

### New Requirement

Starting in the 2017-18 academic year, every concentration shall have a requirement that will help students gain an understanding of structural and institutional hierarchies based on one or more of the social categories of race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexuality, age, and abilities/disabilities. Departments and programs shall determine how their students will fulfill this requirement in a way that is most consistent with their disciplines. The requirements should encourage students to think critically about accomplishments, experiences, and representations of various social groups in the United States and/or other countries.

### Implementation

The Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) has established a subcommittee to review proposals from departments and programs with concentrations to make recommendations to the full CAP for approval for each concentration in Spring 2017 and, further, in 2021-22 to review the implementation of the requirement by the concentrations. Karen Brewer is the chair of the subcommittee.

Report to the Faculty November 7, 2017

## **Summary of the SSIH Requirement Design and First Implementation-REPORT**

### **The Process**

The Subcommittee consisting of Karen Brewer (Chair), Emily Conover, Nathan Goodale, Martine Guyot-Bender, Michelle LeMasurier, and Heather Merrill was charged by the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) to gather and make recommendations on the proposals submitted by Departments and Programs with concentrations for the Social, Structural, and Institutional Hierarchies (SSIH) requirement which was passed by the faculty in Spring 2016. The motion and rationale passed by the faculty is attached.

The subcommittee worked in two stages. In Fall 2016, the committee developed a set of criteria based on the spirit of the motion concerning articulation of the proposed requirement for concentrators and implementation. These were communicated to the chairs of departments and programs through memos in October. From October through December, the subcommittee read and provided feedback to all departments/programs on their initial proposal drafts. Feedback on the initial proposals included request for catalog masthead language to highlight the requirement in the requirements for the concentration along with questions about staffing, available seats in courses, and how potential late-declaring concentrators might fulfil the requirement. The subcommittee also asked departments to elaborate further on some aspects of their proposal in order to describe how the proposal fit with the concentration, how the department's approach was novel, how students will critically engage with the SSIH topics, and the rationale for the level of courses chosen. All departments then prepared a final proposal and the subcommittee read through each during Spring 2017, submitting all its recommendations to the CAP in April and May. By the end of September 2017, 90% of the website mastheads have been changed to reflect the new SSIH requirement for each concentration. The CAP encourages faculty members to explore the innovative ways departments and programs are fulfilling the requirement through each discipline.

The adopted motion states "in 2021-22 ... [the CAP will] review the implementation of the requirement by the concentrations." To facilitate the collection of data for the review, the CAP has worked with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to include a section in the

Department/Program Annual Report for Chairs/Directors to discuss the implementation of the requirement.

### **Snapshot of the Final Proposals**

Recognizing that many departments are already focused through their goals and courses on the topics and goals of the SSIH requirement, it is not surprising that the majority of departments and programs will be implementing the requirement through existing courses or slight modifications and refocusing of courses already in their curriculum.

Still, about 40% of departments or programs are either implementing new courses or programs or are undertaking significant redesign of courses as they considered how to best coordinate the requirement with the needs of their concentrators. As might be expected, the science and mathematics departments, having few existing courses for the requirement, make up about 60% of those departments. New approaches from several departments and programs include: a new joint course between departments, integration of coursework students take inside or outside of the department, redesign of existing and introductory or gateway courses, introduction of SSIH topics across several courses in the concentration, and expansion of the senior program.

The curricular levels at which the requirement will be implemented varies from concentration to concentration. About 20% are at the 100/introductory level, 40% at the 200-300/intermediate level, 10% at the 400-500/advanced level, and 27% at various levels (either as choices the students make or as a department-wide program at many levels).

October 6, 2016

Dear Department and Program Chairs,

The CAP Subcommittee on the Social and Institutional Hierarchies (SIH) requirement would like to extend our advice in preparing your proposals for our recommendation to the CAP for approval.

As a reminder, the faculty passed by vote the following text:

“MOVED that, starting in the 2017-18 academic year, every concentration shall have a requirement that will help students gain an understanding of structural and institutional hierarchies based on one or more of the social categories of race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexuality, age, and abilities/disabilities. Departments and programs shall determine how their students will fulfill this requirement in a way that is most consistent with their disciplines. The requirement should encourage students to think critically about accomplishments, experiences, and representations of various social groups in the United States and/or other countries.”

To get you started in planning and implementation, we outline below what we are looking for in your submission.

(1) A short rationale or explanation no longer than 1 page of how your department or program plans to fulfill the requirement as passed by the faculty. In order for the subcommittee to provide timely feedback on department and program proposals during the planning stage, we request a first draft of your plans before **November 18**. The subcommittee will use this first draft to identify intersections between proposals and connect departments that might benefit from discussions of their proposals with each other. You will hear any feedback from the subcommittee before **December 16**.

We encourage creative proposals that might

- Examine intersections between topics addressed in a course or seminar or across more than one course or seminar, or
- Reflect an examination and focusing of the department’s current or future offerings or the redesign of courses in relation to the new requirement, or
- Apply a lens that integrates qualitative with quantitative critical thinking, or
- Engage across disciplines and seek expertise from colleagues whose scholarly work will build a strong and student-meaningful requirement for your department.

(2) After the subcommittee has read and commented on your draft in December, please submit for CAP’s review (due **February 1**) your final proposal including a rationale with any additions or adjustments. If you will be designing a new course for the requirement include a course description. This description does not have to be final in every detail, but should give a sense of the emphases of the course along with a provisional title, how often you expect it to be offered, how many concentrators it might serve, and how it might be staffed with instructors. Lastly, include masthead language that briefly describes in just a few lines how concentrators may satisfy the requirement for your department or program. You may include current masthead language to show how it would be listed in the context of other requirements for the concentration. A few examples (not meant to be prescriptive) follow:

Beginning with the class of 2020, students concentrating in X must satisfy the Social and Institutional Hierarchies requirement by completing by the end of the junior year one of the following courses in the department: XXX, XXX, or XXX.

Concentrators may satisfy the Beginning with the class of 2020, students concentrating in X must satisfy Social and Institutional Hierarchies requirement by completing XXX, a seminar that is part of senior project.

All courses in the X concentration discuss issues that would satisfy the Social and Institutional Hierarchies requirement. The department emphasizes the breadth of this requirement and students satisfy this requirement through one of the following pairs of courses: XXX and XXX, XXX and XXX, or XXX and XXX.

Although your final proposal is not due until the beginning of February, we encourage you to ask the advice of colleagues and our subcommittee. We will be happy to meet with you or your department to assist in your planning. You may send your drafted proposal anytime before November 18 to the Chair of the CAP subcommittee, Karen Brewer ([kbrewer@hamilton.edu](mailto:kbrewer@hamilton.edu)).

Karen Brewer, Chair  
Emily Conover  
Nathan Goodale  
Martine Guyot-Bender  
Michelle LeMasurier  
Heather Merrill

## SIH Requirement Evaluation Guidelines

In the interest of transparency and to provide additional guidance, the CAP Subcommittee for the Social and Institutional Hierarchies (SIH) Requirement would like to share with you the following areas on which we will focus in providing feedback on your draft proposal (due November 18). While the subcommittee has anticipated these as areas for reflection, other questions may arise depending on each proposal.

- **Articulation of the proposed requirement for concentrators**

Why has the department chosen this approach? How is this approach consistent with the discipline?

What aspects of the SIH requirement (e.g. which social categories) will be addressed through the requirement?

How does fulfilling the requirement in the concentration critically engage students in ways consistent with the spirit of the motion? What kinds of academic work are proposed to meaningfully engage students? For example, does the proposal suggest there will be readings with discussion, films, art creation or performance, service learning, case studies, special projects, presentations, etc.

How did the department or program choose the level of the approach (first year, sophomore year, junior year, or senior year) for concentrators to fulfill the SIH requirement? For example, is it appropriate to fulfill the requirement only after students have the language and tools of the discipline or is it best done at the beginning stages of student learning in your discipline to deepen the topics that students encounter later?

- **Implementation**

Will students in the concentration be able to fulfill the requirement without significant barriers? For example, will students have had the opportunity to complete prerequisites? Are there sufficient seats in the course(s) to accommodate all concentrators? What is the department's commitment to regularly offer the proposed course(s)? Are the courses listed outside of the department (if applicable) predictably offered? Are there instructional staffing considerations?

- **Other considerations (only if applicable)**

Is the proposal or course redesign innovative and/or creative?

Are there anticipated ways in which the proposed approach might evolve?