

U.S. Multiculturalism Requirement

Rationale

A rich campus life, language acquisition, study away, and interaction with diverse students and faculty all contribute to students' intellectual and experiential grasp of difference and of their own place in relation to the "other" and the world. In this context, the U.S. Multiculturalism and Internationalism graduation requirements are designed to prepare students to contribute as members of a thoughtful and principled citizenry in a global society. These courses provide specific knowledge about the complexity of internationalism and multiculturalism abroad, in the U.S., and in the rich campus and local communities in which Macalester participates. While internationalism and multiculturalism are distinguished as two components of the College mission, in reality they are intertwined. Peoples divided by national boundaries may, for example, be more homogeneous culturally and linguistically than peoples within a nation like the United States. Systems of power and privilege that help create and maintain hierarchical relations among peoples operate within the U.S. and other nations, among nations, and between the U.S. and the rest of the world. All lives are shaped by historical dynamics and contemporary structures that operate on transnational, international, and global levels. Macalester's two-part requirement recognizes not only the conceptual interconnectedness of internationalism and multiculturalism, but also the need for students to engage with complexities of difference within the community where they live and work, as well as within an international and global context. In learning about other peoples, cultures and global systems one dislodges presuppositions about others and, crucially, about one's individual and collective self.

Motion: EPAG moves that the Faculty endorse the refined description (statement, course approval criteria) of the U.S. Multiculturalism Requirement as follows:

U.S. Multiculturalism Requirement: *At least one course devoted to the study of social groups (e.g. based on race, religion, class, gender, sexuality, language, national origin) in the U.S.; including analysis of forces that create, contest, or maintain power, identity, or difference.*

Course Approval Criteria

The majority of the course (content, pedagogy, activities, assessment) will provide opportunities for students to develop:

- 1) An understanding of the varied experiences and contributions of social groups in the U.S.;
- 2) An understanding of the interrelationships among social groups in the U.S., and how these work to shape complex, dynamic identities and social realities;
- 3) An understanding of the ways in which unequal distributions of power and resources have developed and continue to affect people in the U.S.; and
- 4) An understanding of efforts to promote agency, equity, and social justice within the U.S.