GE Theme course submission worksheet: Citizenship for a Just & Diverse World

Overview

Courses in the GE Themes aim to provide students with opportunities to explore big picture ideas and problems within the specific practice and expertise of a discipline or department. Although many Theme courses serve within disciplinary majors or minors, by requesting inclusion in the General Education, programs are committing to the incorporation of the goals of the focal theme and the success and participation of students from outside of their program.

Each category of the GE has specific learning goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) that connect to the big picture goals of the program. ELOs describe the knowledge or skills students should have by the end of the course. Courses in the GE Themes must meet the ELOs common for **all** GE Themes and those specific to the Theme, in addition to any ELOs the instructor has developed specific to that course. All courses in the GE must indicate that they are part of the GE and include the Goals and ELOs of their GE category on their syllabus.

The prompts in this form elicit information about how this course meets the expectations of the GE Themes. The form will be reviewed by a group of content experts (the Theme Advisory) and by a group of curriculum experts (the Theme Panel), with the latter having responsibility for the ELOs and Goals common to all themes (those things that make a course appropriate for the GE Themes) and the former having responsibility for the ELOs and Goals specific to the topic of **this** Theme.

# Briefly describe how this course connects to or exemplifies the concept of this Theme (Citizenship)

In a sentence or two, explain how this class “fits’ within the focal Theme. This will help reviewers understand the intended frame of reference for the course-specific activities described below.

*(enter text here)*

This course explores the ways knowledge sharing and knowledge building communities evolve through and on social media. Many individuals have little experience with these types of communities or the new form of online digital citizenship necessary for it to empower productive social phenomena.

# Connect this course to the Goals and ELOs shared by *all* Themes

Below are the Goals and ELOs common to all Themes. In the accompanying table, for each ELO, describe the activities (discussions, readings, lectures, assignments) that provide opportunities for students to achieve those outcomes. The answer should be concise and use language accessible to colleagues outside of the submitting department or discipline. The specifics of the activities matter—listing “readings” without a reference to the topic of those readings will not allow the reviewers to understand how the ELO will be met. However, the panel evaluating the fit of the course to the Theme will review this form in conjunction with the syllabus, so if readings, lecture/discussion topics, or other specifics are provided on the syllabus, it is not necessary to reiterate them within this form. The ELOs are expected to vary in their “coverage” in terms of number of activities or emphasis within the course. Examples from successful courses are shared on the next page.

**Goal 1:** Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations. In this context, “advanced” refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities.

**Goal 2:** Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-ofclassroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

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|  | Course activities and assignments to meet these ELOs |
| **ELO 1.1** Engage in critical and logical thinking. | This course is unique in that it offers students experience with abductive logic (most critical and logical thinking in university courses is deductive and/or inductive). Abductive logic will become increasingly important as we move deeper into the information age and individuals will have more responsibility to vet and gauge competing information and information sources. In the Online Community through Social Media course students will be tasked with comparing not only different platforms and different types of platforms, but different information universes (open information sources vs. TOR/Dark Web Sources). They will recognize the danger in easily accepting and adopting information from any source and the need to compare the legitimacy and viability of the information they find online for use in their everyday lives.(Assignments Weeks 5.6. 10) |
| **ELO 1.2** Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or ideas within this theme. | Students will engage in careful exploration of social media phenomena and its role as a tool in our society. But understanding the ways in which online community and social media emerged, initially separately and then merging together for both positive and nihilistic purposes they will develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be an active participant in an online community, including the possibilities but also the dangers of increasingly active use of social media. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) in their seminal work on citizenship in the 21st century point to the ways society is going to have to re-evaluate and, in some ways, re-invent citizenship in online contexts. Students will be able to develop a better idea of what digital citizenship means to them and the world around them (All assignments in some way that address this ELO). |
| **ELO 2.1** Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences. | Students explore this topic through both academic articles, online group work and active engagement with social media platforms/applications.  Readings for this course represent both classic and cutting-edge writings on online communities and social media. For example, reading Howard Rheingold's book on the beginnings of virtual communities allows them to understand the predictions Rheingold made about the coming information age and grapple with why so many of the predictions of coming danger came to fruition.  Group Work: Students will form and actively use their own small communities online (4-8 students) offering them first-hand experience of possibilities and limitations of using different online platforms and the importance of setting norms, both universal and local, in the interests of community development.  Engagement with social media platforms/applications: Students will explore social media platforms in the context of digital citizenship, offering a very different perspective/understanding of what their online activities mean, and how they can be used for different purposes. |
| **ELO 2.2** Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, selfassessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts. | Students will be asked to use social media in relation to real world contexts where they need to figure out ways to turn their online communities into productive, problem-solving spaces (a core principle of digital citizenship). In week 13 for instance their assignment is developing an approach using online social media to solve an OSU campus problem. Their final project revolves around developing a workable, sustainable online community. These assignments are not only reflections of the class but can and should be extended out to their use of educational online tools such as discussion boards (recognizing that they only really work if there is a way to turn posts and comments into a sustainable community). |

*Example responses for proposals within “Citizenship” (from Sociology 3200, Comm 2850, French 2803):*

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| ***ELO 1.1*** *Engage in critical and logical thinking.* | *This course will build skills needed to engage in critical and logical thinking about immigration and immigration related policy through:*  *Weekly reading response papers which require the students to synthesize and critically evaluate cutting-edge scholarship on immigration;*  *Engagement in class-based discussion and debates on immigration-related topics using evidence-based logical reasoning to evaluate policy positions; Completion of an assignment which build skills in analyzing empirical data on immigration (Assignment #1)* |

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|  | *Completion 3 assignments which build skills in connecting individual experiences with broader population-based patterns (Assignments #1, #2, #3)*  *Completion of 3 quizzes in which students demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and materials.* |
| ***ELO 2.1*** *Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences.* | *Students engage in advanced exploration of each module topic through a combination of lectures, readings, and discussions.*    *Lecture*  *Course materials come from a variety of sources to help students engage in the relationship between media and citizenship at an advanced level. Each of the 12 modules has 3-4 lectures that contain information from both peer-reviewed and popular sources. Additionally, each module has at least one guest lecture from an expert in that topic to increase students’ access to people with expertise in a variety of areas.*    *Reading*  *The textbook for this course provides background information on each topic and corresponds to the lectures. Students also take some control over their own learning by choosing at least one peer-reviewed article and at least one newspaper article from outside the class materials to read and include in their weekly discussion posts.*    *Discussions*  *Students do weekly discussions and are given flexibility in their topic choices in order to allow them to take some control over their education. They are also asked to provide*  *information from sources they’ve found outside the lecture materials. In this way, they are able to*  *explore areas of particular interest to them and practice the skills they will need to gather information about current events, analyze this information, and communicate it with others.*    *Activity Example: Civility impacts citizenship behaviors in many ways. Students are asked to choose a TED talk from a provided list (or choose another speech of their interest) and summarize and evaluate what it says about the relationship between civility and citizenship. Examples of Ted Talks on the list include Steven Petrow on the difference between being polite and being civil, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s talk on how a single story can perpetuate stereotypes, and Claire Wardle’s talk on how diversity can enhance citizenship.* |
| ***ELO 2.2*** *Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.* | *Students will conduct research on a specific event or site in Paris not already discussed in depth in class. Students will submit a 300-word abstract of their topic and a bibliography of at least five reputable academic and mainstream sources. At the end of the semester they will submit a 5-page research paper and present their findings in a 10-minute oral and visual presentation in a small-group setting in Zoom.*    *Some examples of events and sites:*  *The Paris Commune, an 1871 socialist uprising violently squelched by conservative forces* |
|  | *Jazz-Age Montmartre, where a small community of African-Americans– including actress and singer Josephine Baker, who was just inducted into the French Pantheon–settled and worked after World War I.*  *The Vélodrome d’hiver Roundup, 16-17 July 1942, when 13,000 Jews were rounded up by Paris police before being sent to concentration camps The Marais, a vibrant Paris neighborhood inhabited over the centuries by aristocrats, then Jews, then the LGBTQ+ community, among other groups.* |

# Goals and ELOs unique to Citizenship for a Just & Diverse World

Below are the Goals and ELOs specific to this Theme. As above, in the accompanying Table, for each ELO, describe the activities (discussions, readings, lectures, assignments) that provide opportunities for students to achieve those outcomes. The answer should be concise and use language accessible to colleagues outside of the submitting department or discipline. The ELOs are expected to vary in their “coverage” in terms of number of activities or emphasis within the course. Examples from successful courses are shared on the next page.

**GOAL 3:** Successful students will explore and analyze a range of perspectives on local, national, or global citizenship, and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that constitute citizenship.

**GOAL 4:** Successful students will examine notions of justice amidst difference and analyze and critique how these interact with historically and socially constructed ideas of citizenship and membership within societies, both within the US and/or around the world.

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|  | Course activities and assignments to meet these ELOs |
| **ELO 3.1**  Describe and analyze a range of perspectives on what constitutes citizenship and how it differs across political, cultural, national, global, and/or historical communities. | Digital citizenship will be an increasingly important topic and skill set as the Internet applications, especially social media platforms, become more pervasive in everyday lives. The abilities to understand the how and how, and the diversity, of social media will be critical. For the most part, our education system leaves (especially younger) users on their own to figure out what it means to be a responsible and productive digital citizen. One of the most important aspects of this course is its global reach in explore the issues and ramifications of Internet-based activities where they are few traditional boundaries and guardrails. We live in an era where misinformation is a constant danger and abilities to build active, nihilistic communities based on limited knowledge and connections are always present. We are dealing with a world that intermixes the local, the global and the historical in way a few decades earlier we would have never thought possible. Understanding how our current situation evolved and will continue to evolve is one of the essential goals of 21st century educational institutions. |
| **ELO 3.2** Identify, reflect on, and apply the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for intercultural competence as a global citizen. | Intercultural competence is not so much a goal to reach as a way of life in our Web-based world. Or it might be more accurate to talk about a new type of electronic, cyber based cultural competence. There is however still many cultural boundaries on social media sites even though communication does not involve traditional cultural cues (what does the person look like, what do they sound like, what types of cultural capital do they display). Often times members of traditionally defined cultures (especially marginalized cultures) do not feel comfortable on mainstream sites based on content and tone of conversation. Following the "What is social media?" topic students will learn how different cultures used social media as outlets, and how the ways these sites were managed often times led to face-to-face marginalization re-emerging online. For example MySpace was very much a site for marginalized communities to have a voice, but it was squeezed out in many ways by the more exclusive, power-centered Facebook. In the "From Content to Connectivity" topic they will see how a similar scenario played out more than a decade later as the emergent and newly powerful "Black Twitter" was circumvented by the transition from Twitter to X. In the misinformation unit students will discuss how males gamers used social media sites such as 4Chan and 8Chan to try and re-establish hegemony over females looking for a place in the gaming industry leading to the months long "Gamergate." These and other examples will help explore the idea that culture is a much more dynamic but also fragile aspect of the online world, one that we are just beginning to understand. That to doxx someone or troll a group can and does have severe cultural consequences. |
| **ELO 4.1** Examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, inclusion, and explore a variety of lived experiences. | Through exploration and discussion critical moments in the development of active social media and social media type communities, both positive, such as the Whole Earth ‘Lectronic Link (Well), Black Twitter, the Arab Spring, and negative such as “The Fappening,” Gamergate, human trafficking on the dark web, and white supremacy on X, students will have opportunities to examine and critique the ways that social media has been and might be used for specific purposes (justice oriented or with nihilistic implications). The students will be able to track how the same technologies have been used for both a new type of inclusion (the George Floyd protests, the use of Twitter and specific subreddits) and exclusion of historically marginalized groups. They will be able to understand the interaction between individual users and their abilities to create welcoming and safe environments difficult in face-to-face interactions) as well as toxic systems where individuals and groups are bullied (trolled) and even frightened for their own well-being. Students will be able to witness how interaction between user populations and platform constraints become determinative of online behavior, and how fragile many safeguards can be. This includes incursions by individuals looking to take over and control the online community for their own purposes, especially when there is limited moderation and individuals feel free to use language and online activities that make other users feel unsafe. Students will learn that issues of diversity, equity and inclusion are more transparent and straight forward in burgeoning online communities and the responsibility of the users in real time (e.g., the way gaming subreddits were able to chase away more toxic elements in gamergate, but they were able to find a home in 8chan. This allow students to self-reflect on their own responsibilities in emergent online social media communities (how do you respond to an abusive post to a vulnerable member? Do you just leave or do you attempt to ban other users together to ration the offending party? Is it then okay for that offending party to say that they are the ones who are being “cancelled”? |
| **ELO 4.2** Analyze and critique the intersection of concepts of justice, difference, citizenship, and how these interact with cultural traditions, structures of power and/or advocacy for social change. | It is response to this learning objective that Online Community through social media is perhaps most powerful from a citizenship perspective. The course outlines how social media communities have interacted with structures of power and can lead to advocacy for social change – if these communities are developed in a responsible manner. In the units on misinformation and political advocacy especially the students will be presented with examples of how social media is capable of giving voice to the voiceless in ways that are usually restricted in traditional face-to-face society. Black women in the case of Black Twitter’s campaign to find out what happened to Sandra Bland, it was able to shine a spotlight on the way young, marginalized women are abused by the justice system at multiple levels and find some level of justice that had not been possible before. In the George Floyd protests organizers were able to push the inequities of the justice system to the forefront before it was eventually swallowed up by more traditional sources. In the Brazilian protests groups were able create spaces to discuss material and emotional inequities in the streets of Rio de Janeiro. This type of successful social advocacy is contrasted with the ways that social media communities can enable increased marginalization and dangers for other members of online and f2f communities. Students will be able explore how different types of communities evolve. |

*Example responses for proposals within “Citizenship” (Hist/Relig. Studies 3680, Music 3364; Soc 3200):*

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| ***ELO 3.1*** *Describe and analyze a range of perspectives on what constitutes citizenship and how it differs across political, cultural,* | *Citizenship could not be more central to a topic such as immigration/migration. As such, the course content, goals, and expected learning outcomes are all, almost by definition, engaged with a range of perspectives on local, national, and global citizenship.* |

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| *national, global, and/or historical communities.* | *Throughout the class students will be required to engage with questions about what constitutes citizenship and how it differs across contexts.*    *The course content addresses citizenship questions at the global (see weeks #3 and #15 on refugees and open border debates), national (see weeks #5, 7-#14 on the U.S. case), and the local level (see week #6 on Columbus). Specific activities addressing different perspectives on citizenship include Assignment #1, where students produce a demographic profile of a U.S-based immigrant group, including a profile of their citizenship statuses using U.S.-based regulatory definitions. In addition, Assignment #3, which has students connect their family origins to broader population-level immigration patterns, necessitates a discussion of citizenship. Finally, the critical reading responses have the students engage the literature on different perspectives of citizenship and reflect on what constitutes citizenship and how it varies across communities.* |
| ***ELO 3.2*** *Identify, reflect on, and apply the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for intercultural competence as a global citizen.* | *This course supports the cultivation of "intercultural competence as a global citizen" through rigorous and sustained study of multiple forms of musical-political agency worldwide, from the grass-roots to the state-sponsored. Students identify varied cultural expressions of "musical citizenship" each week, through their reading and listening assignments, and reflect on them via online and in-class discussion. It is common for us to ask probing and programmatic questions about the musical-political subjects and cultures we study. What are the possibilities and constraints of this particular version of musical citizenship? What might we carry forward in our own lives and labors as musical citizens Further, students are encouraged to apply their emergent intercultural competencies as global, musical citizens in their midterm report and final project, in which weekly course topics inform student-led research and creative projects.* |
| ***ELO 4.1*** *Examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, inclusion, and explore a variety of lived experiences.* | *Through the historical and contemporary case studies students examine in HIST/RS 3680, they have numerous opportunities to examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as a variety of lived experiences. The cases highlight the challenges of living in religiously diverse societies, examining a range of issues and their implications. They also consider the intersections of religious difference with other categories of difference, including race and gender. For example, during the unit on US religious freedom, students consider how incarcerated Black Americans and Native Americans have experienced questions of freedom and equality in dramatically different ways than white Protestants. In a weekly reflection post, they address this question directly. In the unit on marriage and sexuality, they consider different ways that different social groups have experienced the regulation of marriage in Israel and Malaysia in ways that do not correspond simplistically to gender (e.g. different women's groups with very different perspectives on the issues).*    *In their weekly reflection posts and other written assignments, students are invited to analyze the implications of different regulatory models for questions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They do so not in a simplistic sense of assessing which model is* |
|  | *"right" or "best" but in considering how different possible outcomes might shape the concrete lived experience of different social groups in different ways. The goal is not to determine which way of doing things is best, but to understand why different societies manage these questions in different ways and how their various expressions might lead to different outcomes in terms of diversity and inclusion. They also consider how the different social and demographic conditions of different societies shape their approaches (e.g. a historic Catholic majority in France committed to laicite confronting a growing Muslim minority, or how pluralism \*within\* Israeli Judaism led to a fragile and contested status quo arrangement). Again, these goals are met most directly through weekly reflection posts and students' final projects, including one prompt that invites students to consider Israel's status quo arrangement from the perspective of different social groups, including liberal feminists, Orthodox and Reform religious leaders, LGBTQ communities, interfaith couples, and others.* |
| ***ELO 4.2*** *Analyze and critique the intersection of concepts of justice, difference, citizenship, and how these interact with cultural traditions, structures of power and/or advocacy for social change.* | *As students analyze specific case studies in HIST/RS 3680, they assess law's role in and capacity for enacting justice, managing difference, and constructing citizenship. This goal is met through lectures, course readings, discussion, and written assignments. For example, the unit on indigenous sovereignty and sacred space invites students to consider why liberal systems of law have rarely accommodated indigenous land claims and what this says about indigenous citizenship and justice. They also study examples of indigenous activism and resistance around these issues. At the conclusion of the unit, the neighborhood exploration assignment specifically asks students to take note of whether and how indigenous land claims are marked or acknowledged in the spaces they explore and what they learn from this about citizenship, difference, belonging, and power. In the unit on legal pluralism, marriage, and the law, students study the personal law systems in Israel and Malaysia. They consider the structures of power that privilege certain kinds of communities and identities and also encounter groups advocating for social change. In their final projects, students apply the insights they've gained to particular case studies. As they analyze their selected case studies, they are required to discuss how the cases reveal the different ways justice, difference, and citizenship intersect and how they are shaped by cultural traditions and structures of power in particular social contexts. They present their conclusions in an oral group presentation and in an individually written final paper. Finally, in their end of semester letter to professor, they reflect on how they issues might shape their own advocacy for social change in the future.* |