

General Education at NC State

Jay Schalin

North Carolina State University's general education program is ambitious, seeking to accomplish a great many things. Yet its implementation is not aligned with its ambitions, because it demands too little of students. This gap between intentions and implementation can cause students to end up with anti-intellectual attitudes, poor writing and reasoning skills, and anti-social perspectives.

The program reflects some good intentions, mainly an emphasis on science and mathematics that many other general education programs lack (this is perhaps to be expected at a school with technical roots). Yet the program attempts to produce reasoned thinking in students using a scattershot "smorgasbord approach," which permits students to choose from among 714 courses, rather than requiring the focused rigor that improving thought processes requires. The fact that general education at NC State requires two science courses does not mean students must take two *rigorous* science courses.

Additional problems are clearly the result of overt politicization. It is difficult to simultaneously instill an objective spirit of inquiry and to inculcate a politically correct worldview that rejects objective inquiry.

General Education Basics

General education consists of the courses that a college or university requires a student to take in order to be a "well-rounded person." When properly designed, the general education program can be the most valuable part of a student's college education.

In most general education programs today, students can choose from a variety of courses that fall into categories of knowledge determined by the school to be of particular importance. A well-designed program can perform quite a few functions with a relatively small number of courses. When poorly devised, however, a general education program will merely give a student a confusing collection of unconnected facts and trivial theories. That seems to be the case at NC State.

A good program emphasizes skills, knowledge, and reasoning that are applicable to all careers. These include the ability to organize thoughts and write well, the ability to use logical, scientific, probabilistic, or other forms of reasoning, an awareness of mankind's past activities and ideas as influences on the present and future, the power of analysis, and much more. In today's world, in which graduates will likely change jobs numerous times or possibly never work in their major field of study, such skills are paramount to their success.

Society also benefits from a well-designed general education because it teaches students about citizenship, ethics, and culture. A good general education program should elevate a student's sense of what it means to be good, moral, or just.

General Education Issues

There is great confusion about what a general education program should be. Perhaps its most commonly accepted function is to provide students with a “breadth” of knowledge.” However, too often this is interpreted to mean that students should be offered as broad a selection of courses as possible. This is exactly the wrong course of action to ensure that students have a breadth of knowledge, for it enables them to choose many courses that are either very narrow, trivial, or both.

Breadth of Knowledge

Breadth of knowledge is provided by courses that introduce important and major themes—often survey or introductory level courses. It is better for a school to construct a program with a few broad courses to ensure that students are indeed getting that breadth of knowledge rather than a potpourri of isolated trivia.

This leads to a question that is fundamental to a college general education: are students able—and likely—to make good judgments about their general education courses or not? Some students may be smart, focused, and mature enough to do so, but many are not. Consider how many drop out, how many change majors, how many change career paths after graduation.

And choosing a major or career path is a single choice that is tied to one’s main interests; creating a general education program is a much more complex operation, one that requires understanding of what constitutes a good education and how the various courses should blend together to achieve that education. This is a task that requires maturity, knowledge, and professional judgment, that very thing that students lack and are in school trying to acquire.

Critical Thinking

Another problem that most general education programs today share is an emphasis on “critical thinking” rather than on the more historically accepted “reason.” While the term critical thinking is absent from North Carolina State’s General Education Mission Statement and Program Rationale, its influence is clearly felt throughout. And a recently formed system-wide commission, the University of North Carolina General Education Council, has made critical thinking one of its two primary goals.

Reason and critical thinking, as they are being implemented throughout academia, are two very different things.

Succinctly, reason is the ability to make sensible observations from the world and draw logical conclusions from those perceptions. According to official or accepted definitions, critical thinking appears almost identical to reason. But over time it has come to mean something quite different, emphasizing the “to criticize” definition rather than the “crucial” definition, which was its original meaning.

According to a 2010 essay in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by Wesleyan University president and intellectual historian Michael Roth, the concept became commonplace in the 1940s through the work of Robert H. Ennis, an education professor at the University of Illinois.

Ennis identified 12 different “aspects” of “how we teach ‘the correct assessment of statements’” as the keys to critical thinking. In time, one of those aspects—“the ability to see through or undermine statements made by (or beliefs held by) others,” has come to be a mark of intellectual sophistication, according to Roth.

As a result, Roth suggests, students are rewarded largely for attacking ideas. Unfortunately, no philosophical system is without flaws, and therefore all are open to critical attack. This focus on exposing the flaws in ideas or “deconstructing” ideas rather than on constructing

a serious worldview leads naturally to angry close-mindedness or hip cynicism, which inhibit real learning.

Students trained to deconstruct rather than to understand will also side with the philosophy that favors such deconstruction instead of listening to reasoned arguments in favor of sensible and time-tested social structures and philosophies.

It just so happens that the philosophy that favors deconstruction is on the far left. Perhaps it is sheer coincidence that the 1940s were also the period when the “critical theory” school of the self-exiled German philosophers of the neo-Marxist Frankfurt School started making inroads into the American academy. But perhaps not. This perspective has a variety of definitions, but it generally encourages analyzing society and knowledge through a political lens. “Deconstruction” is in fact a term growing out of Frankfurt School critical theory.

Even if that is coincidence, critical thinking as discussed in today’s academia is insufficient to produce the desired ability to reason. Helping students build solid philosophical foundations takes much more planning and effort than does teaching them to be critical.

It certainly takes much more than a hodge-podge of college courses on different topics to train the mind to proper habits of reason; rather, it takes consistent attempts to interpret and discuss important ideas over time. That is part of the appeal of a Great Books approach, in which students read, analyze, and discuss important texts over a duration of their educations.

Another way to approach it is directly, through teaching logic, statistics, and the scientific method. Perhaps the best way to develop powers of reason is through both the Great Books and direct approaches. That said, it is a fallacy to believe that a very specific goal of instilling the power to reason can be accomplished haphazardly, as is invariably the case with a smorgasbord-style program.

“Rocks for Jocks”?

There is also an issue about whether a school should provide easier versions of introductory science courses for liberal arts majors—the so-called “Rocks for Jocks” courses. It may be that doing so is necessary, as the level of teaching can be quite different when trying to provide students with a general background in the sciences versus trying to get science majors started down the path to becoming scientists. Often, introductory science courses for majors require at least some calculus background, which students in other majors may lack.

On the other hand, perhaps non-science majors should be made to face the same rigors that science majors do; is it not part of the educational process to make students rise to difficult challenges?

Even if science courses are designed for non-science majors, they should not be “dumbed-down” to the point where they lack rigor. They should still offer considerable challenge.

The General Education Program at NC State

The following is the official North Carolina State University general education program, which appears on the school’s Web site. It consists of a minimum of 39 credit hours, plus a foreign language requirement that students can either test out of or satisfy by taking two three-credit courses, for a total of 45 credits. There are additional “co-requirements” that do not force students to take additional courses. Instead, their purpose is to encourage students to take specific courses that satisfy other requirements.

Main Requirements

English 101: Introduction to Writing (4 credit hours)
– Successful completion requires a C- or better.

Mathematical Sciences (6 credit hours)

- At least one course must have an MA (Mathematics) or ST (Statistics) prefix.

Natural Sciences (7 credit hours)

- At least one must be a laboratory course or a course with a lab.

Humanities (6 credit hours)

- Selected courses must be from two different humanities disciplines.

Social Sciences (6 credit hours)

- Selected courses must be from two different science disciplines.

Interdisciplinary Perspectives (5 credit hours)

Additional Breadth (3 credit hours)

Select Additional Breadth course from either the Humanities/Social Sciences/Visual and Performing Arts course lists or Mathematics/Natural Sciences/Engineering course lists depending on the Major.

Health and Exercise Studies (2 credit hours)

Must include one Fitness and Health HESF-level course.

Total credits to this point: 39

Foreign Languages

Must achieve 102 level proficiency. It can either be satisfied by demonstrating proficiency through testing or taking the first two courses in a language sequence.

Co-requirements

Global Knowledge (no additional credits required)

Must take 1 course designated GK

United States Diversity (no additional credits required.)

Must take 1 course designated USD

Communication within the Major

Requirement fulfilled within the major department requirements. This means that some courses within

a student's major must have a writing component in order to better prepare them to communicate with colleagues in their future professions.

Technology Fluency

Requirement fulfilled within the major department requirements. This means that some courses within a student's major must include exposure to the types of technology likely to be used in their future professions.

In addition, individual departments and colleges may have requirements of their own. For instance, the College of Arts and Sciences requires students to achieve fluency in a foreign language at the 201 level, one course higher than the 102 level mandated by the university general education program.

Overall Problems with NC State's Program

The general education program at North Carolina State University is deeply flawed. For one thing, students can satisfy general education requirements by choosing from over 700 courses. Many of those courses are too narrow to offer much insight for a student who is only taking one course in a broad area of study. For example, "FLC 351: Modern Chinese Popular Culture," satisfies one course out of the two-course requirement for humanities.

Others are on topics that are trivial—not really college material but grist for the "Features" section of a large daily newspaper. These include "PRT 200: Leisure Behavior, Health, and Wellness," which meets one of the course requirements in social sciences. Its catalog description reads:

Leisure as a lifelong resource for human satisfaction and fulfillment; its potential for physical, mental, social and emotional growth and development of the individual. Leisure opportunity areas presented and evaluated.

Other courses that can fill a “general education” requirement don’t seem to fill a “general education” purpose: they don’t add to the students’ breadth of meaningful knowledge, reasoning prowess, or writing ability. One example is “SMT 232; Recycling to Create a Sustainable Environment.” Another is “HON 391; Music and Social Life,” which satisfies an Additional Breadth requirement.

Although the General Education program purports to make better writers of all students, it requires only one writing course. A student can just about avoid writing altogether in the rest of the general education program by selecting courses that are quantitative or those in which the testing is quantitative. Many courses in the social sciences determine grades with multiple-choice tests rather than essays or reports.

While one semester’s worth of writing instruction may be enough to make those who already have strong writing skills better, it is hardly enough to improve those who need more attention (as often is the case at a technical school, where many math-oriented students avoid writing whenever possible).

There are also too many upper-level courses that require prerequisites. For general education purposes, an upper-level course is redundant. A general education program is intended to provide breadth, not depth in a particular subject. Lower-level courses provide that breadth; upper-level courses provide depth. Therefore, it is only sensible to remove most upper-level courses from the general education program.

One such course is “SOC 351: Population and Planning.” It has a pre-requisite of any 200-level sociology course; every one of those 200-level courses can be used to satisfy the same social sciences requirement that SOC 351 does.

The Trendy Side of General Education

NC State’s general education program has three features that can best be described as trendy or inspired by political correctness.

Co-requirements

One of those features is the two co-requirements mandating that students take at least one course designated as “United States Diversity” (USD) and one course as “Global Knowledge” (GK). Students need not take additional courses to satisfy these requirements; they can take courses that simultaneously fulfill other requirements. In other words, they can satisfy their requirement for a humanities course by taking “AFS 344: Leadership in African American Communities,” which at the same time satisfies the USD co-requirement.

The two co-requirements present a whole host of problems. First and foremost, they direct students’ choices toward courses that satisfy both a requirement and a co-requirement. Doing so is the logical way for a student to proceed in order to complete his or her general education requirements by taking fewer courses, enabling him or her to graduate earlier or leaving more time for either electives or additional classes in one’s major. That can be especially important at State, where there are many science and engineering majors. Today, major requirements in such subjects can be so demanding that many full-time students are pushed to take an additional semester or two to graduate, despite good grades.

The co-requirements were blatantly chosen to push students toward politically correct courses, rather than the best courses. Perhaps different co-requirements would be better than the current ones, but the simplest and best way to handle this is to restrict general education courses to the most important ones.

One stark example of the negative impact of these co-requirements is the way the basic course in Western civilization is handled. “HI 205: Western Civilization since 1400” is included as a humanities course. Yet it has no GK or USD designation—which makes it less attractive to students trying to complete their degrees as efficiently as possible. Indeed, it becomes considerably less attractive to a student in need of a GK or USD course than such trifling fare in the humanities as “AFS/ARS 346: Black Popular Culture” (USD), or “HI 374: Visual Culture of Modern South Asia” (GK), both of which meet a co-requirement as well as a requirement.

There is perhaps no course that offers greater understanding of the modern world—global knowledge, so to speak—than the study of modern Western civilization. For the West’s influence touches every part of the globe, even in the non-Western Third World. Some countries have rebuilt their societies along Western ways, as China did with the adoption of communism, a Western import (followed by changes in the direction of the free market economies now favored by most countries in the West). Other Third World nations have governments, economies, or culture that are derived from European society, such as many Latin American countries.

Colonization left a large imprint—positive and negative—on many other countries, such as India. Still more nations did not even exist as organized entities until they were colonized by the West. To suggest that the study of Western civilization increases one’s “global knowledge” less than the study of the recent “visual culture” of India and Pakistan is a mockery of real knowledge. Yet that is how State’s general education program is set up.

Interdisciplinary Courses

A second problematic feature is the requirement that two courses be “interdisciplinary.” This is very trendy in academia right now; there is a great belief that erasing the boundaries between academic disciplines to more closely

resemble the real world will enhance the ways in which students apply their education. After all, so many new discoveries are in the intersection between two subjects, such as bio-technology.

Yet the concept of “interdisciplinary” without any context is meaningless and ripe for abuse in a general education program. Almost any two topics can be interdisciplinary; the concept at NC State allows for such meager fare as “FLG 440: Green Germany: Nature and Environment in German Speaking Cultures” and “IDS 211: Eating Through American History.”

Many interdisciplinary courses at State tend to be focused on environmentalism, a field fraught with politically correct dogma.

Thematic Tracks

The third feature is the inclusion of five voluntary “thematic tracks.” Students who complete one of the tracks have a line saying so on their transcripts. Just like the two co-requirements, they tend to direct students to take specific courses that will help with both a requirement and the thematic track.

The biggest problem with the five thematic tracks is, without question, that they are politically inspired. They are:

- Conservation of Natural Resources
- Food and Nutrition
- Gender and Society
- Global Health
- Impact of Humans on the Natural Environment

If four of the five thematic tracks and co-requirements are so blatantly chosen to instill politically correct attitudes, surely the general education program contains much more of the same that is less visible to the public eye.

Weak Education

Anybody thinking that the all-inclusive “smorgasbord” approach taken by NC State is going to develop serious habits of mind is trivializing education. Here is a hypothetical student’s general education choices that would meet university guidelines:

Writing

ENG 101 Academic Writing and Research (4)

Mathematics

MA 107 Precalculus I (3)

PHI 250 Thinking Logically (3)

Natural Sciences

MEA 120 The Dinosaurian World (3)

MEA 121 The Dinosaurian World Lab (1)

CS 210 Lawn and Sports Turf (3)

Humanities

AFS/ARS 346 Black Popular Culture (3)

HI 374 Visual Culture of Modern South Asia (3)

Social Sciences

ANT 346 Peoples and Cultures of Southeast Asia (3)

SOC 311 Community Relationships (3)

Interdisciplinary Perspectives

BIO 233 Human-Animal Interactions (3)

PB 219 Plants in Folklore, Myth, and Religion (3)

Additional Breadth

IDS 211 Eating through American History (3)

Health

HSF 101 Fitness and Wellness (1)

HSF 243 Bowling (1)

Foreign Languages

FLP 101 Elementary Portuguese I (3)

FLP 102 Elementary Portuguese II (3)

It is a fiction that, by taking such a curriculum, one is educated. Students mistakenly may think they are being educated; after all, there is no reason to think otherwise, since educational authorities and experts have designed the system. Some of the courses may improve some skills. Yet, in most of the courses students are wasting time on fluff and minutiae.

Nor is this waste benign economically. NC State students are highly subsidized, to the tune of \$15,947 a year (in academic year 2010-2011). General education programs are roughly one-third of their educations—and perhaps the most important one-third.

Line-by-Line Analysis and Recommendations

The following is a more in-depth analysis of each requirement. Specific recommendations for an improved general education program are noted in *red italics*.

Writing

The inclusion of a freshman composition course is the bare minimum for any general education program. NC State tries to supplement its required “English 101: Academic Research and Writing” course with a mandated “Communication in the Major” co-requirement. This is inadequate for many, if not most, college students; teachers in other disciplines, particularly at a school with so many technical and scientific majors, cannot be expected to have the same expertise in basic writing instruction as English instructors.

What State’s program needs is a second writing requirement, one that goes beyond mere composition into rhetoric and argumentation. Many students and graduates need practice in crafting reasoned arguments that require them to use supporting logic and evidence as opposed to relying on emotional appeals.

There does not appear to be such a course at State. One course, “COM211: Argumentation and Advocacy,” does not seem to focus on the hands-on structuring of written arguments (and one must worry about the inclusion of the word “advocacy” in the title). It is described as:

Theory-based analysis of public argument in specialized settings of law, politics, academic debate, business and organizations, and interpersonal relations.

Mathematics

The requirement for two mathematic courses is laudable. However, they are not stringent enough. A student can fulfill the requirement to take one course with an MA prefix by taking “MA 107: PreCalculus I,” which many college-ready students (especially at a major land-grant university such as State) take in their junior year in high school. As the prerequisites and description indicate, this is not a demanding course.

Prerequisite: C- or better in MA 101, or a 450 or better on the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics Level 2 or the NCSU Math Skills Test.

Algebra and basic trigonometry; polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions and their graphs. Credit for MA 107 does not count toward graduation for students in Engineering, College of Sciences, Bio and Ag Engineering (Science Program) Bio Sci (all options) Math Edu, Sci Edu, Textiles, and B.S. degrees in CHASS. Credit is not given for both MA 107 and MA 111.

It is reasonable to expect a graduate of a technical school such as NC State to take the next course in the standard mathematics sequence, “MA 108: PreCalculus II.” After all, that is the normal expectation for high school graduates on a college track.

Furthermore, it is important that all students have some exposure to statistics, as they are used in almost every

profession from educational administrators to research scientists to financiers.

In the current general education program, a logic course can satisfy the requirement for a mathematics course. Logic can also be taught as a philosophy course or a writing course. Because logic is so important in both reasoning and writing—in fact, writing could be described as applied reasoning—*all students should have to take a logic course. It should be considered a writing requirement rather than a mathematics requirement.*

Natural Sciences

Some of the science courses for non-science majors appear to be less than rigorous, with discussions of issues taking the place of laboratory methods. Yet laboratory methods are the best reason for having liberal arts and social science majors take sciences, so that they grasp that there are concrete methods for determining facts. Consider “CH 100: Chemistry and Society,” a 4-credit course that fulfills the requirement to take at least one lab science. Its catalog description reads:

Awareness and understanding of chemistry in everyday life for the non-science student. Non-mathematical treatment of essential fundamental concepts. Emphasis on practical applications of chemistry to consumer affairs, energy, medicine, food, sports, and pollution.

Some other courses that satisfy the requirements for a lab science include “BIO 140 (with BIO 141): Survey of Animal Diversity” and “MEA 120 (with MEA 121): The Dinosaurian World.”

Science courses for non-science majors should be made more rigorous, with more focus on scientific methods and less on contemporary issues.

Humanities

The humanities (typically, history, literature, and philosophy) have crucial functions in a general education program.

First, they provide the main cultural knowledge. It is imperative that the humanities selections introduce the broadest range and most important facets of history and literature. One of the most important reasons for taking these courses is that they give students a mental timeline of events, ideas, and great writing.

Just as important, or perhaps more important, is that the humanities are where students closely read important texts to help develop their powers of reason. Additionally, the humanities are also where students are exposed to the great ideas and moral dilemmas that have dominated human events.

In State's general education program, it is possible for a student to completely miss out on these crucial experiences by choosing courses that eschew great ideas and close reading. They can also choose narrow topics that do not offer the necessary breadth of cultural knowledge.

Therefore, *the number of courses must be greatly reduced in the humanities to ensure students make proper choices. Also, a course in philosophy should be added to the other two humanities sections to make sure students get sufficient exposure to ideas.*

Social Sciences

Not all social sciences are equivalent in importance; for instance, anthropology—while a valuable discipline as a source of knowledge—may not be as valuable in a general education sense as a course in economics or political science. One of the most important stated goals of general education systems is to improve a student's sense of citizenship. Where else can a student increase his or her knowledge of how and why our government came to be and how it works other than through the study of political science or history?

Additionally, many college graduates today are woefully ignorant of how an economy works and how it functions

according to incentives. Such knowledge is crucial for both personal and civic reasons. Too often, if students study economics at all, it is an alternate form taught in social science classes or the humanities that is little more than an attack on capitalism.

While studying exotic cultures or the prehistoric origins of man contributes to mankind's overall store of knowledge, *that knowledge ranks well below political science and economics when it comes to living our adult lives.*

Interdisciplinary Perspectives

For the reasons expressed above, *the interdisciplinary requirements should be dropped.*

Additional Breadth

The single "additional breadth" requirement seems almost meaningless, given the vast array of narrow, trivial courses one can use to fulfill it. *Better to simply remove it and allow the credits to be used elsewhere or simply for elective courses.*

Health and Fitness

Students have already had gym classes every week throughout high school; one additional course in the four years of college won't make much difference. *The requirement for two courses should be reduced to one, and that course should be standardized so that all students are instructed about what constitutes a good exercise regimen.*

Foreign Languages

Expecting students to take two foreign language classes (or be able to test out of them) is proper in a large general education program (45 credits) such as NC State's. Foreign languages have additional value in that they can improve students' knowledge of English.

Co-requirements and Thematic Tracks

For the reasons expressed above, *the Co-Requirements and Thematic Tracks should be dropped.*

An Optimal General Education Curriculum Based on Pope Center Recommendations

The following is an example of a good general education curriculum based on the Pope Center analysis above.

Humanities

HI 205	Western Civilization Since 1400
ENG 252	Major American Writers
PHI 214	Issues in Business Ethics

Science

MEA 101	Geology 101
MEA 110	Geology 101 Lab
PY 124	Solar System Astronomy
PY 125	Astronomy Lab

Social Sciences

PS 201	American Politics and Government
EC 205	Fundamentals of Economics

Mathematics

MA 108	Precalculus II
STA 101	Statistics by Example

Logic

LOG 201	Logic
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Writing

Eng 101	Academic Writing and Research
New Course	Rhetoric

Foreign Languages

FLP 101	Elementary Portuguese I
FLP 102	Elementary Portuguese II

Health and Fitness

HESF 101	Health and Fitness
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Conclusion

It is possible for a student to currently craft a general education schedule that is outstanding at North Carolina State University. But to do so, he or she must know what is meaningful and be willing to take on additional intellectual challenges above and beyond his or her major subject. Unfortunately, that is beyond the abilities or desires of most students.

Many students tend to have a low regard for general education; it is often seen as an irritating obstacle to completing their degree so they can graduate and enter the workforce. Others take general education classes that are easy as welcome breathers from rigorous majors. Others still are taking the easiest path through college and avoid rigor in either majors or general education.

And of those who view general education positively, many are unsure about what a good schedule would be.

Students assume that the faculty knows best; if the general education program is properly structured, that's how it should be. But the incentives in N.C. State's program have been set to favor trendy, trivial, or politically correct courses.

The Pope Center recommendations to greatly restrict the number of courses and to focus on the most important subjects will restore an importance and seriousness to NC State's general education program. Students will be rewarded in any number of ways, and the state will benefit by having more work-ready and more deeply thinking graduates.

A Sampling of General Education Courses at NC State

(These are taken from NC State's General Education Program course list)

AFS/ARS 346	Black Popular Culture	HI/AFS 476	Leadership in Modern Africa
ANT/FLJ 351	Contemporary Culture in Japan	HON 341	Time Travel
ARS 259	The Arts and Politics	HON 391	Music and Social Life
BIO 233	Human-Animal Interactions	HS 200	Home Horticulture
CLA 325	Gender, Ethnicity & Identity in the Ancient World	HS 303	Ornamental Plant Identification I
CSC 281	Foundations of Interactive Game Design	IDS 211	Eating through American History
ECD 225	Foundations of Cultural Competence	LAR 221	Introduction to Environment and Behavior for Designers
ENG 233	The Literature of Agriculture	MEA 120	The Dinosaurian World
ENG 267	LGBTQI-Literature in the U.S.	NTR 220	Food and Culture
ENG 377	Fantasy	PB 205	Our Green World
ENT 203	An Introduction to the Honey Bee and Beekeeping	PB 219	Plants in Folklore, Myth, and Religion
ES 200	Climate Change & Sustainability	PRT 238	Diversity & Inclusion in Recreation & Sport
FLC 351	Modern Chinese Popular Culture	PSY/WGS 406	Psychology of Gender
FLI 318	Italian Society Through the Cinema	SOC 311	Community Relationships
FLJ/ANT 351	Contemporary Culture in Japan	SOC 351	Population and Planning
FLN 401	Hindi Lit & South Asian Cultural Contexts	SMT 232	Recycling to Create a Sustainable Environment
FLR 318	Russian Cinema and Society	STS/WGS 210	Women & Gender in Science and Technology
HI 380	History of Nonprofits, Philanthropy, and Social Change	SW 312	Multicultural Social Work
HI 412	The Sexes and Society in Early-Modern Europe	TOX 201	Poisons, People and the Environment
HI 465	Oil and Crisis in the Gulf	USC 100	Transition into a Diverse Community
HI 469	Latin American Revolutions in the 20th Century		

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The center aims to increase the diversity of ideas discussed on campus, encourage respect for freedom, improve student learning, and lower the cost of education to both students and taxpayers.

To accomplish these goals, we inform parents, students, trustees, alumni, and administrators about actual learning on campus and how it can be improved. We inform taxpayers and policymakers about the use and impact of government funds, and we seek ways to help students become acquainted with ideas that are dismissed or marginalized on campuses today.

Jane S. Shaw is the president of the Pope Center. She can be reached at shaw@popecenter.org. More information about the Pope Center, as well as most of our studies and articles, can be found on our Web site at popecenter.org. Donations to the center, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible.

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