Proposal for a Mixed Cluster General Education Learning Community:

Thinking Globally

1. What is the theme you propose for your group of courses? In what ways do you think this theme speaks to issues important to our freshman population?

The theme of the proposed Learning Community is an interdisciplinary investigation of the environment and environmental issues. In the future, environmental problems such as global warming, water quality and biodiversity may represent some of the most pressing issues faced by our society. The current generation may be the first to face large scale loss of human habitat due to rising seas, shifting climate zones and other environmental disasters (e.g., radioactive contamination). The proposed Learning Community will investigate the scientific, ethical and political issues related to the environment and prepare students to make informed choices as consumers and voters in the future.

2. List the three courses (prefix, number, title, units)

ENSC 280X Global Environmental Issues (4 units)
PHIL 110X Social and Ethical Issues (4 units)
POSC 1171 Environmental Politics (4 units)

3. Explain how the theme will be used to integrate course content in each course. (Describe the contribution of each discipline’s perspective on the theme that will create a coherent learning experience for the students.)

This cluster is an interdisciplinary examination of environmental issues – the three content courses represent courses from the three major GE learning areas: Natural Science Area B (ENSC 280X), Humanities Area C (PHIL 110X) and Social Science Area D (POSC 1171). In the Fall Quarter, students will investigate the science behind important environmental issues affecting California and the entire Earth in ENSC 280X. This course integrates physical and life science content and provides the background for students to have meaningful discussions about environmental ethics and policy in the subsequent quarters. During the Winter Quarter, students will take PHIL 110X and learn about social issues (e.g., environmental racism) related to the environment and learn to construct logical arguments based upon various ethical frameworks (e.g., precautionary theory). POSC 1171 will be offered during the Spring Quarter where students will gain an understanding of the history, ideologies and institutions of modern environmental politics and policy. The approach of this cluster is interdisciplinary and comprehensive – it provides students with the scientific background of environmental issues, enables students to create ethical arguments and determine the social and political implications of environmental policies.

4. Explain how each course in the proposed learning community will support student learning of each of the lower division area learning outcomes and General Education requirements (passed by Academic Senate February 17, 2004). Please use the GE course
application forms to address this question. (If the course has already been approved for GE credit, and the current application form was used, please attach a copy. If the course has not yet been approved for GE credit, the use of the application form will permit review for GE credit even if the cluster is not selected.)

http://www.csuhayward.edu/ge/subcommitte/ge/learningoutcomes.htm Please note: for mixed area learning communities, courses must meet learning outcomes in each area covered by the learning community. For example, a learning community with a course in humanities, one in social science, and one in science must demonstrate that the learning outcomes in humanities, social science and science are met by the relevant courses.

ENSC 2800 (B3) and PHIL 1101 (C2, C3) have been previously approved for lower division General Education. The specific courses incorporated into the proposed cluster will be cluster-specific versions of these courses. We have attached the original GE course proposal for ENSC 2800. ENSC 2800 was approved for GE before the adoption of the current GE course approval form; we have also included a reworded GE course proposal for using the current form to make review easier. Although PHIL 1101 had been previously approved for GE, the original course application has disappeared into the ether. Attached is the current GE course proposal form for (Area C2 or C3) with statements addressing issues related to the cluster variant of this course.

5. Attach course outlines for the three courses. Each course outline should indicate how the theme would be used in the course and any student activities that cross all courses. (for example, will there be common reading(s) in the three courses? Will there be common assignments, or assignments on which students work the entire year? Will students keep a cluster portfolio, etc.?)

The focus on environmental issues from a variety of disciplinary perspectives will unify the proposed cluster. Although faculty have not decided on specific assignments, we will use the summer meeting on cluster integration to develop assignments and/or readings that will span the freshman year. For example, one proposed assignment consists of students writing a series of papers during each quarter — each student would chose a specific environmental issue. During each course in the cluster, students would write papers on the science, ethical issues, social implications and a summary of the political issues for their chosen environmental issue for a portfolio. Alternatively, students may work in groups to develop mini-conferences on a limited number of environmental issues.

Course syllabi for previously approved courses and POSSC 1171 are attached.
Approved by Department Chairs

Jeff C88
Signature

EESE
Department
17 April 2007
Date

Jennifer S. Eagan
Signature

PHIL
Department
4/17/07
Date

Signature

PEL SCI
Department
4/19/07
Date

Approved by College Dean / Associate Dean

Signature

D. W. Melton
Date

Signature

Date

Signatures of three faculty members: Ideally, the person who will teach the courses will participate in cluster planning. We acknowledge, however, the difficulties of staffing departments face and understand that the person who plans the new cluster may not be the person who teaches the cluster course. In these cases we expect the faculty member who plans the cluster will provide a thorough orientation to the expectations and methods developed for the learning community to the actual instructor.

We each agree, if selected, to meet on the following for an end of Spring or Summer seminar on interdisciplinary curriculum and pedagogy and course integration Summer 2007 to be determined mutually.

Jeff C88
Signature

17 April 2007
Date

Jennifer S. Eagan
Signature

4/17/07
Date

Signature

for Craig Gillingham
4/19/07
Date

Please submit 12 copies of the proposal.