Intercultural Understanding Educational Objective
Graduation Guidelines, Student Learning Outcomes, and Course Criteria

Catalog Language

Educational Objectives of Pitzer College: Intercultural Understanding

By learning about their own culture and placing it in comparative perspective, students appreciate their own and other cultures, and recognize how their own thoughts and actions are influenced by their culture and history. This understanding supports a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that facilitate effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts. See student learning outcomes.

Guidelines For Graduation

1. Intercultural Understanding
In order to meet the student learning outcomes (SLOs) for Intercultural Understanding and provide students with a well-rounded perspective on this educational objective, it is important that students demonstrate these SLOs regarding both global and local contexts. Students, working closely with their advisers, will select a set of courses and/or programs to demonstrate intercultural understanding from (A) a global or international perspective and (B) from a domestic (US) or local perspective.

A. Demonstration of an understanding of the intercultural from a global or international perspective.
Students will meet this objective by either:
1. Completing an approved study abroad program (a semester or, in extenuating circumstances, a summer program).
2. Taking a course that discusses or addresses a culture (or cultures) outside of the U.S. (including historical cultures and civilizations).

B. Demonstration of an understanding of the intercultural from a domestic (US) or local perspective.
Students will meet this objective by either:
1. Completing the Pitzer in Ontario Program
2. Taking a course that addresses historically marginalized cultures in the U.S. including but not limited to current offerings in Ethnic Studies departments, Gender & Feminist Studies, American Studies, and courses on queer theory. See course criteria.

Student Learning Outcomes and Course Criteria

I. Student Learning Outcomes for Intercultural Understanding (global and/or local, international and/or domestic can be selected as appropriate for an IU-G or IU-L course)

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1 “Extenuating circumstances” might include a New Resources student or any student who has justifiable reasons for not studying abroad for a full semester.
Intercultural Understanding focuses on knowledge, empathy, and the application of learning. The Student Learning Outcomes associated with this perspective of Intercultural Understanding are:

1. Students will be able to identify and describe different global and local manifestations of culture and discern cultural complexities.

2. Students will be able to critically analyze their own cultural norms and biases and describe how these affect their world-view.

3. Students will be able to draw upon personal experiences and class learning to develop common ground for interactions with those from other cultures.

4. Students will be able to identify, describe, and analyze important social issues from multiple cultural perspectives.

5. Students will be able to engage with diverse groups of people while recognizing cultural and individual differences in interaction and communication.

6. Students will be able to identify and describe how power, positionality, privilege, and other socio-structural factors impact their own life circumstances and those of people locally and globally.

II. Course/Program Criteria for the intercultural Understanding

A. Program Criteria for meeting the intercultural understanding guideline on a study abroad program:

Study Abroad should entail a deep engagement with another culture and the learning that comes from that as a part of a four-year liberal arts education. Program components that normally best promote intercultural learning on study abroad:

- Intensive language instruction once you are there (where applicable)
- Homestays
- A core course on the culture and important issues of the area or region
- Guided reflection on your experience through writing assignments
- A directed independent study project
*Students on exchanges will take a distance learning course, MLLC 110 Portfolio Writing, which helps students link their experiences abroad with the Intercultural Understand educational objective.

B. Course Criteria for meeting the intercultural understanding guideline in a course that discusses or addresses a culture (or cultures) outside of the U.S.

“Global/International” courses are not just courses that focus on the international or on other countries. For the intercultural requirement there must be significant focus on non-US “cultures.” The course will:

1. Examine a culture or cultures outside of the US (to include historical cultures and civilizations) OR
2. Provide a comparative perspective between the US and other culture(s), with at least half of the course focused on non-US cases

C. Course Criteria for meeting the Intercultural Understanding guideline in a course that addresses different cultures in the U.S.
While recognizing that some course criteria will not be applicable to courses in all fields, courses that meet the Intercultural Understanding guideline for different cultures in the U.S should:

1. Expose students to marginalized communities (via course materials, art work, readings, films, and/or internship/social responsibility sites) and ask students to reflect their upon understandings of specific issues via assignments, journal entries and/or reflective essays
2. Directly discuss the role of individual privilege as it relates to the denied privileges of socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. role of social and cultural capital)
3. Investigate the impact of and counter the ideas of ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism as these terms relate to how marginalized populations are characterized and caricatured
4. Encourage the development of cultural empathy, respect, and understanding for host/community/local perspectives within class discussion and oral/written assignments about social stratification, socio-structural barriers, and social inequality as systems of oppression
5. Ask students to investigate the intersections between racialized, gendered, and/or classed identities as they relate to how intersecting axes of oppression, such as heterosexism, racism, classism, and/or ableism, affect marginalized communities in the U.S. and abroad
6. Push students to recognize how historical structures, individual agency, and the relations between the two are exhibited within the social circumstances of marginalized communities in the U.S. and abroad
7. Teach students how to use social theory to analyze and describe why social hierarchy persists and the ways in which it impacts the life chances of marginalized populations

Faculty should articulate these criteria in ways that are appropriate for their discipline or field. For a Humanities course that meets the Intercultural Understanding guideline that addresses different cultures in the U.S., there are alternative course criteria that could be used in place of some of the criteria above. These courses could:

1. Examine unequal power relations embedded in the cultures and histories of the United States
2. Enable students to explore diverse cultural perspectives on United States society and history by analyzing the production of art, literature, or philosophy
3. Encourage the development of cultural empathy, respect, and understanding for ethnic studies
Social Justice Theory/Social Responsibility Praxis Educational Objective:
Graduation Guidelines, Student Learning Outcomes, and Course Criteria

Catalog Language

Educational Objectives of Pitzer College

Social Justice, Social Responsibility and the Ethical Implications of Knowledge and Action Educational Objective

Through the Social Justice Theory and Social Responsibility Praxis paired course sequence, students will acquire a concern with and commitment to social justice and social responsibility through both theory and practice courses that emphasize these themes. See student learning outcomes.

Guidelines For Graduation

2. Social Justice, Social Responsibility and the Ethical Implications of Knowledge and Action

Students satisfy this objective by completing two courses: one in Social Justice Theory and one in Social Responsibility Praxis.

a. Social Justice Theory (SJT)

The social justice theory course will emphasize diverse theoretical frameworks, movements and histories of social justice. See course criteria. [Hyperlink will lead to the course criteria listed on the following page.]

b. Social Responsibility Praxis (SRP)

The social responsibility praxis course emphasizes the manifestation of social responsibility through community engagement, theoretical analysis, and critical reflection, or “praxis.” See course criteria.

I. Social Justice Theory: Student Learning Outcomes and Course Criteria

A. Social Justice Theory Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify and describe the ethical and political implications of injustice, such as social problems, social stratification, the interdependence and intersection of systems of oppression, interpersonal and structural discrimination, and unequal distribution and access to power and resources (including natural resources).

2. Students will be able to identify barriers to equality and/or inclusiveness and explore strategies to remove them.
3. Students will be able to identify and describe the hegemonic structures and practices that further social injustice and oppression as studied in their course.

**B. Social Justice Theory Course Criteria**

All of the following criteria must be met in order for courses to fulfill the guideline. Consider the criteria as they relate to your discipline or your field of study.

1. Courses should have assignments that can be used to assess the provided Social Justice Theory student learning outcomes.

2. Course topics should be about the theory, history, current events, and/or social movements surrounding social (in)justice issues pertinent to at least one of the following: race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, nationality, ability status, environmental justice, religion and/or social stratification. For example, the course might explore the history and current status of social justice movements, such as Civil Rights, Women’s Movements, Immigration Reform, Sexuality and Labor.

3. Course topics should enable students to acquire knowledge and sensitivity to the ethical and political implications of at least one of the following: social problems, oppressive systems, interpersonal and structural discrimination, unequal distribution and access to power and resources (including natural resources), and the interdependence and intersection of systems of oppression.

4. Course readings and discussions should challenge hegemonic structures and practices that further social injustice and oppression, and promote strategies to redress systemic barriers to equality and inclusiveness.

**II. Social Responsibility Praxis: Student Learning Outcomes and Course Criteria**

**A. Social Responsibility Praxis Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be able to identify and describe social (in)justice issues and their root causes (e.g., structural, political, social, economic, and/or environmental conditions) that have resulted in the need for community engagement.

2. Students will be able to demonstrate the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct when negotiating engagement in the community.

3. Students will be able to design and utilize strategies that attempt to address social justice/social responsibility issues through community engagement activities.

4. Students, in collaboration with community members, will be able to recognize community assets and needs.
5. Students will be able to identify, describe, and critically analyze the benefits and potential pitfalls of community-campus partnerships.

6. Students will be able to describe how their community engagement alongside critical reflection on their own perceptions, biases, and assumptions, inform their understanding of social (in)justice issues and their awareness of power, privilege, and positionality.

**B. Social Responsibility Praxis Course Criteria**

1. Community engagement may come in the form of service, research, community-based education, or another form of collaboration, conducted by faculty members in a way that is appropriate to their pedagogy, methodology and personal approach, and operating from a framework that honors reciprocal, respectful, ethical partnership with the community members, agencies or institutions with whom the faculty member and students are collaborating.

2. Community engagement fieldwork normally includes at least 40 hours in a single semester, and is complemented by classroom discussions, lectures, and assignments (which correlate with stated Social Responsibility Praxis student learning outcomes) to engage critical reflections and rigorous analysis that address the theories of social justice that are specific to the disciplinary and community context.

3. The agenda for the community engagement is made in collaboration between college partners (students, faculty, and/or staff) and the primary community partner contacts, attempting always to recognize and build on existing assets of the community.

4. Community engagement actions address the structural, political, social, economic, and/or environmental conditions (and any other root causes) that have resulted in the need for community engagement, and explore the benefits and potential pitfalls of community-campus partnerships.

5. (As applicable/ If applicable) Community engagement courses that involve research must follow appropriate ethical standards, such as: informed consent, mutual benefits, equal partnership in designing and conducting research, and sharing of end products.