values such as Beauty throughout history and across various cultures today. Beauty in the various forms of art, music, literature, theatre, dance, food, etc. is a central motivation in our lives. Understanding the variety of things that people call beautiful and their reasons for doing so will help students ground their own aesthetic values as well as better understanding and being able to articulate the values held by others. Being able to communicate knowledgeably and coherently concerning issues of pleasure and taste make both our communal and personal lives more rich, stable and satisfying.

Outcomes (To be developed)

Knowledge Outcomes

Skill Outcomes

Examples of courses that might be adapted or developed in this category:

Approaches to Non-Western Art ARTH 102

Approaches to Visual Literacy ARTH 105

Philosophy of Art PHIL 221

Visual Anthropology ANTH 250

Literature across the Americas ENG 325

Dance in World Cultures (ASU)

Contemporary Art (St. Peter's College)

Fine Arts and the Modern World (Oakland City University)
Musical Traditions of South and West Asia (Harvard)

Ethics and Social Responsibility

Courses in this area will give students a broad understanding of the variety of approaches to understanding ethical values such as “the Good” throughout history and across various cultures today. Understanding the variety of actions that people call ethically good and their reasons for doing so will help students ground their own ethical values as well as better understanding and being able to articulate the values held by others.

There will be a variety of options for this category. A major could direct students to specific courses or develop a specific course for the major. It might also choose to incorporate ethical perspectives within existing coursework. For example, the College of Business already has a 1.5 credit course on Business Ethics.

Examples of courses that might be adapted or developed in this category:

Ethics PHIL 200
Sociology of Religion SOC 233
Environmental Ethics (Phil335)

In the major

Bioethics and Society (Bio 470)
Environmental Ethics (Phil 335)
Ethics and Business (Mgmt 350)

Bioethics: Stem Cells, Abortion, Disability, & Euthanasia (Ramapo College)
Professional Ethics (Bergen Community College)
Ethics and Civic Responsibility in Literature & Film (Minnesota State Mankato)
Ethics and Morality in Buddhist Literature (USC)
Ethics and Decision Making in Education (University of Minnesota-Morris)

Applied Experiences: Values in Action

In this capstone course the examination of values and their consequences reaches its fruition in the application of one’s values in various personal, professional and civic life situations either within or outside of one’s major. Many experiential educational opportunities are encouraged as examples of such applications: internships, study abroad, civic engagement, service learning, etc. Majors may organize projects for the consideration of value issues in the application of the discipline’s skills to real career situations. If the major so chooses, students may select an interdisciplinary approach to these issues combining several disciplines on a common project. This may be completed in a variety of methods as directed by the major or outside the major. Credit will vary based on the experience.

Outcomes (to be developed)

Examples of courses that might be adapted or developed in this category:

This is a representative list of existing courses.

Field Study in Anthropology (ANTH 499)

Student Teaching internship (EDUC 419)

Internship in Sociology (SOC491)

Computer Science Senior Project (CS490)

Internship in English (ENG490)

Project Outreach (Psyc 211 & its sections) (University of Michigan)

Being an Effective Change Agent (Portland State)

Civic Engagement in America (University of Oklahoma –Honors)

Foundations of Citizenship and Community Leadership (Bridgewater)

GE Council

Draft

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