

**FINAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**ETHNIC STUDIES IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

**Respectfully Submitted  
to Provost Peter Spear**

**and**

**Dean Gary Sandefur**

**April 7, 2005**

## CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
II. BACKGROUND AND MEMBERSHIP .....	2
III. TIMETABLE AND WORK .....	3
IV. PRINCIPAL DEFINITIONS AND CRITERIA.....	5
V. COURSE REVIEW AND ACTION.....	7
VI. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	9
A. Future Review and Liaison .....	9
B. The Perception Deficit .....	9
C. Creating More “E” Courses from Existing Curriculum .....	11
D. Encouraging New “E” Courses.....	12
E. Recognizing and Rewarding Ethnic Studies Faculty and Instructional Staff .....	13
F. Making Ethnic Studies Courses More Meaningful .....	14
G. Enhancing the Status of the Requirement within the General Education Course Array .....	14
H. Summary of Recommendations .....	14
VII. AN INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON ETHNICITY AND RACE IN THE AMERICAS .....	16
VIII. CONCLUSION.....	17

### Additional materials:

- A. Concept Memo: Institute for Research on Ethnicity and Race in the Americas
- B. Ethnic Studies Course List: <http://www.ls.wisc.edu/Gened/courselists/ethniccourses.htm>

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ethnic Studies Implementation Committee (ESIC) hereby reports on the work it conducted between September 2003 and April 2005 to implement the recommendations made in 2002 by the Ethnic Studies Review Committee. These recommendations were approved with slight modification in 2003 by the University Academic Planning Committee and the University Senate, and the Dean of Letters and Science was asked to convene a committee that would begin the process of implementing the ESRC's recommendations.

The activity for which the ESIC was chiefly responsible was the application of the revised ES criteria to the existing ES course array. Equally important was the ESIC's discussion and synthesis of ESRC recommendations that went beyond the immediate demand to address the ES course array. To this end, a consolidated set of general and – we hope – practical recommendations was developed to provide direction for future action.

## Key points on the implementation of the revised criteria for Ethnic Studies courses:

- ESIC developed a set of operational guidelines to determine eligibility of courses under the newly approved criteria; these guidelines were developed to facilitate the work of committees or individuals who may, in the future, be charged with ongoing review and approval of potential ESR courses.
- After a thorough review of existing Ethnic Studies (ES) courses to determine their compliance with these criteria, ESIC found that 166 of the original 230 ES courses should continue to carry “e” designation. Sixty-four courses have had ES designation removed, either by request of the department or in consultation with the committee. The deletion of the “e” designation has been communicated to the Office of Timetable and Classroom Scheduling in the Office of the Registrar, and the changes have been made effective Fall 2005.
- Based on an estimate of minimum number of seats the university must provide to ensure that all undergraduates have access to ES courses, we predict that the revised list of “e” courses meets this minimum. Since the list represents only a portion of all approved ES courses, we can hope to exceed the minimum by a more comfortable margin as new courses are offered.

## Recommendations:

- Responsibility for administration of the Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR) should be formally transferred to the General Education Committee. The GEC should be encouraged to convene a subcommittee to review proposals, maintain communication with campus administrators and governance bodies, consult with Divisional Committees and staff on ESR matters as needed, confer with faculty, instructional staff, and school/college-level administrative offices on ways to augment the ES course array, and

develop and implement a plan for ongoing assessment of student attainment of ESR goals.

- Campus administration (chiefly, the offices of the Vice Chancellors for Teaching and Learning and for Diversity, as well as college level undergraduate advising offices), in consultation with the General Education Committee and the ESR Subcommittee, should pursue a variety of strategies to educate campus constituencies about the ESR.
- Campus administration (chiefly, the offices of the Vice Chancellors for Teaching and Learning and for Diversity), in consultation with the General Education Committee and the ESR Subcommittee, should work to enhance and develop structures to improve the administrative and philosophical foundation that supports the teaching of ethnic studies at UW-Madison.
- The Deans of each school and college should encourage their departments and faculty to examine how their instructional efforts align with the goals of the ESR. Wherever possible, departments and programs should be encouraged to propose adding existing courses that might (or could be modified to) meet the ESR criteria to the ESR course array. Given the scarcity of ESR courses in particular programmatic areas, the Deans should provide additional incentives to motivate departments and faculty to offer courses in these areas.
- The Chancellor should establish an Ethnic Studies Teaching Award to emphasize the UW-Madison's commitment to excellence and innovative teaching of ethnic studies courses.
- The university should give serious consideration to the establishment of an Institute for Research on Ethnicity and Race in the Americas (IRERA), whose creation would underscore the campus' commitment to the integration of research on ethnicity and race with Ethnic Studies teaching. A proposal to this effect is now being introduced by some faculty and discussed with university and L&S administration.

## **II. BACKGROUND AND MEMBERSHIP**

In February, 2003, the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC) approved the principle that “all students take a 3-credit course that considers ethnic/racial minorities that have been marginalized or discriminated against in the U.S.” At the same time, the UAPC called for the creation of an implementation committee to examine the full array of courses that currently meet the Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR). “All courses that the implementation committee approves as satisfying the requirement,” reads the document, “must provide evidence that the course material illuminates the circumstances, conditions, and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States.” Given that a large majority of these courses would be in the College of Letters and Science, Provost Peter Spear requested that Dean Phillip Certain create the implementation committee, with instructions to report to the Provost on its progress. Dean Certain organized the Ethnic Studies Implementation Committee (ESIC) at the beginning of the

2003-04 academic year. Committee members were Deborah L. Brandt (Professor, English), Ada Deer (Director, American Indian Studies Program), Camille Guerin-Gonzales (Professor and Director, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program), Carl A. Grant (Professor and Chair, Curriculum and Instruction), Michele Hilmes (Professor, Communication Arts), Jonathan M. Kenoyer (Professor and then Chair, Anthropology), Catherine H. Middlecamp (Director, Chemistry Learning Center), Steven M. Nadler (Professor, Philosophy, and then Director, Jewish Studies), Lincoln Quillian (Assistant Professor, Sociology), Tori C.A. Richardson (Assistant Dean, Student Academic Affairs, L&S), Francisco A. Scarano (Professor, History—chair), William L. Van Deburg (Professor, Afro-American Studies), and Hope Wallace (undergraduate student, class of 2004). Elaine M. Klein (Director, L&S Academic Planning, Program Review and Assessment) served as facilitator.

### III. TIMETABLE AND WORK

ESIC began its work in earnest on 10 September, 2003. On that occasion, Deputy Dean Mary Anne Fitzpatrick visited with the Committee to summarize the steps that led to its creation and to give it its “charge.” The main message conveyed was that ESIC’s work was crucial to the University as it continues to implement a curriculum that expands students’ understanding of, and appreciation for, our society’s racial, ethnic, class, and gender diversity. She also cautioned that ESIC’s work must try to balance this broad purpose, now refocused in the new University imperative that courses have direct relevance to U.S. realities and conditions, with access to courses needed by all students before they can graduate. Dean Fitzpatrick expressed confidence, however, that in the end the Committee would find a way to balance these demands.

Over the course of the Fall semester, in a series of bimonthly meetings, ESIC held substantive discussions concerning the conceptual and practical implications of this charge. It took several open and at times spirited conversations before the Committee arrived at a working understanding of the practical and instrumental implications of the redefined policy on the Ethnic Studies Requirement: how the Committee should approach its task, what criteria it would use to render judgment on existing ES-designated courses, what sorts of information were necessary and/or sufficient to support these judgments, and, of course, which courses seemed to qualify for the ESR designation and which did not. Armed, in the initial stages of the discussion, with a crude typology of what would constitute acceptable and unacceptable courses, and relying on the course titles and catalogue descriptions available for each of the 230 distinct<sup>1</sup> “e-designated” courses, the Committee carried out several simulation exercises whereby Committee members arranged the courses into several categories. While it was clear at first that ESIC members brought to the table different understandings of the new rules—the first ratings exhibited a great deal of variation—over the course of several exercises and the attendant discussions the scores become more proximate. Moreover, the simulations allowed Committee members to sharpen their sense of how far an *a priori* exercise, such as the one it was conducting, without the benefit

-----  
<sup>1</sup>In September 2003, there were 230 courses designated as Ethnic Studies, or “e,” courses, many of which were crosslisted among two or more departments. When crosslistings were taken into account, the number of e-designated courses rose to 358.

of explanations and rationales that only departments, faculty and instructional staff could provide, might reasonably take it.

In view of concerns raised about the partial nature of the information at hand, the Committee engaged in one final simulation in December 2003. For this exercise, the following working definition of a qualifying Ethnic Studies course was used:

Ethnic Studies (EC) courses are defined as those in which at least 25% of course content focuses on negotiations of race and/or ethnicity in the experience of persistently marginalized groups in the United States, from a theoretical, historical, or critical perspective. Thus, courses that focus primarily or exclusively on groups outside the United States (e.g., “JavaneseDance” or “Race, Class, and Colonialism in the Caribbean”), or solely on axes of difference other than race and ethnicity (e.g., “Gender in the United States”), or on groups that have not been persistently marginalized in the U.S. experience (e.g., “Germans of the Great Lakes Region”), will not qualify as Ethnic Studies courses.

With this definition and an impending letter to department and program chairs in mind, Committee members carried out a “final” simulation, placing existing ES courses into three categories:

1. Courses that clearly meet the criteria. If departments wanted the courses to remain as ES-designated courses, no further action would be necessary.
2. Courses that, after an extensive discussion of materials currently available (i.e., course descriptions and catalog information), may or may not meet the criteria. If departments wished for the courses to remain ES-designated, ESIC would need to review current or recent syllabi before making a decision. ESIC would notify departments of its decision at the earliest opportunity.
3. Courses that, after an extensive discussion of materials available, would not appear to meet the revised criteria. If departments wished for a reconsideration of ESIC’s decision, they would have to submit a current or recent syllabus for the courses a cover letter explaining their understanding of the courses as it relates to the approved criteria.

Of the 230 distinct courses, 100 fell into the first of these categories, 112 fell into the second, and eighteen were placed in the final group. Since it was clear to the Committee that its determinations were based on only a fraction of the information pertaining to each course, members found it necessary to consult with departments about these preliminary determinations. This consultation would afford the Committee an opportunity to share information about the faculty’s revisions to the requirement, to inform departments of the Committee’s need to review information about Ethnic Studies courses, and to allow Departments to support, modify, and appeal the Committee’s preliminary decisions. In short, the Committee sought to engage departments in a dialogue about their contributions to the Ethnic Studies course array.

In March, 2004, Dean Phillip Certain and Professor Francisco A. Scarano, ESIC chair, dispatched a letter to departments that explained the background and work of the Committee and described the operational criteria by which it would review courses in the existing Ethnic Studies

course array. The letter included the Committee's preliminary classification of each department's or program's currently listed "e" courses and outlined the documentation ESIC needed in order to carry out its mission of confirming courses that met the new criteria, de-certify those that clearly did not, and requesting more information about the ones for which questions remained.

Nearly every department responded to this initial inquiry or to follow up requests for information. Responses fell into a broad range. In many cases, departments agreed with the ESIC's judgment regarding specific courses, signifying their approval to remove or retain the ESR designation. In other cases, departments seeking reconsideration of decisions provided additional information (course syllabi and, in some cases, letters explaining the suitability of the course to the ESR criteria). Finally, some departments asked to remove courses that meet the criteria from the ESR course array. These cases usually represented courses intended to serve program majors, courses for which Ethnic Studies designation was redundant, or for which the designation was otherwise inappropriate.

Throughout this process, the committee worked hard to respect the departments' ownership of these courses, and to honor the role of these courses in service to the ESR. In addition, committee members were keenly aware that many of these courses also serve other curricular goals, whether as components of First-year Interest Groups or as program requirements for a major.

## **IV. PRINCIPAL DEFINITIONS AND CRITERIA**

As adopted by the UAPC, the Ethnic Studies Requirement states:

*The University of Wisconsin-Madison is committed to fostering an understanding and appreciation of diversity, in the belief that doing so will:*

- *Better prepare students for life and careers in an increasingly multicultural US environment,*
- *Add breadth and depth to the University curriculum, and*
- *Improve the campus climate.*

*One of the University's overarching goals is to infuse the curriculum in all disciplines with diversity, including those where traditionally it has been absent. The Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR) is one of several key elements in reaching this goal. This is a requirement that all students take a 3-credit course that considers ethnic/racial minorities that have been marginalized or discriminated against in the U.S. Because issues of ethnic diversity and religion are often intertwined and cannot easily be separated, courses that focus on religion may, where appropriate, fulfill the ESR.*

*All courses that the implementation committee approves as satisfying the requirement must provide evidence that the course material illuminates the circumstances, conditions, and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States.*

*(Adopted by the UAPC January 23, 2003;  
excerpted from Faculty Document 1736)*

From this statement, the Committee developed a set of operational criteria by which course syllabi might be evaluated. This step was deemed essential to the implementation process: a serious concern expressed about the Ethnic Studies course array as it stood in September 2003 was that courses that did not address the experiences of persistently marginalized groups, or the experiences of those groups in the United States, had been allowed to carry “e” designation.

The operational guidelines that facilitate implementation of the criteria state:

*ESR courses must be offered for a minimum of 3 credits.*

*Evidence (e.g., syllabus, reading list) must be provided demonstrating that the course material illuminates the circumstances, conditions, and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States.*

*Courses that explore the circumstances, conditions, and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities in a comparative international format must devote at least 25% of the course (lecture, discussion, reading materials, etc.) to the experience and/or theoretical understanding of the means by which persistently marginalized groups in the US negotiate the conditions of exclusion or marginalization.*

*Courses that explore the condition of U.S. ethnic groups that were at one time marginalized but which have since been widely assimilated into the dominant U.S. culture must devote at least 25% of the course to the experience and/or theoretical understanding of the means by which persistently marginalized groups in the US negotiate the conditions of exclusion or marginalization.*

*In cases where religion is intertwined with respect to ethnic/racial minorities that are persistently marginalized or discriminated against in the U.S., courses that focus on religion may fulfill the ESR.*

Two important points should be noted regarding these guidelines. First, they are intended to be *descriptive* rather than *prescriptive* with respect to course content. In the process of using these guidelines, the committee learned that a prior version that used language emphasizing conditions of discrimination and marginalization was perceived to be negative in focus and overly prescriptive regarding course content. Although the Committee’s use of the guidelines was more generous than such allegations might suggest, the guidelines were amended. Hence, the terms used above employ a more neutral framework, referring to the “means by which persistently marginalized groups in the US negotiate the conditions of exclusion or marginalization.”

The second point to be made is that the operational guidelines allow for the possibility that courses might take a comparative approach to the study of issues of race and ethnicity. The stated goal of the requirement is to “*better prepare students for life and careers in an increasingly multicultural US environment,*” by calling on courses that “[*illuminate*] the circumstances, conditions, and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States”. Although a strict interpretation of the latter clause would hold that ESR course content should focus solely on the United States and, within those borders, solely on racial and ethnic minorities, the Committee found many courses that seemed capable of achieving the stated learning goal via com-

parative frameworks. Indeed, the Committee argued, comparative ethnic studies frameworks might open avenues of interest for students who have little interest in the ESR other than to complete a university requirement. Also, in light of the need to ensure that the university offers a sufficient number of ESR seats to students to ensure timely progress to degree, holding the ESR course array to the most strict definition would serve no good purpose.

By these means, the ESIC sought to create a framework for defining Ethnic Studies courses, not only for the immediate purposes of reviewing some 130 course syllabi, but for the future. These guidelines have been crafted to help anyone charged with making determinations about whether courses are appropriate to the array, including deans, departments, and faculty developing ESR courses.

## V. COURSE REVIEW AND ACTION

Thanks to the cooperation of the fifty-five departments that listed “e” courses in their catalogs in September 2003, 166 of the original 230 ESR courses will continue to carry “e” designation. Sixty-four courses have had Ethnic Studies designation removed, either by request of the department or in consultation with the committee. The deletion of the “e” designations has been communicated to the Office of Timetable and Classroom Scheduling in the Office of the Registrar, and the changes have been made effective Fall 2005.

During this period, the L&S Curriculum Committee (which had previously been responsible for making determinations about requests to offer “e” courses) asked the ESIC to assume responsibility for reviewing requests to add new or existing courses to the ESR course array. By this means, 25 new courses will be added to the array of ESR offerings, bringing the total number of distinct Ethnic Studies courses in effect for Fall 2005 to 191. New courses are added to this list as they are approved, and the current ESR course list is posted on the General Education Requirements website (<http://www.ls.wisc.edu/gened>). (Courses offered each semester can be located by students who search the *Timetable* for courses carrying the “e” attribute.) Finally, the Ethnic Studies Review Committee advised that students complete the requirement early in their academic careers. Of the courses in the Fall 2005 ESR course array, two-thirds have numbers below 400, which promises to facilitate achievement of this recommendation.

Although it is difficult to calculate precisely whether we have a sufficient number of courses and an adequate number of seats for students who need to meet the requirement, we can make a reasonable guess, since 150 of the 191 courses in the revised Ethnic Studies course array have been offered in the past. We can look at course enrollments between Fall 1989 and Spring 2004 and compare enrollments in all courses that carried the “e” designation to enrollments (the “old ESR course array”) in the 150 previously offered courses on the revised ESR course list (the “new ESR course array”). This comparison appears as Figure 1. It is important to note that this representation of historical enrollments does not take a few important factors into account:

- New ESR courses have been approved that are intended to be offered regularly (e.g., Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies 100, “Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies”).

- Enrollment figures reported for the “old” course array include a number of ESR courses for which other ESR courses were required as prerequisites. This inflates the number of enrollments in “e” courses, and does not reflect the number of seats needed for “first and only” ESR enrollment demand for students who need to complete degree requirements.

Approximate “first and only” demand for ESR seats can be calculated from the number of new freshmen and transfer students admitted each year. Every freshman can be assumed to need an Ethnic Studies course, and as many as half of new transfer students may need to take a course to meet the requirement. We can estimate a minimum number of seats the university must provide to ensure that all undergraduates have access to Ethnic Studies courses so they can meet the requirement and graduate on time. In Figure 1, we see that enrollments in the revised list of Ethnic Studies courses meet this minimum. Since this list represents only a portion of all approved ESR courses, we can hope to exceed the minimum by a more comfortable margin as new courses are offered.

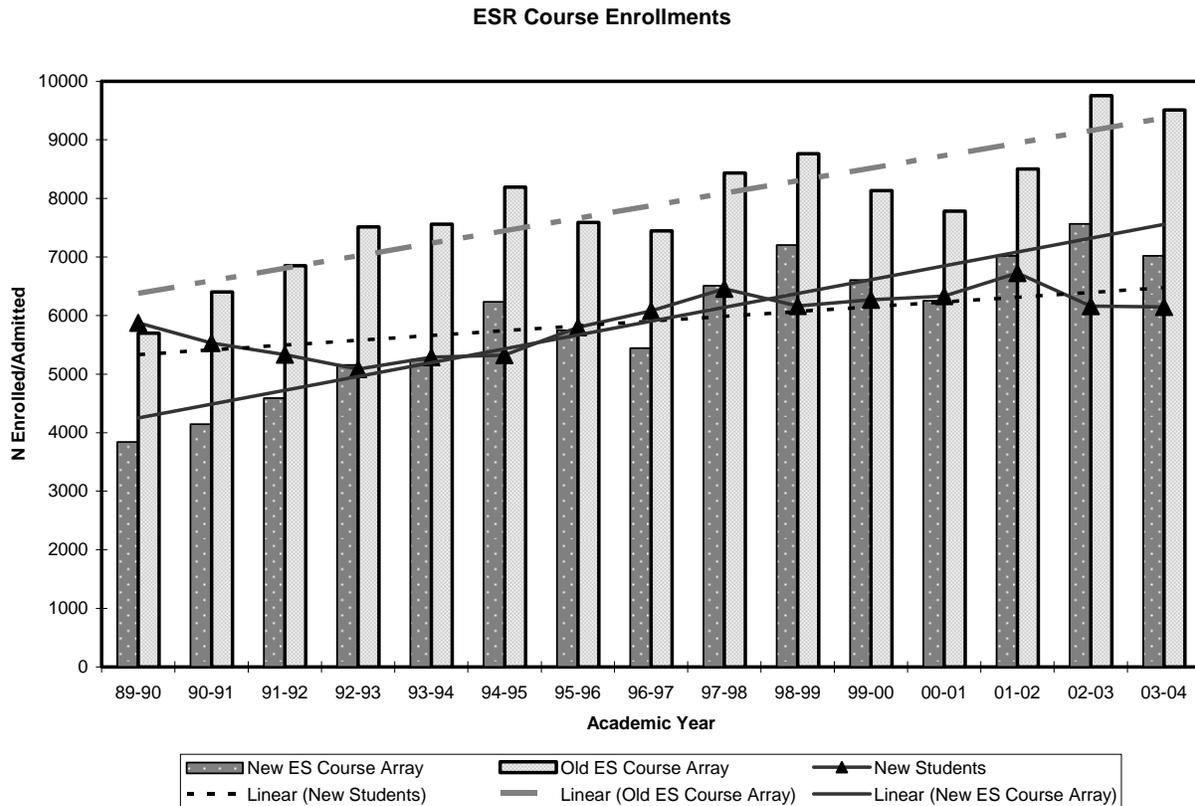


Figure 1: Comparison of Fall 2005 Ethnic Studies Course List to All Courses Carrying Ethnic Studies Designation, AY 89-90 to AY 03-04

## **VI. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recognizing that the Committee would engage in an in-depth review of the ESR that touched on many aspects of Ethnic Studies implementation, deans Phillip Certain, Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, and Gary Sandefur instructed members, on separate occasions, to recommend ways to enhance the Requirement. After lengthy deliberations, which included meetings with other faculty and instructional staff and with Dean Sandefur on one occasion, ESIC respectfully submits the following recommendations:

### ***A. Future Review and Liaison***

The course review process that ESIC has performed over the past two semesters needs to be institutionalized. In committee discussions, ESIC members paid considerable attention to this issue, trying to balance the necessity of thorough and informed review with the requirement for efficiency and simplicity. We considered several ways to carry out this work. One is the model currently used by the General Education Committee (GEC) in the review of Comm A and Comm B courses. According to this model, GEC delegates the review work to one faculty member, who advises the GEC on the suitability of courses presented for one or another type of General Education credit. At the other extreme would be a standing committee of faculty and academic staff, similar in composition and function to ESIC. This committee would meet several times a year to review new-course and course-change proposals for suitability under current Ethnic Studies criteria.

Between these two extremes, a third proposition is plausible: the creation of a small GEC subcommittee of two or three senior faculty and instructional staff who teach ES courses or have otherwise been involved in campus efforts to assess and expand curricular offerings about issues of ethnic and racial marginalization. If necessary, this GEC subcommittee could draw on the expertise of an Advisory Committee on Ethnic Studies, a body comprised of senior faculty and instructional staff with equivalent experience and qualifications.

ESIC members overwhelmingly favored this alternative because it insures simplicity while guaranteeing that the often difficult judgment of whether a particular course should or should not carry Ethnic Studies credit does not fall on a single individual.

### ***B. The Perception Deficit***

The Committee found that, over the years, ES courses in general may have developed a poor reputation among students and even some members of the advising staff. Some of these courses may suffer from a poor reputation among faculty and instructional staff, even those who regularly teach them. Some of the Committee's informants described the problem as one of a "bad rep" because of a few bad experiences. Others believed it may be a more general or systemic problem.

Evidently, the ESR and ES courses suffer from a perception deficit. This deficit, in our view, consists of several problems that, although distinct, need to be addressed together. The first has

to do with student attitudes. Because many students do not understand the pedagogical reasons for the Requirement, some of them arrive in ES classes with preconceived (and generally negative) views about the subjects and instructors. According to ES faculty and instructional staff, many of them members of ESIC, some of these students turn their ignorance of the Requirement's goals into outward expressions of discontent, and may sometimes become disruptive in class.

ESIC members agreed that this problem needs to be tackled aggressively through earlier and more pointed advising, more efficacious use of advising websites, a clearer enunciation of goals in bulletins and catalogues, and perhaps a campus-wide campaign to publicize the Requirement's objectives and goals. The latter could be carried out on its own or in conjunction with the launching of other initiatives, such as the creation of an Institute for Research on Ethnicity and Race in the Americas (IRERA, see below).

The Committee believes that the University can do a better job of explaining to students the purpose of the Requirement, the role it plays in their future, and the myriad ways in which it contributes to their career goals. We need to define the purpose of the Requirement in a way that is meaningful to students; or, to put it another way, to have clear answers to the question: What do students get out of it? Moreover, advisors should be asked to recommend that students fulfill the ESR early in their careers.

The second problem concerns the manner in which some advisors, both at the departmental level and in SOAR, discuss the ESR with students. Simply put, these advisors may be sending the wrong signal by implying that the ESR is not quite at the level of importance of the other general education requirements. Instead of representing the ESR as an opportunity for personal growth and a necessary corrective to the lack of exposure to diversity experiences, the unintended message they may be purveying is that the ESR is not an educational asset of the same order as the other general education requirements, such as Communications A and B.

The Committee believes that SOAR presents the optimal opportunity to explain the Requirement's purpose and nature to students. Currently, some schools and colleges (e.g., CALS) address this issue abundantly during SOAR, but others do not. The University should strive for the fullest possible presentation of the nature and goals of the ESR during SOAR. All schools and colleges should emulate CALS in explaining the ESR's importance and the role it will play for students as they prepare to become citizens of a multicultural society.

The third problem relates to the frustration some ES faculty and instructional staff feel with two aspects of the classroom experience: under-motivated students who may become disruptive and, in part as a result of this, lower than normal student evaluations. The problem of instructors' disappointment over the quality of the teaching experience in ES courses is complex and cannot be easily dealt with here. There is substantial anecdotal experience, to be sure, in support of the correlation between ES courses and classroom disruptiveness. Most instructors who have taught e" courses have experienced incidents of unruly, resistant, or otherwise disrespectful students who make it known that they are distressed because they do not see the point of taking such a course to begin with.

Faculty and instructional staff who teach “e” courses should know, however, that they have the ability to restrict access to their courses; for example, by establishing prerequisites. In this way, departments will insure that the courses will be populated by majors or students who have a basic understanding of related material. In this connection, it may be useful for departments to see the benefit of creating “Ethnic Studies for X” courses specific to their fields, so students may be more interested in the topic as well as in the “e” content.

The complexity of this problem comes into full view when one probes deeper into the pedagogy of ESR teaching, which members of the committee discussed at length: Shouldn’t instructors see the prospect of students disliking ES content as a *challenge* rather than a *problem*? Is the issue one that can be addressed by bringing greater clarity to the pedagogical objectives of a given ES course? And should the University--and faculty and instructional staff members teaching ES courses--do a better job of defining the purpose of the requirement in ways that are more meaningful to students? These questions and others should be considered more explicitly and intentionally, in venues that reach instructors and students, as well as administrators and advisors.

On the issue of how teaching “e” courses affects student evaluations of faculty and instructional staff performance there is no certainty. Some members of the Committee made a strong case that, in their own experience, “e”-designated courses have indeed affected in a negative way their student evaluations. Others took a different tack, expressing the belief that whenever they step into an ES classroom, they feel an extra responsibility to make the class exciting and relevant. ESIC believes that this is an issue which merits further study, and encourages the University to use more accurate methods to unravel the connection, if indeed one exists, between ES teaching and teaching evaluations. The issue is of special relevance to the professional advancement of junior faculty in departments and programs called to do the “heavy lifting” in ES teaching. This might be a project to pursue as part of the university’s ongoing assessment of the ESR, perhaps to be undertaken by the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee of the General Education Committee.

### ***C. Creating More “E” Courses from Existing Curriculum***

As the Committee reviewed the existing ES course array within the context of the larger curricular offerings, it became aware that many courses never proposed for ES fulfillment may fit the new definition of the ESR rather handily. Other courses would only require a small investment in effort to make them eligible for ES consideration. There may be, over all, several dozen courses of one or another kind throughout the University curriculum.

In order for such courses to make it into the ES array, schools and colleges must ask departments, faculty and instructional staff to take a look at how their teaching does or does not align with the goals of the ESR. They must also furnish adequate resources and incentives to motivate them to do so. In communicating with departments and instructors, schools and colleges must describe the need for a greater number and a wider variety of courses, affirm that untapped opportunities exist in the curriculum, and provide reasonable incentives for faculty and instructional staff to redesign courses, when necessary, before submitting them for ES approval.

### ***D. Encouraging New “E” Courses***

While rethinking existing courses and providing faculty and instructional staff incentives are important ways to augment the ES array, an even more significant one is to design new courses to address the pedagogical aims of the Requirement. In discussions within ESIC and with members of the GEC, several ideas were proposed to stimulate ES course development.

One suggestion is to tap into the network of resources for new faculty through the office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, Virginia Sapiro. As recently arrived professors create new courses, it may help to reach out to them about ways their courses can serve the broader curricular needs of the campus. To kickoff this process, AV Chancellor Sapiro has offered to place information about the purpose of “e” courses on a website being developed that will explain the undergraduate curriculum to new faculty, instructional staff, and students.

Another recommendation the Committee wishes to advance is to ask the Divisional Executive Committee Office to “flag” new courses (especially those outside of L&S) that seem to have “e” course potential. ESIC’s successor body might then contact the departments involved to ask if they would like to have the new courses reviewed for ES designation. It is very important to reach out to those departments where one would not ordinarily find ES courses. The principle behind this is that the more diverse the curriculum, the better the choices for students, and the greater good to the University. This effort may mean reaching out to develop “e” courses in the non-humanities, non-social science course array. ESIC’s successor body may need to showcase successful courses in some way: via a panel discussion a feature in *Wisconsin Week* or participation in the Teaching and Learning Showcase, for example.

During the course of conversations within the Committee and with other members of the faculty and staff, ESIC members became aware of the many resources that exist on campus to stimulate interest in ethnic and racial diversity. Faculty and instructional staff often do not know these resources exist, and when they do, they may not realize how participating in them may help to promote new course development. One such resource is the Equity and Diversity Resource Center (EDRC), which, among other things, sponsors seminars to make people more aware of, and place themselves in, systems of power and privilege in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. EDRC-sponsored seminars include SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) and SEEDED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity for Experienced Doers). These seminars bring faculty, staff, and students together to raise awareness of issues of power and privilege around the axes of difference noted above. While participation requires a significant investment of time and effort, the payoff, according to a faculty member engaged by the Committee, is significant. The Committee recommends that the University make an effort to publicize and promote participation in these seminars, tracing the connection between them and the creation of new ES courses.

In a similar vein, the Committee believes the University should not just rely on existing faculty and staff interest and expertise to maintain and augment the ES course array. Nor should it be assumed that all people of color among the faculty and instructional staff have the scholarly or pedagogical interest in teaching ES courses – or that instructors who are not people of color do

not or can not teach ES topics. It may help to be more “proactive”, advertising the goals of the requirement and helping to train the faculty and staff to teach ES courses, perhaps by sponsoring a seminar or workshop on “Teaching Ethnic Studies.” In this seminar or workshop, more experienced faculty, national experts, or a combination of these two could help those who are planning to teach ES courses to do so in a manner that is consonant with the Requirement and its underlying assumptions. One of the expected outcomes of this seminar or workshop would be the development of a common language and an array of shared conceptions about the ES enterprise by faculty who currently teach such courses or are planning to teach them in the future. Another would be the expansion of the Ethnic Studies faculty and instructional staff.

Finally, the Committee recommends that the University establish a competition whereby faculty who wish to create new and innovative ES courses could receive resources to do so. Faculty with the winning proposals would receive a significant amount in flexible S&E funds to develop a course or set of courses, and would commit to teaching them as “e” courses for a specified period of time.

### ***E. Recognizing and Rewarding Ethnic Studies Faculty and Instructional Staff***

Departments and faculty must know that creating new ES courses or reviewing existing courses for their possible addition to the ES list, while challenging, can also be rewarding. Some of the rewards are intellectual and moral, while some could involve the specially designated incentives. In order to facilitate the creation of additional Ethnic Studies courses and to expand the number of seats in existing offerings, for instance, the Committee recommends that staffing-related incentives be funded. One of these incentives would involve increasing the number (and/or FTE percentage) of teaching assistant slots as well as making additional allocations for hourly grader positions. Utilization of both approaches likely would spur interest in curriculum construction/enhancement within departments and move individual faculty members to consider opening their e-designated classes to larger numbers of undergraduates. In this fashion, overall e-course capacity would expand to meet anticipated demand.

In view of the increased importance of teaching Ethnic Studies courses across campus, the Committee endorsed recognizing and rewarding faculty and instructional staff who teach Ethnic Studies courses. The teaching of ES courses could be rewarded in the course of departmental merit considerations, for example. For junior faculty, the teaching of ES courses could be considered an important part of teaching achievements that are evaluated during annual renewal and tenure deliberations. At the senior level, these same contributions could be recognized in promotion and post-tenure review considerations.

The Committee likewise believes that an Ethnic Studies Teaching Award should be established to emphasize the commitment to excellence and innovative teaching of Ethnic Studies courses. This annual award would make a significant public statement and have ripple effect on the importance of ES at the departmental level.

### ***F. Making Ethnic Studies Courses More Meaningful***

Once students are more aware of the purpose and nature of the ESR (see our recommendation, above), their experience in the classroom will doubtless be more meaningful to them. Still, other initiatives should be undertaken to achieve this pedagogical purpose. The Committee advises that one way to make the ES course experience more relevant and meaningful is to teach ES courses as part of Freshman Interest Group (FIG) clusters. As the FIGs have become one of the most effective ways to expose incoming students to new material and really change their way of thinking, including “e”-bearing courses in them would significantly raise the profile of the ES enterprise in the minds of recently arrived freshmen. The Committee understands that FIGs encompass a limited number of students, and thus, that the potential impact of this action will be relatively modest. It recommends, however, that ESIC’s successor body contact Greg Smith to discuss expanding the FIG program to include more “ebearing courses.

### ***G. Enhancing the Status of the Requirement within the General Education Course Array***

Unfortunately, the ESR has not been as prominent in campus operations as other General Education Requirements. As a result, efforts to enhance and maintain the number and breadth of ESR courses, and to improve the teaching of such courses, have not kept pace with those of other GERs. In view of this, the Committee recommends an all-out effort to raise the profile of the ESR to the level of those enjoyed by the other GERs. At a minimum, framing the ESR as one among several essential tools for learning and communication grants it a status consonant with its goals: just as students must obtain a minimum level of skill in communication, quantitative reasoning, as well as familiarity with the major modes of learning and research in the Arts and Humanities, and the Social and Natural Sciences, they must also acquire the cultural competence afforded by the ESR.

Certainly, incorporating the ESR into the structure of the General Education Committee will facilitate this effort. By this means alone, we can hope that the administration of the ESR (monitoring seat availability, providing a stable procedure for consideration of courses to be added to the course array) and other aspects of curricular management would be attended to. In addition, the GEC could incorporate ongoing assessment of the ESR into its processes for assessing and improving the efficacy of the other GERs. Via the process of ongoing assessment and improvement of courses and policies serving the requirement, the GEC might consider how best to provide curricular support for ESR courses. Should, for example, a student learning support center akin to the Writing Center be considered? Would ESR faculty and instructional staff benefit from an instructional support program modeled on the Writing Fellows program? How might library instruction and resources contribute to the ESR, as they do to the Information Literacy component of the Comm A program?

### ***H. Summary of Recommendations***

The information we present in this report and the issues we raise are deeply connected to larger and more systemic issues relating to diversity on campus. We, as a university community, must

continue to address these larger issues in order to insure success in our Ethnic Studies courses. The observations and recommendations listed above might be addressed via a series of coordinated recommendations.

1. *Responsibility for administration of the Ethnic Studies Requirement should be formally transferred to the General Education Committee, and the GEC should be encouraged to convene a subcommittee that will:*
  - a. *Review proposals to create new ESR courses or to add existing courses to the ESR course array. The criteria and guidelines cited above should continue to be used to make determinations about whether courses will carry the “e” designation; however, the subcommittee should be allowed to forward recommendations to the GEC and UAPC about seeking revisions to the guidelines, should the need arise.*
  - b. *Maintain communication with campus administrators and faculty governance bodies via annual reports. These annual reports on ESR activities and any recommendations for action are to be included in the GEC’s annual reports to the UAPC.*
  - c. *Consult with the Divisional Executive Committees and staff as needed about potential ESR courses.*
  - d. *Consult with faculty, instructional staff, and campus and school/college level administrative offices about augmenting the ESR course array (e.g., developing FIGs, modifying existing courses, or accessing consultants on Ethnic Studies issues in various topical areas).*
  - e. *Develop and implement a plan for ongoing assessment of student attainment of the ESR learning goals.*
  
2. *Campus administration (chiefly, the offices of the Vice Chancellors for Teaching and Learning and for Diversity, as well as college level undergraduate advising offices), in consultation with the General Education Committee and the ESR Subcommittee, should pursue a variety of strategies to educate campus constituencies about the ESR. These efforts should:*
  - *Improve communication with students, advisors, faculty, and staff so each of these groups understand and can articulate the goals of the requirement;*
  - *Improve communication with schools, colleges, departments, and programs about the goals of the requirement and means by which enrollments can be managed to serve both the purposes of individual courses and academic programs, while also serving the goals of the requirement;*
  - *Work with departments as well as with faculty and instructional staff on course development to enhance the ESR course array;*
  - *Work to enhance institutional efforts to support ESR instruction (e.g., FIGs); and*
  - *Enhance financial and other types of support (e.g., library and media collections, creating an ESR instructional network) for designing and teaching ESR courses.*
  
3. *Campus administration (chiefly, the offices of the Vice Chancellors for Teaching and Learning and for Diversity), in consultation with the General Education Committee and the ESR Subcommittee, should work to enhance and develop structures to improve the administrative and philosophical foundation that supports the teaching of Ethnic Studies at UW-Madison. One or more of these offices should:*

- *Create a workshop or seminar series on “Teaching Ethnic Studies”;*
  - *Showcase successful ESR courses, teachers, and students;*
  - *Work with departments and divisional committees to study ESR pedagogy, from successful instructional to the possible impact ESR instruction may have on teaching evaluations;*
  - *Disseminate as widely as possible (making special efforts to reach out to members of the faculty) information about initiatives that stimulate interest in racial and ethnic diversity; and*
  - *Establish a competitive grant program to support development of new ESR courses.*
4. *The Deans of each school and college should encourage their departments, faculty and instructional staff to examine how their instructional efforts align with the goals of the ESR. Wherever possible, departments and programs should be encouraged to propose adding existing courses that might (or could be modified to) meet the ESR criteria to the ESR course array. Given the scarcity of ESR courses in particular programmatic areas, the Deans should provide additional incentives to motivate departments, faculty and instructional staff to offer courses in these areas.*
5. *The Chancellor should establish an Ethnic Studies Teaching Award to emphasize the UW-Madison’s commitment to excellence and innovative teaching of Ethnic Studies courses.*

These recommendations include suggestions about existing committees and administrative offices that might be well-suited and best able to assume responsibility for particular actions; it may be, however, that some of these activities might be housed in another structure specifically devoted to supporting and promoting the values inherent in the Ethnic Studies Requirement.

## **VII. AN INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON ETHNICITY AND RACE IN THE AMERICAS**

At a research university like UW-Madison, the teaching of Ethnic Studies will never be far removed from the production of new knowledge about the history and present-day beliefs and practices of exclusion and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and race. UW-Madison faculty and instructional staff who teach ES courses are, of course, among the most productive scholars in the nation in their respective fields. They have achieved distinction on their own and with the support of the departments and programs they are affiliated with. What they have lacked thus far is an institutional space to promote forms of interdisciplinary collaboration and cross-fertilization not easily accomplished within existing academic structures. For an institution as strong as ours in the study of race and ethnicity, it is surprising that we have not yet formalized such spaces of collaboration.

The Committee believes that establishing a research institute to promote interdisciplinary research on ethnicity and race, in the broader context of the Americas, would be a particularly salutary development. It therefore strongly endorses the proposal written by Professor Steve Stern, chair of the History department, for the creation of an Institute for Research on Ethnicity and

Race in the Americas (IRERA—see the enclosed document). We see IRERA as a space where faculty and instructional staff who teach and do research on Ethnic Studies will forge collaborative research ties that will then positively affect, not only their research programs, but also their pedagogical practices. IRERA would give ES faculty and instructional staff a corporate identity and serve to recruit new members and courses to the ESR array. Its impact on the recruitment of graduate students and the obtainment of outside research resources can only be imagined. Just as importantly, IRERA would help undergraduate students better recognize and appreciate the connection between University research and the ESR, a connection they do not now envisage.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

During many months of discussion and debate, the members of this committee found that it, too, can reaffirm the value of the ESR. Members note that discussions of racism and discrimination invoke the rule of law and the responsibility of lawmakers or administrators to create rules that ensure equity; on the other hand, discussions of diversity appeal to the community and individuals' responsibility to understand and respect difference. We as a campus need to talk about both, and one function of the ESR (for students, instructors, and administrators) is to discuss how to improve the climate of inclusiveness. If our goal, overall, is to ameliorate racism, the ESR is one means by which we give the members of our community the tools to recognize and combat its manifestations, be they on campus or in the larger society.