

## *Structural Parameters for Interdisciplinary Courses*

In various sections of the General Education Curriculum there are included opportunities for students to study in an intentionally interdisciplinary context. At times this represents a course taught by an individual instructor, while at other times a team-teaching approach is used with two or three faculty members jointly working in the course.

Given the unique nature of these courses the General Education Committee has developed a statement of "structural parameters" for each section of the curriculum in which interdisciplinary instruction is provided. These statements are intended to guide faculty members as they propose and design relevant courses, and they also serve as the basis upon which the General Education Committee reviews relevant course proposals.

### **1.1 First Year Seminar**

While there will be substantive variation among seminars, particularly relative to topical or thematic content, all seminars abide by the following common expectations.

#### **Participants**

1. Each seminar is open to all students (with the exception of special sections designated for honors students. No prerequisites are permitted, and seminars are not designed with the intent of introducing the student to a particular academic discipline.
2. Enrollment in First-Year Seminars is 16 students; honors sections are limited to 15 students.

#### **Relation to the Core:**

1. The First Year Seminar is the first common academic experience of most Messiah College students and therefore provides a foundation for the Created and Called for Community Course that students typically take in the second semester of the first year.
2. The First-Year Seminar course will introduce students to the concept of vocation, broadly defined as "Love of God and Neighbor – to understand all of one's life and activities as a form of stewardship and cooperation with God in the ongoing work of creation and redemption."

#### **Pedagogy**

1. The Seminar emphasizes the academic skills of reading and listening carefully and critically; thinking logically and creatively, analytically and synthetically, abstractly and concretely; writing and speaking clearly and coherently; and accessing, evaluating, and using information effectively and ethically.
2. The emphasis of this course is to be on the process of intellectual discovery and skill development, using the academic content (facts and theories) of specific disciplines as a vehicle for learning.

3. Although pedagogical approaches may be varied, the seminars concentrate on active student learning: discussions are primary and lectures are only used to enhance the process of active student learning.
4. Students are given the opportunity to develop their oral skills by participation in class discussion, and, at the instructor's discretion, through formal oral presentations.
5. Formal student evaluation is primarily designed to assess the students' writing, thinking, and reading skills. Examinations focus on content only to demonstrate that students are able to master college-level content, not to verify that students have mastered a particular content.

## **Reading**

1. One common text, read by all entering first-year students prior to enrolling, is used as the starting point for common conversation about vocation during the initial week of the course. The seminar instruction is coordinated with a convocation related to the common text.
2. Each seminar includes substantial work with other written texts, and most are primary sources. Multiple readings, reflecting a variety of perspectives and authors, are assigned. Moreover, the purpose of this reading is not simply to support or illustrate information provided by the instructor. To a large extent, the class discussions revolve around the readings.
3. Readings are high quality academic content providing students with the opportunity to analyze challenging texts.

## **Writing**

As Messiah's initial writing course, the First Year Seminar conforms to the following expectations:

1. Writing is taught both as a process and as a collaboration within a community of writers. Thoughtful attention is given to idea generation, to revision, and to editing within the framework of helpful intervention (conferencing, instructor and peer feedback on ungraded drafts, tutoring, etc.).
2. The course emphasizes writing as a purpose-driven activity where sensitivity to the rhetorical situation (i.e., interaction among writer, text, and audience) is developed.
3. Writing to learn (writing with self as audience) is taught and practiced as an important skill (e.g., response and reaction writing, reading journals, essay quizzes, free writing, reflexive writing, etc.).
4. Students engage in individual process writing for not less than 15 or more than 25 pages of "final-draft" writing (not counting writing to learn).
5. An initial writing assignment focuses on the common text. This assignment is to be graded but may or may not be one of the drafted assignments.
6. Students write a variety of drafted assignments: at least 3 separate assignments to account for the page requirement above. At least two-thirds of the course grade will be based on these writing assignments.
  - a. At least one assignment requires the use of library resources to discover pertinent information in texts and to incorporate this information appropriately into their own writing. To this end students will:

- i. Use an appropriate documentation style to cite sources correctly, e.g. MLA, Chicago.
    - ii. Exhibit an understanding of plagiarism, clearly crediting the ideas and works of others.
  - b. At least one essay has as its purpose to persuade a skeptical audience.
  - c. At least one essay has as its purpose to analyze or synthesize problematic aspects of a subject.
7. Students discuss in class Messiah's Policy Regarding Academic Integrity, which is included in the syllabus.
  8. Students learn to write according to the conventions of inclusive language. Messiah's Statement on Inclusive Language is included in the syllabus and class time is taken to discuss this issue with the students.
  9. Students who receive a grade of C+ or lower in First Year Seminar are required to take a writing competency exam. If they fail, they are required to complete IDWR 099 College Writing Workshop with a passing grade to fulfill the First Year Seminar requirement for graduation.

### **Information Literacy**

Instruction in accessing, evaluating, and using information effectively and ethically is provided by library faculty and seminar instructors.

1. In the first four weeks of the semester, recognizing the need for library use in the First weeks of the students' college experience, students receive, from the librarians, basic orientation for using library resources for all of their college classes. After four weeks, students will demonstrate the following abilities:
  - a. Know the function of basic academic library service points: Reference and Circulation Desks; online search stations; reference collection; periodicals; and stacks.
  - b. Use the Murray Library homepage as a gateway to access essential library resources and information (e.g., library catalog, general periodical index).
  - c. Recognize academic research terminology (e.g. index, periodical, citation, abstract).
  - d. Identify key concepts of a selected topic.
  - e. Know basic search strategies (author, title, keyword, and phrase searching).
  - f. Use the Library's online catalog and at least one periodical index, to retrieve information.
  - g. Interpret bibliographic citations in order to locate the materials cited.
2. After completing First Year Seminar, students will demonstrate the following abilities:
  - a. Define academic research terminology (e.g. index, periodical, citation, abstract).
  - b. Understand that materials not owned by one library may be obtained from other sources.
  - c. Focus and articulate an information need.
  - d. Determine type(s) of materials appropriate to meeting an information need (e.g., currency, format)
  - e. Understand common search strategies that help narrow, broaden, or otherwise enhance their basic searching capabilities (e.g. the use of Boolean operators, differentiating keyword from subject searching)
  - f. Select the appropriate research database to find information on a topic.
  - g. Evaluate retrieved information, discerning its strengths, limitations and usefulness in relation to a topic.
3. Concurrent with information literacy instruction, assignments are made that integrate course content with information literacy skills.

4. Information literacy instruction requires at least two 50 minutes sessions, one session to be given in the first four weeks of the semester.
5. Students are required to pass a library competency test in order to pass First Year Seminar. Students who fail to do so receive an Incomplete as a course grade.

### **Christian Faith and Intellectual Life:**

Seminars give attention to helping students begin to understand how the Christian faith and the intellectual life are related. Given the diversity of subject areas and pedagogical approaches, this attention evidences itself in many different ways: class discussions, writing assignments, and assigned readings.

### **Syllabi**

In order to assure that the parameters are consistently being implemented in all seminars, each First Year Seminar faculty member submits a copy of his or her syllabus to the Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning and the Instruction Coordinator of Murray Library **by August 1.**

### **Course Themes**

Content topics for the First Year Seminar are selected by individual instructors and approved by the General Education Committee or their designee; selected topics conform to the following guidelines:

1. All proposals must evidence how sub-points a,b,c, and f of College-Wide Educational Objective #1 are addressed in the course and state how the course content reflects Messiah College's Mission and Identity and Core Value Statements and contributes to fulfilling several of the sub-points of College-Wide Educational Objectives 3,5-7.
2. Selected topics reflect the expertise of the faculty member, as developed through formal academic study, extensive independent reading and research, or some other commensurate means; seminar proposals are not accepted for a topic in which the faculty member has not previously developed an appropriate level of knowledge.
3. Faculty members cannot select topics which are narrowly linked to an academic discipline other than the faculty member's own.
4. Topics which are interdisciplinary, and which effectively combine a variety of resources and pedagogical approaches, are encouraged.

### **Faculty**

Faculty for First Year Seminars are selected within the following parameters:

1. Faculty in First Year Seminars are individuals who write and are interested in the reading/writing/thinking process, their own and others'.
2. In recruiting First Year Seminar instructors, priority will be given to members of the full-time teaching faculty who have a minimum of three years teaching experience within traditional academic disciplines.

3. Others--whether they be part-time instructors, administrators, or other college professionals--may also teach if they have equivalent teaching experience.
4. New First Year Seminar Faculty receive training in May led by the Director of Writing across the Curriculum. Each year, faculty receive additional training that focuses on fulfilling the parameters for First Year Seminar led by the Director of First Year Seminar and on refining writing skills led by the Director of Writing across the Curriculum.

### **Assessment**

An assessment instrument for First Year Seminar is administered in each semester it is taught. This instrument is developed and edited by the Director of First Year Seminar and the results are processed and filed in the Office of General Education and Common Learning. This instrument focuses on:

1. the achievement of course objectives.
2. the ability of the instructor to create a classroom environment where students are effectively introduced to the intellectual life of the College.
3. the quality of the course in developing important academic skills, such as reading, writing, and critical thinking.
4. the extent to which writing instruction conforms to the parameters of the course.

Data from this evaluation will be reviewed yearly by the General Education Committee to determine the content of the May Development Week program and to make decisions about future Seminar offerings and the general administration of the First Year Seminar program.

### **1.3 Created and Called for Community**

1. The *Created and Called for Community* course is divided into class sections with student enrollments of 25. The majority of course sections are open to all students, with one or two designated for the needs of upperclass transfer students. Students are generally required to successfully complete the First Year Seminar prior to enrolling in *Created and Called for Community*, though in rare cases the two may be taken concurrently.
2. The *Created and Called for Community* course meets for the equivalent of three 60-minute class sessions each week during Spring Term. Students are awarded three credit hours. Faculty are assigned four units; the additional load unit is awarded to compensate for time spent in faculty development programs, team meetings, and attendance at convocations.
3. Individual faculty members are assigned to small teams; one faculty member serves as the team coordinator. Teams meet twice monthly to discuss lectures, readings, assignments, and pedagogical approaches. In addition, faculty are required to participate in two half days of faculty development during May Development Week and late January respectively.
4. Administrative oversight of the *Created and Called for Community* course resides in a Steering Committee composed of the team coordinators, the First Year Experience Residence Life Coordinator and the Director of the *Created and Called for Community* course, who serves as the chair. Team coordinators serve three years with staggered terms. The Steering Committee will include tenure track faculty as well as other full members of the Community of Educators. The composition of the Steering Committee will reflect the various disciplines that compose the core faculty.

5. The *Created and Called for Community* course utilizes a common syllabus.
  - a. All course sections share a significant core of common texts (readings, music, art, video). Individual faculty may add supplemental texts in a manner that complements the themes and objectives of the course. The Steering Committee makes minimal changes to this core of common texts in any given year.
  - b. The course operates on a common calendar so that students across all sections are examining the same texts concurrently.
  - c. The course includes similar assignments with shared objectives; individual faculty have some flexibility in implementing these objectives.
  - d. Proposed changes to the common syllabus are solicited from the entire *Created and Called for Community* faculty during the May development meeting. Suggestions are considered by the Steering Committee and finalized by mid-November.
  
6. The *Created and Called for Community* course is thematically organized.
  - a. A shared theme provides coherence to the overall course.
  - b. The course is structured around three thematic units: Creation, Community, and Vocation. Each unit:
    - i. requires a variety of texts;
    - ii. raises and addresses ethical issues or questions; and
    - iii. employs biblical and theological themes.
  
7. Assessment of student learning is accomplished through at least two papers related to two separate units of the courses and three exams, one for each unit.
  
8. The *Created and Called for Community* course focuses on careful reading and engagement of written texts.
  - a. The course emphasizes primary texts, including contemporary and ‘classic’ texts.
  - b. The course emphasizes the process of intellectual discovery and skill development. Although pedagogical approaches vary, the course concentrates on engaged student learning: discussions are primary and lectures are used to provide a context for the readings.
  - c. Assigned readings reflect a variety of perspectives and authors, and, collectively, are inclusive across gender, ethnicity, culture, and nationality.
  
9. While the subject content of the *Created and Called for Community* course remains the primary objective, the writing process is an integral part of the intellectual and pedagogical fabric of the course.
  - a. Writing is aimed to allow students to reflect critically or respond creatively to assigned texts.
  - b. Writing assignments aim to reinforce the intellectual skills introduced in First-Year Seminar.
    - i. One essay is assigned in which students are required to coherently present personal experiences or observations on a theme.
    - ii. One essay is assigned in which students are required to analyze complex material and persuasively support a thesis.
  - c. Exams evaluate content as well as writing skills.
  - d. The Director of the Writing Across the Curriculum program is consulted regularly regarding the course and invited to participate regularly in faculty development sessions for the *Created and Called for Community* faculty.
  
10. The *Created and Called for Community* course aims to influence student learning within and beyond the individual classroom context.
  - a. Encouraging students to engage ideas beyond the classroom is part of the course’s larger aim to enrich the academic climate of Messiah College.

- b. Each unit includes a Convocation program, a common speaker, artistic event, production, film, play, or media presentation. Attendance and participation in Core Convocations are required for all students and faculty. Faculty reference or incorporate Convocations into classroom discussion.
  - c. Collaboration between teaching faculty and cocurricular educators is crucial for realizing the purposes of the course. Students are expected to participate in cocurricular programs sponsored by Residence Life.
11. An assessment instrument for the *Created and Called for Community* course is administered annually. This instrument is developed and refined by the Director of the *Created and Called for Community* course, and the results are processed and filed with the Associate Dean for General Education and Common Learning.
  12. The faculty who teach sections of the *Created and Called for Community* course are expected to follow the parameters, course objectives, and the general guidelines specified in the common syllabus. Within these boundaries, faculty members are encouraged to shape the course as they desire.
    1. These *Created and Called for Community* course parameters are consistently implemented in all sections; therefore, faculty members submit copies of their syllabi to the Office of the General Education and Common Learning prior to the beginning of the semester. Syllabi are reviewed by the Director of the Core Course.
  14. Faculty for the *Created and Called for Community* course are selected according to the following parameters:
    - a. *Created and Called for Community* faculty are educators with interdisciplinary interests.
    - b. At least two-thirds of the instructors in the *Created and Called for Community* course are members of the Ranked Faculty.
    - c. Other College educators and administrators may also teach the *Created and Called for Community* course if they have appropriate academic preparation.
    - d. Priority for teaching the *Created and Called for Community* course is given to full-time teaching faculty.

### **2.1.C Science, Technology, and the World**

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of courses meeting the Science, Technology, and the World requirement.

1. The primary focus of the course should be scientific (i.e., related directly to one of the traditional disciplines of the natural or mathematical sciences or to a related applied/technological field of study such as computer science, nursing, or engineering), but the approach taken to the course content should be interdisciplinary by way of including appropriate attention to approaches to knowledge traditionally associated with the social sciences, humanities, and/or arts.
2. The course may focus on aspects of a single scientific discipline or applied area of study or it may examine aspects of more than one scientific discipline or applied area of study, so long as the approach to this focus, or the perspective applied, is consistent with the guideline stated above.
3. Required reading thus, should allow other disciplinary perspectives to bear critically on the topic(s) within the context of the sciences. Traditional scientific/technical textbooks should usually be avoided, but whenever they are part of a course they may not be used alone, and should not be used for more than one-half of the assigned readings.

4. Since science and technology do not occur in a vacuum, course content should include study of the intellectual, social, and cultural context within which new scientific theories are formulated and new technologies are developed.
5. The course should be designed in a manner which will help students think critically about the ways in which science and/or technology influence and shape the contemporary world.
6. The course may include a laboratory component.
7. Required assignments should include work in which students are expected to reflect upon the nature and scope of scientific/technical knowledge, and how it relates to other forms of knowledge.
8. The course should be designed to appeal to students in both scientific/technical and non-scientific/non-technical fields of study, in order to facilitate a meeting of these "two cultures."
9. The course should have no prerequisites related to other courses of study, although students will generally complete the laboratory science requirement prior to enrolling in this course.
10. Faculty members teaching the courses should
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the scientific and technical aspects of the topic under study;
  - b. be familiar with areas of the social sciences, humanities, and/or arts which may provide the context for reflection upon the contemporary application of scientific and/or technical aspects of the course; and
  - c. be prepared to integrate these "two cultures" within the course, allowing each to facilitate an enhanced understanding of the other.

## 2.4 Cross Cultural Studies

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of off-campus cross cultural studies courses. The general education committee will be responsible to approve and monitor cross cultural courses and alternate activities.

1. The specific objectives listed below guide cross cultural courses (and should be included in all course syllabi). By the completion of the program the students will demonstrate the ability to
  - a. appreciate cultural traditions significantly different from their own.
  - b. articulate how people from different cultures perceive the world, interpret reality, and make meaning.
  - c. understand the paradoxes, tensions, and contradictions as well as the consistencies and values in a society significantly different from their own.
  - d. develop an appropriate sense of cultural relativism and reduce ethnocentrism.
  - e. reflect on their own culture and society from the perspective of another culture.
  - f. gain skill and experience living and working in a culture different from their own.
2. Credit for cross cultural study or waiver of the requirement may be earned in the following ways
  - Cross cultural courses sponsored by Messiah College (Credit)
  - Directed study (Credit). Must be directed by an on-site Messiah College faculty member.
  - Four semesters of study at the Philadelphia Campus (Waiver)
  - Approved programs sponsored by other organizations (Waiver)
  - Significant prior experience living in another culture (Waiver)
3. Messiah College cross cultural courses will include the following components. Faculty are responsible to design courses to accomplish the objectives and may use a variety of pedagogical strategies and course requirements to do so.

**A cognitive component** - Cognitive learning may be accomplished through readings and lectures which include a culture or country survey and representative literature from the host culture preferably developed by members of the host culture. Content might include history, literature, language, religion, social systems, economics, government, health care, education etc.

The cognitive component should include attention to the study of culture including culture theory, cross cultural communication, cultural relativism, and culture shock.

**An experiential component** - Students should have experiences as participant observers in the culture through close involvement with a small unit of people (e.g. family, work group) for at least five days . Involvement in the culture should be characterized by building relationships, listening, mutuality, and reciprocity. Cross cultural courses must include experiences through which students enter the culture and become vulnerable to it and dependent upon it. These experiences can be obtained by living with a local family, volunteering in a local organization, or comparable experience. If the students are given adequate instruction in ethnographic research methodologies and if they speak the lingua franca, doing an ethnographic study will provide this experience.

**An observation and reflective component** - Students should observe the culture in a disciplined way and reflect on the meaning of cultural practices. They should reflect on their own culture through their experience in another culture. This may be done through discussion, regular journaling or periodic response papers.

**An integrative and analytic component** - In order for learning to happen, students must engage in structured integration and analysis which brings together the experiences, readings and lectures. This may be done through a paper, examination, presentation, or similar activity.

4. Student evaluation will be on a letter grade basis.
5. Cross cultural courses should be inclusive as possible (e.g., open to all majors; no prerequisites other than language). On occasion, however, departments may propose *discipline specific* courses which could provide a *waiver* of the cross cultural studies requirement. Requests for a *waiver* will be governed by these guidelines:
  - a. All the objectives for Cross Cultural Studies shall be met. Syllabi will include these objectives (see #1 above).
  - b. Major or department objectives unrelated to cross cultural studies will be balanced with cross cultural course objectives.
  - c. Discipline specific courses will be prepared by the appropriate department (not individual faculty). Such courses will follow the normal process for new courses including review by the Dean of Curriculum and the Curriculum Committee. Once approved, courses will be forwarded to the General Education Committee for review and approval of a cross cultural waiver. In the case of previously approved discipline specific courses, a department may submit them to the General Education committee for review and consideration of a cross cultural waiver. Departments will be asked to demonstrate how proposed courses fit with the cross cultural course parameters.
  - d. Discipline specific courses that carry cross cultural studies waiver may be limited to students in the appropriate department and may carry course prerequisites. These courses will *not* be cross-listed.
10. Faculty members or local persons extensively involved in teaching courses should:
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the country/culture through formal study, extended residence, or other commensurate means. If the faculty members' knowledge is limited, it is expected that they will use local experts to supplement their knowledge.

- b. know the lingua franca; in cases where English is not widely spoken; the faculty member should know the common language at least on a conversational basis.
  - c. be widely read in the literature on the culture(s) under study in the course.
  - d. be familiar with the literature of cultural anthropology (i.e. theoretical approaches to the study of culture), and be prepared to integrate this throughout the content of the course.
11. Faculty expenses and load credit will be provided in the following manner:
- a. Expenses incurred by the course faculty (i.e., transportation, lodging, and meals) should be included in the costs assumed by students enrolled in the course.
  - b. For J-term courses, faculty load credit of three hours will require an enrollment of at least 12 students; full load credit for two faculty members will require an enrollment of at least 22 students
  - c. May courses that constitute part of the faculty member's normal load (24 load units) should have least 12 students per faculty member. If the faculty member is teaching the course as an overload, then the course should have an enrollment of at least 9 students.
  - d. For courses during the summer or at other times, the load credit will be consistent with college policies for awarding load credit during that time period.
12. Proposals for all **new** cross cultural courses must be submitted by **November 1** of the year prior to when the course is to be scheduled; proposals for **repeating** a previously approved course must be submitted by **December 1** of the year prior to when the course is to be scheduled (for both J-term and May cross cultural courses).
13. All cross cultural study courses must be at least three weeks in length inclusive of travel time.

## 2.5 Non-Western Studies

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of courses meeting the non-Western studies requirement.

1. Course content should center on either a general survey (social, economic, political, religious backgrounds, etc.) or a thematic study (e.g. music, literatures, religion, etc.) of a single country or a geographical region (e.g. southeast Asia, Latin America, etc.).
2. The course should have no prerequisites related to other courses of study.
3. Required reading should include authors (frequently in translation) native to the country or geographical region under study.
4. Attention should be given to the nature of contact between the part of the world being studied and nations in the Western world, including discussion of the changing nature and historical and continuing effects of this contact.
5. Courses should be designed from the bias of learning about and from, rather than primarily critiquing or changing, the country or region being studied. [Note: There may be cases where human rights abuses may warrant advocating transformation.]
6. Courses may be designed for either two or three credit hours of study.

7. Faculty members teaching the course should
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the country/region being covered in the course through formal study, extended residence, or some other commensurate means;
  - b. be familiar with the introductory literature on the country/region being studied, including a basic knowledge of the country's history and contemporary social/cultural context; and
  - c. be widely read in the literature related to the themes/topics which will serve as the focus of the course.

#### **4.2.A Ethics in the Modern World**

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of courses meeting the Ethics in the Modern World requirement.

1. The primary focus of each course should be on philosophical and theological ethics, with attention given to the application of ethical theory and discussion of Christian responses to selected contemporary moral issues.
2. Each course should be taught from an interdisciplinary perspective, including the sub-discipline of ethics as well as one or more disciplines associated with the applied components of the course.
3. Each course should be designed in a manner which will assist students in thinking critically about selected contemporary social issues and in developing and defending an ethical perspective on these issues.
4. Required reading should reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the course; substantial reading should be assigned in theoretical ethics as well as relevant applied disciplines.
5. Faculty members teaching the courses should
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the literature on ethical theory, as developed through either formal academic study or extensive independent reading and research;
  - b. be familiar with relevant aspects of other academic disciplines appropriate to the social issues under study; and
  - c. be prepared to integrate ethical theory and additional disciplinary perspectives within the course, allowing each to facilitate an enhanced understanding of the other.

#### **4.2.B World Views**

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of courses meeting the World Views requirement.

1. The primary focus of the course should be on understanding the assumptions and approaches which shape understanding of reality.
2. Each course should include study of two or more world views not commonly identified as "Christian," along with specific attention to a Christian world view.
3. In reflecting on a Christian world view, each course should assist students in developing an awareness of multiple approaches assumed by Christians in developing a world view.
4. Each course should be designed in a manner which will assist students in thinking critically about their own world view and that of others, including both the content of world views as well as the approaches to justifying world views.

5. Each course should be taught from an interdisciplinary perspective; attention should be given to philosophy, and may include other disciplines such as literature, history, economics, sociology, and theology.
6. Required reading should reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the course, and should include primary sources in each of the major world views under study. [Primary sources are defined as those written by individuals who personally adhere to the respective world view.]
7. Faculty members teaching the courses should
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the literature relevant to each world view under study, as developed through either formal academic study or extensive independent reading and research;
  - b. be familiar with relevant aspects of the various disciplines which serve as the basis for the content developed in the course; and
  - c. be prepared to integrate the various disciplinary perspectives within the course, allowing each to facilitate an enhanced understanding of the other.

#### **4.2.C Pluralism in Contemporary Society**

The following parameters serve as guidelines for the development of courses meeting the Pluralism in Contemporary Society requirement.

1. The primary focus of each course should be on the pluralistic context of contemporary society.
2. Areas of diversity appropriate for study in this part of the curriculum include race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and religious faith. Each course should provide extensive study related to at least two of these areas.
3. The selected areas of diversity should be approached in each course from an interdisciplinary perspective.
4. Each course should be designed in a manner which will assist students in thinking critically about the effects of inequality, prejudice, and discrimination within the pluralistic context of contemporary society.
5. Each course should assist students in responding appropriately as Christians to the increasing diversity of society.
6. Required reading should reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the course, and should include primary sources in each of the major conceptualizations of diversity and pluralism under study in the course. [Primary sources are defined as those written by individuals who are personally identified within the respective social context.]
7. Faculty members teaching the courses should
  - a. have a broad knowledge of the literature relevant to the areas of pluralism and diversity under study, as developed through either formal academic study or extensive independent reading and research;
  - b. be familiar with relevant aspects of the various disciplines which serve as the basis for the content developed in the course; and
  - c. be prepared to integrate the various disciplinary perspectives within the course, allowing each to facilitate an enhanced understanding of the other.