Action Item: General Education Requirement Area E, Multicultural Understanding
March 7, 2014

Summary
The proposal is to add a Multicultural Understanding requirement to our list of General Education Areas. This can be done without adding additional courses or units and without students having to take additional courses or units. Any of the GE courses a student is already able to take (in Areas A, B, C, D) and that has been approved as providing a significant Multicultural Understanding component as part of the course would count toward an Area E. Currently there are courses in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences that could conceivably meet the requirement as written.

Justification
There is a need for Multicultural Understanding as a component of student education. Research shows that course requirements like this can help create an inclusive campus environment, something that is essential for persistence of all students and of historically underrepresented students in particular. The Chancellor requires the monitoring and initiation of institutional action to correct the disproportionate impact of curriculum on underrepresented students, as is reflected in our Student Equity Plan. The Multicultural Understanding requirement would help us in demonstrating our efforts to meet this goal and would be one more action taken in accordance with the SEP. Most Community Colleges (70% by estimation of the MDC as of 2013) have a similar requirement, as do many transfer institutions. For example, HSU has a two-course sequence known as the Diversity and Common Ground Requirement. With this new CR GE Area E, our students will better prepared for transfer to an institution such as HSU. Also, students that are sensitized to the variety of currently existing cultural perspectives and practices will be better prepared to participate and contribute to local economic and intellectual development in an increasingly multicultural and globally influenced context.

Next Steps
If this proposal is passed, we will need to determine what existing courses already satisfy the criteria for this requirement and develop criteria that will be used to determine if new or updated courses can meet this requirement. Please see the attached documents from HSU that give a list of their courses that count toward their requirement as a guide. Additionally, we will likely need to review the Global/Historical Context GE outcome.