Cultivating Citizenship for a Multicultural Democracy and a Globalized World

“Have you enlarged your knowledge of obligations and your capacity to perform them?”

Owen D. Young

Graduates of St. Lawrence University will have cultivated a habit of reflecting on their ethical responsibilities to themselves, others, and the public good in support of justice. They will be able to analyze how human differences in identity, history, social and geographical location, power, and privilege produce different ways of knowing and being, and they will use this analysis to interact respectfully with people and ideas across cultural and social boundaries.

All SLU students will complete at least two Diversity Courses to qualify for graduation—one of which focuses on diversity in a U.S. context.*

Criteria for Designation as Diversity Courses

All diversity courses will include a focus on

I. **Critical Self-reflection on Social Location**: How does who you are, what you know, how you feel and where you stand in relation to others shape how you experience the world and interact with others? Students will engage in a process of self-reflection designed to locate their multiple identities as active members of the United States and/or global community and to recognize that differential perspectives on knowledge and power derive from particular social locations.

II. **Diversity within and among Groups**: Students will learn about the multiple forms of diversity that comprise particular individuals, societies, and the world. They will learn about the socio-historical construction of difference in the relevant location and be introduced to the ways that difference affects individuals’ life chances, behavior, and ways of knowing. They may learn about and communicate these issues through different modes of expression and social practice as well. They will also consider commonalities that help bridge differences.

III. **Power and justice within and/or among groups or societies**: Students will learn to think critically about power and privilege as functions of material and cultural conditions rooted in history and to reflect on their responsibilities toward others as citizens at the local, national, and global scales.

*U.S.-based courses must include attention to race (a minimum of 25% of the class material), power and privilege, and justice, although the chief focus of the course may be on other markers of identity, such as gender, sexuality, class, religion, and ethnicity.
Common Learning Goals for Diversity Courses

The common learning goals below will serve as a guide in the development and assessment of diversity courses. However, the achievement of these goals will not fully occur after one diversity course. These goals reflect what a St. Lawrence graduate should be able to know and do after fulfilling both diversity requirements.

I. **Critical Self-reflection on Social Location**: How does who you are, what you know, how you feel and where you stand in relation to others shape how you experience the world and interact with others? Students will engage in a process of self-reflection designed to locate their multiple identities as active members of the United States and/or global community and to recognize that differential perspectives on knowledge and power derive from particular social locations.

Achievement of this goal will be indicated by student work that

1. Describes the social, geographical, class, gender, race, and/or other relevant and intersecting attributes of position from which the student or the writer speaks and acts.
2. Describes and analyzes multiple viewpoints on the topic under consideration.
3. Analyzes how these attributes of position may have shaped the research or argument under consideration.
4. Demonstrates a willingness to contextualize her/his own cultural beliefs and practices and those of others.
5. Refers to personal changes and developments gained in the process of learning about diversity.

II. **Diversity within and among Groups**: Students will learn about the multiple forms of diversity that comprise particular individuals, societies, and the world. They will learn about the socio-historical construction of difference in the relevant location and be introduced to the ways that difference affects individuals’ life chances, behavior, and ways of knowing. They may learn about and communicate these issues through different modes of expression and social practice as well. They will also consider commonalities that help bridge differences.

Achievement of this goal will be indicated by student work that

1. Can analyze and theorize how specific differences of culture, gender, race, nation, class, sexuality, minority status, and so forth affect the perceptions of different individuals on a common topic.
2. Can analyze and theorize how historical processes have produced the specific forms of diversity in any particular situation.
3. Can reflect on how particular modes of expression may be used to embody or represent particular ways of knowing or identities.

III. **Power and justice within and/or among groups or societies**: Students will learn to think critically about power and privilege as functions of material and cultural
conditions rooted in history and to reflect on their responsibilities toward others as citizens at the local, national, and global scales.

Achievement of this goal will be demonstrated by student work that

1. Recognizes privilege as an unearned benefit accruing to some members of society and some nations, privilege that in some cases should be extended to all and in other cases should not be held by anyone.
2. Demonstrates an understanding that power is a function of material and cultural conditions, ones rooted in historical conditions, and that it is distributed unequally.
3. Theorizes power and privilege in a way that moves beyond the oppressor/oppressed binary and recognizes that all individuals are shaped by multiple axes of power (e.g., race, nation, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability) that can position the same person simultaneously as oppressor and oppressed. Analyzes how differences in power and privilege influence interactions between people.
4. Demonstrates an understanding of the interrelationships within and among economic, political, social, and cultural groups over time and space (i.e., empires, civilizations, states, nations, socio-cultural groups) and how power is negotiated and exercised in those relationships.
5. Understands the importance of research and scholarly argument when confronted and unsettled by cultural difference, and rejects any inclination to dismiss, judge or embrace uncritically. Articulates how particular cultural perspectives and ways of knowing inform a group’s beliefs and practices.
6. Locates, evaluates, and interprets sources from different points of view, different cultural perspectives, different sites of power or vulnerability.
7. Recognizes the responsibility to take action in support of justice in local, global and transnational contexts.