

Diversity Outcomes for the Miami Plan Working Group Final Report

May 2007

Thanks to committee members Gerardo Brown-Manrique (ARC), Barb Heuberger Rose (EDT), John Jeep (GREAL), Susan Paulson (LAS), Ron Scott (COM), Michael Stevenson (Co-Chair, Provost Office), Jerry Stonewater (Co-Chair, Liberal Education), Desmond Sumuya (student), and Carl Halvorson (student)

Introduction

In October 2005 Provost Herbst appointed a faculty and student committee to examine ways in which the university's curriculum could more broadly address issues related to diversity. Specifically, the Provost charged the committee with two major responsibilities:

- to develop student learning outcomes for diversity such that assessment tools can be developed to measure students' progress in accomplishing the outcomes; and
- to revise existing Miami Plan courses or develop new ones as appropriate to implement the student learning outcomes specified.

The committee met regularly during the last year and one half and submits this report to the Provost, the University community, and to the University Liberal Education Council for further action. The following sections outline the major accomplishments of the committee and list specific recommendations for implementation of recommendations.

Accomplishments and Implementation Recommendations

A. Diversity Student Learning Outcomes were written for each of the Four Miami Plan Principles. Early in its deliberations the committee decided that the effort to develop specific student learning outcomes for diversity would be best accomplished in context of the four Miami Plan principles: critical thinking; understanding context; engaging with other learners; and reflecting and acting. This decision was made for several reasons. First, the focus of the Provost's charge was primarily, but not exclusively, on the Miami Plan; second, the four principles are a common language within the university and thus provided a vehicle for communication; and third, assessment tools have already been developed for several of these principles, thereby enabling the committee to capitalize on the work others have accomplished.

The task of writing student learning outcomes for diversity consumed the majority of the committee's time and the process required many iterations and revisions. Care was taken to write

general, not specific, outcomes that were broad-based in scope. They are presented in this report as examples and suggestions for faculty use rather than as prescriptions that must be followed in course design. Indeed, faculty are encouraged to develop their own learning outcomes as they see fit. At the same time, the learning outcomes presented here provide the Liberal Education Council with liberal education outcomes that can be assessed from the programmatic – rather than the individual course – perspective.

The diversity learning outcomes developed by the committee appear in Appendix 1. They are preceded with a preamble explaining how faculty might use them, then for each of the four Miami Plan principles, several diversity goals are presented. Then, for each goal, specific and measurable student learning outcomes are suggested. If you think about using this information on a webpage, you would click on a Miami Plan principle to see the general goals associated with it, then click on the goal of interest to see the associated student learning outcomes. Eventually, each outcome could be connected to example course assignments and/or assessment tools associated with it.

The committee recommends that the Liberal Education Council accept these student learning outcomes, revise them as necessary, and adopt them officially. It further recommends that the final list accompany the *Bulletin* and *Guidebook* descriptions of the Miami Plan. Further, the Office of Liberal Education and Assessment should develop methods of assessing the learning outcomes at the programmatic level.

The committee also suggests that, where appropriate, new course proposal forms and LEC review criteria use the diversity learning outcomes.

B. Curriculum and course development strategies were developed by the committee. Two new curriculum development projects that will expand students' intellectual and personal skills related to diversity were developed by the committee. The first of these, the *Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone*, provides release time for faculty to develop new diversity-based Capstones. The second, called the *Liberal Education and Diversity Project*, is more modest in scope and involves working teams of faculty involved in redesigning course assignments to strengthen and assess students' diversity-related skills. Each is described in the following. Materials to disseminate to faculty are in Appendix 2.

Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone: These newly developed Miami Plan Capstones should focus on a particular diversity related issue or problem that requires an interdisciplinary team of students to "solve." It is expected that there are no prerequisites for such a Capstone, but that students bring their disciplinary knowledge and significant outside research to the class, and work collaboratively to address the issue at hand. Thus, the focus of the Capstone is that the students, as a team, are a task-force that goes about addressing the problem and producing some kind of final product that is appropriate for the issue at hand.

The Liberal Education and Diversity Project: This project is modeled after the highly successful Assessing Critical Thinking Project developed by the Office of Liberal Education and Assessment. Faculty work in teams with a facilitator to develop or revise course assignments based on diversity learning outcomes, provide one another feedback on drafts of the assignments, and develop and use a method for assessing student accomplishment of the outcomes. At the end of the semester, participants submit to the Office of Liberal Education a short report of their work, including a list of the student learning outcomes developed, a copy of the assignment(s), and the assessment results.

The committee also recommends that if these approaches are successful, consideration be given to implementing departmentally-based projects to infuse diversity outcomes into appropriate courses in the major. Similar to the Outcomes on the Major project model, departments would be asked to identify diversity outcomes appropriate for their majors (using the list we developed as a guide), examine the departmental curriculum to determine where the selected outcomes belong, then revise courses as needed.

One other outcome of this committee should be mentioned. Michael Stevenson submitted a program about our work for the summer NASPA conference in St. Louis and it was accepted.

Appendix 1

Liberal Education Student Learning Outcomes for Diversity

The attached information is designed to facilitate evaluation of Miami Plan Liberal Education student learning outcomes. Developed at the request of Provost Jeffrey Herbst by an ad-hoc team of faculty, administrators, and students, it aims to provide tools for assessing syllabi, readings, various student writing and oral assignments, tests, pedagogical approaches, and course evaluation instruments.

The material is arranged around the four central Liberal Education principles: Critical Thinking, Understanding Contexts, Engaging with other Learners, and Reflecting and Acting. For each goal we have aligned general and more specific descriptors of measurable outcomes.

We encourage both experienced and new faculty to use the overview to further their understanding of accepted means of describing course outcomes for enhancement of existing courses and/or for support in developing new Miami Plan classes.

Liberal education student learning outcomes are ambitious in design, mutually supportive in execution, and can often only be attained over time. The data aims to identify assessable entities for consideration in evaluating course design, materials, and teaching and learning within and outside of the classroom.

Web enhanced versions of this and other supporting material are being designed. Seminars, workshops, and other collaborative options provide concrete opportunities to engage with others who have expertise and interest in demonstrating what our students learn in our Miami Plan courses.

Miami Plan Principle 1 – CRITICAL THINKING

GOAL 1.1 The students should be able to apply complex thinking strategies to course concepts and theories related to diversity.

GOAL 1.2 The student should be able to use high-level critical thinking skills to integrate academic understanding of diversity to personal experiences and situations.

Miami Plan Principle 2 – UNDERSTANDING CONTEXTS

GOAL 2.1 The student should be able to articulate and analyze multiple perspectives on a variety of diversity issues in an ****unbiased manner**.

GOAL 2.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to draw from multiple perspectives and contexts about issues under study and then develop reasoned conclusions about complex diversity issues.

GOAL 2.3 The student should consider and analyze the potential impact of conclusions on many situations, including personal attitudes, beliefs and ideas.

Miami Plan Principle 3 – ENGAGING WITH OTHER LEARNERS

GOAL 3.1 The student should help create environments that are safe for complex exploration of self, academic information, and others in the environment.

GOAL 3.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to learn with and from a wide variety of “others,” including those that are very different from oneself.

GOAL 3.3 The student should demonstrate the ability to explore “difference” in interpersonal interactions of all kinds and engage in cultural activities that are beyond one’s personal experiences.

Miami Plan Principle 4 – REFLECTING AND ACTING

GOAL 4.1 The student should articulate positions on diversity that are new to them and explain their relevance to the discipline and one’s own personal belief structures.

GOAL 4.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to act on personal beliefs that are informed by experience and academic study of the discipline.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for CRITICAL THINKING

GOAL 1.1 The students should be able to apply complex thinking strategies to course concepts and theories related to diversity.

SLO 1.1.a Identify and explain in own words each diversity-related course concept and theory and assess relevance and implications of specific concepts and assumptions linked to them.

SLO 1.1.c Analyze a given situation from the perspective of multiple theories, then integrate analysis into a new interpretation.

SLO 1.1.d Relate an issue from the course to another course student has had and describe various strategies employed to a) describe the issue, and b) propose solutions.

SLO 1.1.e Judge the appropriateness of various theories to explain situations.

GOAL 1.2 The student should be able to use high-level critical thinking skills to integrate academic understanding of diversity with personal experiences and situations.

SLO 1.2.a Describe why diversity-related concepts exist within the course and the personal meaning of each.

SLO 1.2.c Articulate differences and similarities between one's own culture and other cultures (within the US and globally).

SLO 1.2.d Describe how own values and beliefs can be both a benefit and barrier to diversity learning.

SLO 1.2.e Develop a sociopolitical perspective (or perspective relevant to the course content) on identity development.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for UNDERSTANDING CONTEXTS

GOAL 2.1 The student should be able to articulate and analyze multiple perspectives on a variety of diversity issues in an **unbiased manner.

SLO 2.1.a Given a diversity-related concept or theory, state different perspectives that may be different from your own.

SLO 2.1.c Describe multiple diversities within individuals and groups.

SLO 2.1.d State one's position on an issue, then convincingly argue for a different position.

SLO 2.1.e Identifies main problem along with at least one issue or questions of diversity entailed therein; examines several diversity-related questions or issues and recognizes relationships among them.

SLO 2.1.f Compares perspectives of different people or groups; compare different ways of analyzing or interpreting the material; discusses implications of competing perspectives.

GOAL 2.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to draw from multiple perspectives and contexts about issues under study and then develop reasoned conclusions about complex diversity issues.

SLO 2.2.a Identifies barriers to understanding multiple perspectives.

SLO 2.2.b Recognizes contexts and biases from multiple diversity data sources, then synthesizes sources into themes and perspectives.

SLO 2.2.c Recognizes the complex interaction of factors in diversity issues.

SLO 2.2.d Analyzes a situation or problem from an unbiased view, states and supports one's own perspective, discusses other perspectives, then reaches an appropriate conclusion based on data, evidence and/or theory.

SLO 2.2.e After examining various perspectives on a given situation, develops an appropriate integration of the perspectives into an appropriate conclusion.

GOAL 2.3 The student should consider and analyze the potential impact of conclusions on many situations, including personal attitudes, beliefs and ideas.

SLO 2.3.a Identifies conclusions/consequences of given perspectives or analyses on issue at hand; considers diversity-related information and context in identifying implications of arguments and issues.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for ENGAGING WITH OTHER LEARNERS

GOAL 3.1 The student should help create environments that are safe for complex exploration of self, academic information, and others in the environment.

GOAL 3.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to learn with and from a wide variety of “others,” including those that are very different from oneself.

SLO 3.2.a applies skills for solving problems in diverse groups, settings, contexts and ideas.

SLO 3.2.b develops culturally appropriate interpersonal skills.

SLO 3.2.c asks culturally competent questions.

GOAL 3.3 The student should demonstrate the ability to explore “difference” in a variety of interpersonal interactions and engage in cultural activities that are beyond one’s personal experiences.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes for REFLECTING AND ACTING

GOAL 4.1 The student articulates positions on diversity that are new to them and explains their relevance to the discipline and one's own personal belief structures.

SLO 4.1.a Develops an understanding of one's own cultural lens (self-reflection) by:

- Demonstrating increased knowledge of one's own identity and culture,
- Recognizing own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, and privileges.

GOAL 4.2 The student should demonstrate the ability to act on personal beliefs that are informed by experience and academic study of the discipline.

SLO 4.2.a Evaluates personal values and beliefs related to diversity and develops strategies for increasing diversity awareness and understanding.

SLO 4.2.b Participates in activities and experiences that can enhance one's cultural competence.

SLO 4.2.c describes how cultural competence can enhance interpersonal interaction, critical thinking, problem solving, and current US and world events.

Appendix 2

Curriculum Development Projects Materials



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Provost's committee on Diversity and the Curriculum: Gerardo Brown-Manrique (ACR), Barb Heuberger Rose (EDT), Carl Halvorson (student), John Jeep (Liberal Education and GREAL), Susan Paulson (LAS), Ron Scott (COM), Michael Stevenson (Co-Chair, Associate Provost), Desmond Sumiya (student)

via Jerry K. Stonewater, Co-Chair
University Director of Liberal Education and Assessment

RE: **Applications for *Diversity and the Curriculum* Projects**

I am pleased to announce two new curriculum development projects that will expand students' intellectual and personal skills related to diversity. The first of these, the *Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone*, provides release time for faculty to develop new diversity-based Capstones. The second, called the *Liberal Education and Diversity Project*, is more modest in scope and involves working teams of faculty involved in redesigning course assignments to strengthen and assess students' diversity-related skills.

Attached to this memo are complete descriptions of the projects and an application form for each. **Applications are due in the Office of Liberal Education by**

These two projects are based on the work of a committee appointed by Provost Herbst. He charged this faculty and student group to develop a set of student learning outcomes for diversity that are based on knowledge, skills, and intellectual capital expected of Miami students' liberal education. He asked the committee to suggest outcomes that can be assessed and to develop means for revising existing Miami Plan courses or develop new ones to implement the student learning outcomes.

The project is open to any tenured or tenure trace faculty member who regularly teaches a Miami Plan course. If you have any questions about the project, please call me (9-7135) or send an e-mail (stonewjk@muohio.edu). In advance, thank you for your interest.

The Liberal Education and Diversity Project

Who may apply: All faculty teaching any Miami Plan course during Spring 2008 (Foundation, Thematic Sequence course, or Capstone). Up to 10 faculty members will be selected for participation in the project.

Application deadline:: apply to Jerry Stonewater, Office of Liberal Education (Application form attached).

Expected outcomes of the project:

1. Project participants will participate in a 2-hour workshop on strategies for infusing diversity student learning outcomes into existing courses.
2. Two Teams of 5 selected faculty each will meet 4-5 times during the semester with a facilitator to assist one another to:
 - Select student learning outcomes for diversity that can be infused into the Miami Plan courses taught by the Team members;
 - revise at least one major course assignment for each course – or develop a new one - to incorporate the selected learning outcomes into it;
 - provide Team members with feedback on their revised or new course assignments;
 - develop and use a method of assessing student accomplishment of the diversity outcomes for each course;
 - based on the assessment results, plan revisions in the course/assignment to further improve student accomplishment of the outcome(s).
3. At the end of the semester, participants will submit a 1-2 page report of the results of their work to the Office of Liberal Education. The report will include a list of the student learning outcomes developed, a copy of the assignment(s), and the assessment results.

Professional Spending Account: Each participant will receive a \$300 professional spending account for completion of project activities.

Questions? Contact Jerry Stonewater (9-7135; stonewjk@muohio.edu)

**Application Form
Liberal Education and Diversity Project**

**Directions: Please complete this form and return to Jerry Stonewater, Office of Liberal Education.
Deadline for applications is**

Name: _____

e-mail: _____ **phone:** _____

Department: _____

**What Miami Plan course are you teaching during Spring semester that will be
the focus of your work on this project? _____**

Circle one: Foundation Course in a Thematic Sequence Capstone

Briefly describe why you are interested in the project and what you hope to gain from it.

**Please note that by participating in this project, you are agreeing to attend the kick-off workshop on
..... Lunch will be provided.**

Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone

Description of the Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone: These newly developed Miami Plan Capstones should focus on a particular diversity related issue or problem that requires an interdisciplinary team of students to "solve." It is expected that there are no prerequisites for such a Capstone, but that students bring their disciplinary knowledge and significant outside research to the class, and work collaboratively to address the issue at hand. Thus, the focus of the Capstone is that the students, as a team, are a task-force that goes about addressing the problem and producing some kind of final product that is appropriate for the issue at hand.

Who may apply: Tenured or tenure-track faculty may apply for release time for 3-credit hours of teaching. Departments will be reimbursed at the \$800 per credit hour rate for a total of \$2400. Up to three projects will be selected for funding.

Application deadline:: apply to Jerry Stonewater, Office of Liberal Education (Application form attached).

Expected outcomes of the project:

1. The newly developed Capstone will specify diversity-related student learning outcomes for each of the four Miami Plan principles.
2. An assessment rubric (or other tool) will be developed and used to measure student accomplishment of the diversity learning outcomes specified (see 1). The assessment must analyze work produced by the students. A summary of these data will be made available to the Office of Liberal Education.
3. In addition to meeting LEC criteria for Capstone proposals, the Capstone course developed must also meet the following criteria:
 - be interdisciplinary in nature;
 - address a significant issue or problem related to diversity;
 - have no prerequisites;
 - be structured in such a way that students are using their disciplinary knowledge and significant outside research;
be student-centered, inquiry oriented, and engage students in active learning in a way that they, not the instructor, conduct the course;
require that students produce some kind of final product appropriate to the issue being addressed.
4. The Capstone should be offered at least once per year and a variety of faculty should be able to teach it.

Liberal Education Council Approval: The Capstone is automatically approved by the Liberal Education Council if the proposal for this project is accepted.

Undergraduate Courses and Curriculum Committee Approval: As a new course, you will have to get approval for the course via the university's curriculum approval process.

Release time: Each participant will receive a 3-credit hour release time to develop the course.

Questions? Contact Jerry Stonewater (9-7135; stonewjk@muohio.edu)

**Application Form
Diversity-Based Interdisciplinary Capstone**

Directions: Please complete this form and return to Jerry Stonewater, Office of Liberal Education. Deadline for applications is

Name: _____

e-mail: _____ **phone:** _____

Department: _____

Title of Proposed Capstone:

Abstract (no more than 100 words) for Bulletin and other Miami Plan publications:

Please submit a five page (maximum) narrative describing the Capstone. If accepted for funding, your Capstone is automatically approved for the Miami Plan. Organize your proposal as follows:

1. Use this sheet as the cover for the proposal, with above information completed.
2. For each of the four Miami Plan principles, list the student learning outcomes for diversity that the course will address. These must be written in such a way that they are assessable.
3. Explain how the course addresses each of the following. Provide specific examples, not generalities:
 - be interdisciplinary in nature;
 - address a significant issue or problem related to diversity;
 - have no prerequisites;
 - be structured in such a way that students are using their disciplinary knowledge and significant outside research;
 - be student-centered, inquiry oriented, and engage students in active learning in a way that they, not the instructor, conduct the course;
 - require that students produce some kind of final product appropriate to the issue being addressed.
4. Provide additional information you feel is pertinent in order to clarify to the committee the various aspects of the course.