I. Background Information

A. Title of Program: Hmong Studies

B. Department(s)/Program(s): American Indian Studies, Education Studies, English, Honors, Languages

C. Administrative Home: Department of Languages

D. Division: ☑ Undergraduate (Requires approval by APC*) ☐ Graduate (Requires approval by GC**)

E. Effective Year and Term for Implementation of Action: Fall 2016

II. Unit Approvals

A. Department Chair(s)/Program Director(s) AIS  [Signature]  12/10/15

ES  [Signature]  12/15/15

ENGL  [Signature]  12/16/15

HNRS  [Signature]  12/11/15

LANG  [Signature]  12/10/15

B. Dean of College

C. Chair, Academic Policies Committee

D. Chair, Graduate Council

* APC = Academic Policies Committee
** GC = Graduate Council
III. Certificate program proposals should originate at the department/program level; all affected departments/programs must endorse proposals. Each proposal will include the following:

A. Context for the certificate program (any predecessor programs, relationship to existing programs, alignment with university mission);

While there have been several attempts to establish a program in Hmong Studies in the past, this most recent movement is the first that has been largely led by Hmong-American students at UWE, and it is the first to explicitly connect Hmong Studies in the Curriculum to an improved campus climate in relation to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. There are no predecessor programs, although there are strong relationships with other programs, including American Indian Studies, Education Studies, and Languages, from where students would get key core courses.

Despite the lack of predecessor programs, we have very strong student interest in Hmong Studies, and a growing number of students have declared topical minors in Hmong Studies closely following guidelines laid out by the Hmong Studies Steering Committee. Also designed by the Hmong Studies Steering Committee, this Certificate program is a preliminary institutionalization of Hmong Studies with the aim of establishing a Minor in the near future.

The program aligns with the university mission in important, indeed critical, ways, including:
1. Helping to realize the 2014 Enrollment Management Task Force recommendation to “significantly reduce the achievement gap for underrepresented students in retention and graduation rates.”
2. Provide a response to the University Senate Executive Committee’s expressed interest in developing Hmong Studies on campus as a “worthy focus of study” in relation to EDI issues in April 2013;
3. Diversify the student body to help attain the 2014 Enrollment Management Committee Taskforce’s target of “20% of the incoming frosh class from underrepresented minority groups” within 10 years. (It is important to note here that Hmong American students comprise the majority of students of color at UW-Eau Claire. According to the “State of the Hmong American Community 2013 Report,” the Hmong population is very young, with 44% under the age of 18, making them a particularly appealing demographic for continued long-term recruitment).

B. Rationale explaining need for the program (e.g., target audience(s), evidence of long-term need, anticipated enrollment);

The Enrollment Management Task Force report shows that in the areas of second-year retention rates (2007-11) and six-year graduation rates (2004-06) students of color significantly trail white students, in aggregate. A critical Hmong Studies program is a vital part of achieving this strategic vision of 20% underrepresented minority enrollment and greater retention and graduation because it is a targeted, institutional response to structural racism. The presence of structural racism is determined by inequitable outcomes for people of color. Inequitable outcomes are largely the product of inequitable access to institutional rights and resources. A Hmong Studies program intervenes against these inequities of access.
Broadly speaking, existing organizational structures are inadequate to serve the needs of Hmong American students at UW-Eau Claire. As described in the "Statement of Benefits" section below, Hmong American students do not have equal access to curriculum, faculty relationships, and peer relationships. These are all directly or indirectly academic issues.

Hmong Americans are often homogenized under the aegis of "Asian Americans" or even "multicultural students" even though their social identities and circumstances as Hmong Americans are unique. A critical Hmong Studies program will play a central role in institutional learning about the importance of Hmong refugee history and its relationship to contemporary Hmong American life. For example, a 2011 report from the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice revealed that Hmong Americans not only have the lowest per capita income among all Asian American ethnic groups but also the lowest among all racial groups in the US, including Latino/as. Hmong Studies will educate the campus on how the "model minority" and "perpetual foreigner" stereotypes come to define Hmong American experience and relationships in inaccurate and deleterious ways (Ngo and Lee, 2007).

Existing organizational structures do not promote institutional equity for Hmong American students. Equity happens when an equality of access results in an equality of outcomes. A critical Hmong Studies program is a targeted, institutional response to structural racism that will lead UW-Eau Claire toward its strategic goals for diversity and equity. Our proposal is to draw on existing structures and resources on campus and supplement them with necessary additional resources, with a focus on curricular enhancement.

C. Statement of benefits to students, the department(s)/program(s), college(s), and university;

The Hmong Studies program enhances the curriculum and the experience of students and units at our university by addressing the following inequities in our current curricular offering:

1. Access to own social identity in curriculum: Currently, there are no Hmong Studies-related courses offered with any consistency or predictability at UW-Eau Claire. Unlike other racial/ethnic groups on campus, and despite their plurality within this group, Hmong Americans have no reasonable expectation of enrolling in a course whose curriculum meaningfully represents their culture, history, and experiences. Courses with Hmong and Hmong American content offered in the past include HUMS 110/HNRS 104, HMNG 101/102, and ENGL 368. However, the availability of these courses depends on the staffing and programmatic needs of associated departments. Compared to their white peers, underrepresented minority students are less likely to find a desirable academic major, particularly one that is inclusive of their diverse identities (Syed, Azmitia, and Cooper, 2011). An established critical Hmong Studies program will attract Hmong American students, some immediately upon their matriculation. Critical Hmong Studies curriculum will expand opportunities for Hmong American students to participate in faculty-student research, a hallmark of the UW-Eau Claire academic experience that should be equitable for all. The McNair program stands to benefit greatly from critical Hmong Studies as well. Moreover, the critical Hmong Studies Program will consult with those faculty who ask their students to involve Hmong American students as research subjects.
based on their race and ethnicity with a view to developing more ethical and equitable pedagogical practices.

2. Access to Hmong and Hmong American faculty: Currently, no Hmong American has faculty status at UW-Eau Claire in the social sciences or humanities. The presence of Hmong American faculty with Hmong Studies research interests is essential not only for the development of critical Hmong Studies curriculum but for the development of equitable academic relationships with Hmong American students. These relationships will foster a greater sense of academic engagement for Hmong American students, an important and well-established factor in retention of students of color. For underrepresented minority students, positive role models are more important for retention than they are for white students (Swall, Redd, and Perna, 2003). In addition to creating more opportunities for student-faculty research collaborations mentioned above, these relationships will open and widen pathways for opportunities through word-of-mouth, letters of recommendation, and increased visibility. Hmong American faculty will serve as mentors and role models for Hmong American students, who, at the moment, must learn what it means to be a student and a professional from faculty who have no personal experience with being a Hmong American. Students of other racial/ethnic groups have the opportunity to be mentored by faculty who share important intersectional social identities with themselves: e.g. white men, American Indian women, etc. This is not the case for Hmong American students. The literature of educational policy is clear on the positive impact of faculty contact and collaboration on the retention of underrepresented minority students (Hurtado, Eagan, Tran, Newman, Chang, and Velasco, 2011).

3. Access to relationships with peers: Compared to white students, Hmong American students have inequitable access to positive relationships with their peers of all races/ethnicities. The absence of learning about Hmong Americans in the curriculum has contributed to a number of racist events at UW-Eau Claire in recent years. These include the Towers Residence Hall racist harassment in 2012 and 2015, the vandalism of a Hibbard Hall display on Hmong identity during Hmong Heritage Month in 2014, the racist Yik Yak (social media) message of 2015, and daily, unreported microaggressions. White students and students of color—including Hmong Americans themselves—can and do internalize racist stereotypes of Hmong and Hmong American people (e.g., "Hmong people exclude others"). Currently, there is no academic, institutionalized commitment to countering these racist stereotypes, although the establishment of the Hmong Studies Steering Committee was an important expression of institutional response and incipient academic commitment. Students of other races/ethnicities can expect to have their cultural and social identities reflected in the curriculum, weakening the power of stereotypes of their respective groups. Moreover, Hmong American students do not have equitable access to positive relationships with other Hmong Americans because many do not speak Hmong. Almost all students of other races/ethnicities have the ability to access learning of the languages of their ancestors. This absence of a regular Hmong language curriculum contributes to the internalization of white supremacy vis-à-vis Hmong Americans among all students. Friendship and social integration into college communities have long been positively correlated with student retention and with student of color retention specifically (Tinto, 1993).

Furthermore, scholars have illustrated the importance of Ethnic Studies courses and
programs for student achievement and retention across demographic groups in U.S. educational settings (Antonio et al., 2004; Cammarota, 2007; Sleeter, 2010). Scholars (Banks, 2012; Lee, 2008; Nieto & Bode, 2008; Sleeter, 2010) also have expressed how all students benefit from Ethnic Studies, particularly since “all students are miseducated to the extent that they receive only partial and biased education” (Nieto and Bode, 2008, p. 50).

Finally, the program has the potential to draw individuals from professional areas who interact frequently with Hmong communities. We have designed this certificate to include precisely such a population; here, we have dropped some of the more advanced or academic theoretical requirements that a minor would require (such as more advanced language skills and indigenous studies) while retaining those deemed to be essential to the nature and current needs of the field.

D. Description of the academic component including:

i. Learning goals and outcomes for students;

Learning outcomes for the certificate program will be developed in accordance with a series of broad goals:
1. Engagement with interdisciplinary knowledge about Hmong history, culture, society and language from multiple perspectives with the intentional inclusion of epistemologies and experiences of Hmong communities;
2. Insistence on ethical teaching and learning based on equitable, authentic and sustained relationships (between institutional representatives and Hmong American students and communities);
3. Commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable campus climate for Hmong American students and students of color more broadly as an important measure/indicator of the quality of knowledge and research related to Hmong American and Hmong Studies;
4. Accountability to Hmong American students and communities in decision-making related to the work of the critical Hmong Studies Program.

ii. Specification of any program admission requirements, minimum GPA requirements for courses, GPA requirements for certificate completion above the university minimum, applicability of the S/U option;

No specific program admission requirements.

iii. Course array, including specification of new, required and elective courses. If electives are allowed within the certificate program, an explanation of the proposed electives in light of the need for program cohesion should be included.

The certificate in critical Hmong Studies would consist of at least 15 credits, 6 of which would need to be at the 300-400 level (including electives). Elements of the certificate would include (1) Language; (2) Hmong History, Culture, & Society; (3) Critical Race Theory (CRT); (4) Electives. A feasible curriculum for the Certificate in critical Hmong
Studies is displayed in the following table and includes 10 core credits and 5-8 elective credits that might be chosen from a variety of options:

**CORE:**
- HUMS 110 (Hmong Civilization, Culture and Contemporary Issues) or HNRS 104 (when offered as Hmong Cult Hist Civ) (3 cr)
- HMNG 101 (Hmong Language I) (4 cr)
- ES 385 (Soc Fdtns Hum Reins) (CRT requirement) (3 cr)

**ELECTIVES:**
- HMNG 102 (Hmong Language II) (4 cr)
- AIS 444 (Indigenous Theories/Methodologies) (3 cr)
- ENGL 368 (when focused on Hmong Studies) (3 cr)

**VARIABLE CREDIT OPTIONS**
- TRAVEL SEMINARS focused on Hmong Studies
- VARIOUS COURSES WITH EITHER HMONG OR HMONG-AMERICAN CONTENT OR CRT OR INDIGENOUS APPROACH
- OTHER DISTANCE LEARNING OPTIONS, IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS / UW CAMPUSES WHEN FOCUSED ON HMONG STUDIES

This course array will help to establish a start for the short term. However, in the slightly longer term we anticipate the presence of a qualified instructor to teach a Hmong Culture/History course at or above the 300 level. We also will work toward the development of capacity to teach a focused CRT course on campus.

Note: for standard major/certificate combinations in which course work overlaps, students will need to earn a minimum of 48 unique credits between the two programs to meet graduation requirements for completing a first and second degree program.

**E. Description of the administration, staffing, and budgeting for the program, including:**

i. **Faculty/staff participating in the certificate program;**
- Ka Vang (SSS) (HUMS 110/HNRS 104)
- Charles Vue (OMA) (HMNG 101 & HMNG 102)
- Dr. Heather Ann Moody (American Indian Studies) (AIS 444)
- Dr. David Shih (English) (ENGL 368)
- Dr. Eric Torres (Education Studies) (ES 385)
- Dr. Anjela Wong (Education Studies) (ES 385)
- Dr. Ari Anand (Geography & Anthropology) (Coordinator/Advisor)

ii. **Proposed frequency of offering for courses included in the certificate program;**
Our goal is to have the HNRS 104 or HUMS 110 course continue to be taught every semester, and that the frequency of introductory language courses (101 and 102) be increased to every semester rather than every other
semester as it currently is (budget permitting). We anticipate that the ES 385 course will continue to be taught every semester until a more fully CRT-oriented course is in place.

iii. Proposed arrangements for ongoing advising for students in the certificate program;

Currently Ari Anand is serving as advisor for those following a very similar selection of courses to get a topical minor, and he is willing to continue in his role as advisor for the certificate program. Since this is a certificate program, we do not anticipate the advising burdens to be as heavy as those involved in major or minor advising. However, we anticipate that we will be able to draw on some members of the Hmong Studies Steering Committee to provide advising once we have institutionalized and disseminated information about the program.

iv. Anticipated need for student support services for students enrolled in the certificate program;

None.

v. Identification of an administrative home for certificate programs involving more than one academic department/program;

Department of Languages.

vi. Funding needs to initiate and maintain the certificate program, including source(s) of funding and any needed resource reallocation;

None

vii. Impact on existing courses and programs.

The establishment of a program in critical Hmong Studies will entail curricular and programmatic overlap with other units on campus, including academic departments whose offerings could be cross-listed with Hmong Studies, as well as with units such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs, with whom the program could coordinate around issues of recruitment and retention. In its curricular mission, the program will collaborate with the Department of Languages to attempt to ensure that at least two semesters of Hmong language are offered consistently. We do not anticipate any adverse effects on any unit resulting from the establishment of a program in critical Hmong Studies. Members, including Chairs, of various departments that are potential collaborators, are already on the Hmong Studies Steering Committee (HSSC) that is authoring this proposal. We propose that for at least the first two years of the critical Hmong Studies Program, HSSC will continue to provide a venue in which any and all cross-unit concerns will be constructively and collaboratively addressed. The presence of senior members, particularly program and department chairs, has been instrumental and invaluable to the work of the Hmong Studies Steering Committee.
WORKS CITED


