



Dear Colleagues,

This message is addressed especially to faculty members who are teaching undergraduate courses during the Fall 2006 semester that fulfill the diversity core requirement and to the chairs of departments in which such courses are being taught this semester. A copy of this message is also going to members of the Diversity Work Group on Curricular/Co-Curricular Transformation and Inclusion, to members of the Diversity Requirement Review Committee, and to key administrators who I thought might want to stay informed about efforts in this direction.

I write as director of undergraduate academic affairs and as a member of the Diversity Work Group on Curricular/Co-Curricular Transformation and Inclusion under the leadership of Dr. Lawrence Potter.

This particular diversity work group decided last spring that it should make an effort to assess the effectiveness of the undergraduate core curriculum diversity requirement because this requirement is the most extensive academic effort in the university to enrich the diversity of the curriculum. In addition, as director of undergraduate academic affairs I am responsible for efforts to assess the core curriculum. It soon became apparent that a serious assessment of the effectiveness of the diversity requirement would provide important information to the diversity work group and to the diversity review committee, and would also constitute the first attempt to assess this particular portion of the core curriculum. The diversity work group consulted with the undergraduate review committee that oversees this requirement to develop a survey form to be used for assessment of student learning in this area.

The purpose of this message is simply to give you an opportunity to see the survey form that will be administered in all courses fulfilling the diversity requirement at the end of the current semester and to solicit your cooperation in this important assessment effort.

It would make most sense and be least disruptive to your class for the survey to be administered in class at the same time as the required student reports on teaching are administered near the end of this semester, although let me emphasize that this survey is **NOT** a component of the student report on teaching process and is not an evaluation of individual faculty members or of individual courses. The survey is designed to assess the degree to which students report having learned the approaches and concepts that form the basis of the diversity requirement. The questions in the survey are drawn from the established criteria for the core curriculum diversity requirement. These are the same criteria that faculty would have consulted when proposing to the diversity review committee that the course should be accepted as fulfilling the diversity requirement. Results of the survey will be studied by members of the diversity work group and no information that is identifiable by section or instructor will be published. We will make available to you the cumulative results of the survey when it has been tabulated some time in January 2007.

You will note that the survey asks students about the full range of issues that are identified in the criteria for the diversity requirement, even though we recognize that few courses, if any, were designed to address the full range of possible diversity issues delineated in the criteria. It is to be expected that students in each course will mark a number of the questions as "Not Applicable." Such designations carry no negative implications because the diversity requirement has been set up such that courses that focus on a number of different particular diversity issues will fulfill the requirement.

No action on your part is needed at this time, except to plan on spending the additional minutes necessary during the administration of course evaluations toward the end of this semester to include the distribution and collection of this survey. We will supply you with the survey forms in machine-readable format at the appropriate time.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this important assessment effort and I will direct all such concerns to the Diversity Work Group on Curricular/Co-Curricular Transformation and to the Diversity Review Committee for their discussion.

With ongoing regard,

Michael C. Jordan
Director of Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Professor, Department of English