Request for Proposals:
Courses to be Affiliated with UM Bicentennial Theme Semesters, Winter-Fall 2017

Campus-wide celebrations throughout the year 2017 will mark two hundred years since the founding of the University of Michigan. The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts will sponsor two Bicentennial Theme Semesters, Winter and Fall 2017, offering University students a wide range of special courses that address aspects of the past, present, and future of U-M and its place in the development of public higher education, in American life and culture, and in world affairs. Other activities associated with the Theme Semesters will include museum exhibits, symposia and conferences, musical events, as well as film and lecture series.

We invite proposals from faculty members across all disciplines who wish to offer theme-related courses in either of the following categories:

1. New courses specially designed for one of the Theme Semesters described below, intended to focus on a topic relevant to the past, present, and future of U-M.

2. Existing courses modified in ways that enhance a particular dimension of their subject matter relevant to the issues raised in Bicentennial programming.

For a limited number of proposed courses (either newly designed or significantly modified to affiliate with the themes), we will award one-time seed grants of $1,000 to support course development. An additional $1,000 may be awarded for course-linked special events (exhibits, lectures, panels, etc.) reaching out to a broader public of the campus or community at large.

All the courses selected and identified as Theme Semester-affiliated will be listed at the head of the online LSA Course Guide, thereby attracting student enrollment.

The deadline for proposals is October 30, 2015. This will be the first round of selection for courses intended for either Winter 2017 or Fall 2017. Selection and award of seed grants will be announced by November 30, 2015. It is possible a second round will be open for proposal of Fall 2017 courses, with a later deadline of October 30, 2016.

Please submit proposals, including a budget explaining the use of seed grant funds, to the chair of the Bicentennial Theme Semesters planning committee, Prof. Howard Brick, hbrick@umich.edu. (Seed grants can be used to pay research assistants in aid of course development, obtain special materials for course use, produce public displays of student research emerging from coursework, mount public-outreach exhibits or performances, etc.)

Thanks for considering participation in this exciting celebration of U-M’s heritage and horizons.

(Members of the Bicentennial Theme Semesters planning committee)

Elizabeth Armstrong  Michelle McClellan
Howard Brick (chair)  Anthony Mora
Amy Harris  Priscilla Tucker
Karyn Lacy  Donna Wessel Walker
Winter 2017: The Making of the University of Michigan

The first of the two Theme Semesters addresses the University’s past and present, its “making” over time, since its 1817 founding, as a center for cultivating knowledge and creativity across an expanding array of disciplines and arts; as a force in public affairs locally, nationally, and globally; as a workplace and as a way of life for its students, faculty, administrators and staff. Courses may concern any aspect of University life today that can be better understood by application of the analytical and critical tools of any discipline (or interdisciplinary perspective), especially in light of an evolving heritage drawn from the University’s past. The latter concern with change and continuity in University affairs over time, while of special interest to the planning committee, will not exclude courses devoted largely to current conditions. We especially invite courses in the natural sciences and courses emphasizing key disciplinary innovations to which U-M scholars have contributed. Broadly speaking, we will select those courses that encourage students and faculty, as participants in U-M’s institutional life, to better answer the question, “Where are we today, and how did we get here?”

Fall 2017: Michigan Horizons: The Possible Futures of U-M

The second of the two Theme Semesters addresses the changing place of U-M today in American life and global society; the challenges and dilemmas before the University that are already evident or may be anticipated in coming years; and the varied ways and means—including alternative visions of fundamental reform—that can respond to present and future demands. We especially welcome proposed courses that place U-M in the context of debates regarding the heritage and mission of public higher education or examine the expectations and critiques that citizens, students, and scholars now bring to institutions like this one. Faculty can apply the perspective of any discipline or multidisciplinary program to any aspect of University life—particularly those that engage this community in current public issues and controversies and stimulate consideration of possible directions of change and alternative futures that can be imagined for U-M’s third century. This “future” emphasis will not exclude courses devoted solely to unresolved present concerns. Generally, we look for courses that encourage students and faculty, as participants in U-M’s institutional life, to better answer the question, “Where are we now in dealing with present problems, and where do we go from here?”