

Northern Marianas College
CURRICULUM ACTION REQUEST

Effective Semester / Session: Fall 2012

Type of Action:

- New
- Modification
- Move to Inactive (Stop Out)
- Cancellation

Course Alpha and Number: SO 297

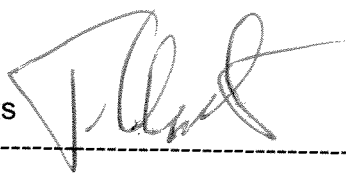
Course Title: Current Issues in the CNMI

Reason for initiating, revising, or canceling:

This course guide is being reviewed as a result of last review occurring in June 2009.

Thomas D. Sharts

Proposer



8/14/12

Date

Thomas D. Sharts

Department Chair

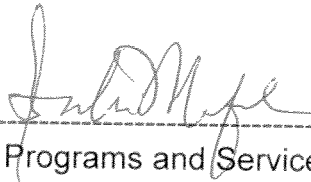


8/14/12

Date

Barbara Merfalen

Dean of Academic Programs and Services



8.14.12

Date

Northern Marianas College Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

1. Department

Social Sciences and Fine Arts

2. Purpose

SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI is a core course requirement for all NMC degrees offered by the College. The overall goal of the course is to promote the growth of students as active, competent, and effective participants in the social, cultural, economic, and political development of their community, the Commonwealth, and the world.

3. Description

A. Required/Recommended Textbook(s) and Related Materials

There is no textbook for this course. The following materials are used as they relate to specific topics in the course:

Constitution of the CNMI

Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America

Local daily newspapers, articles from other periodicals, government reports, and all other Northern Mariana Islands media, including the Internet.

B. Contact Hours

1. **Lecture:** 3 hours per week / 45 hours per semester
2. **Lab:** None
3. **Other:** None

C. Credits

1. **Number:** 3
2. **Type:** Regular degree units

D. Catalogue Course Description

This is a core course required for all NMC degrees. It is a capstone course for all associate degrees, and thus it is to be taken in a student's last semester or next to last semester. For Elementary Education majors, it is to be taken in the second semester of a student's sophomore year or in the first semester of a student's junior year. SO 297 is a seminar-format course designed to assist students

Northern Marianas College

Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

to become active, competent, and effective citizens of the CNMI. The course familiarizes students with current and future political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental issues and problems in the CNMI, which are then discussed and analyzed, and possible solutions are explored. Prerequisite: CO 210 with a grade of "C" or better, or concurrent enrollment. EN 101 with a grade of "C" or better. English Placement Level: EN 202. Math Placement Level: MA 091. (Offered Fall and Spring)

E. Degree or Certificate Requirements Met by Course

This is a core course requirement for all NMC degrees.

F. Course Activities and Design

This course incorporates seminar sessions, presentations by guest speakers, weekly readings, and homework related to seminar/guest speaker topics. Students are strongly encouraged to watch televised news broadcasts (local, national, and international), to read the local daily newspapers, to visit relevant web sites, and to bring to class articles or other information relating to topics under discussion in the course.

In addition, each class / student will have the option of choosing either a research paper or a group project. The writing of a 10 to 15-page research paper must be on a current issue of interest to the student. Research paper topics are selected in consultation with the instructor, who suggests resources and provides basic assistance to the student during the research and writing process.

Or, a group of students may choose to do a group project in place of the individual research papers. The project will be chosen by the students and must be approved by the instructor and must have some community relevance and meet a specific community need. It will require that the students organize and work as a team, prepare a set of goals to achieve the project, and assign individuals or small groups to carry out the research, tabulate such results as may be achieved, and prepare a public presentation including but not limited to the PowerPoint describing the project and the results achieved. The bulk of the project will be carried out outside of class time.

Northern Marianas College Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

**4. Course Prerequisite(s); Concurrent Course Enrollment;
Required English/Mathematics Placement Level(s)**

Prerequisites: Completion of CO 210 with a grade of "C" or better, or concurrent enrollment. Completion of EN 101 with a grade of "C" or better.

English Placement Level: EN 202

Math Placement Level: MA 091

5. Estimated Cost of Course; Instructional Resources Needed

Cost to the Student: Tuition for a 3-credit course, and any applicable fees, and the cost of a copy of the CNMI Constitution (pamphlet) and a copy of the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (pamphlet), both sold at the NMC Bookstore.

Cost to the College: Instructor's salary.

Instructional resources needed for this course include chalk and chalkboard, TV/VCR and videotaped programs, library books and periodicals to be identified by the instructor, and a room that can accommodate 60 students. A reserve section at the Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library has been set aside with literature and publications appropriate to the subject matter of this course.

6. Method of Evaluation

Student grades will be based on the regular letter grade system as described below:

A: Excellent – grade points: 4.0;

B: Above average – grade points: 3.0;

C: Average – grade points: 2.0;

D: Below average – grade points: 1.0;

F: Failure – grade points: 0.0.

NMC's grading and attendance policies will be followed.

Northern Marianas College

Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

7. Course Outline

The following four subject areas will be examined and discussed throughout the semester. The individual topics listed under the subject areas are potential topics for class discussion and student research papers. The scope of the course is not limited to these topics. This is a topical outline and does not necessarily indicate the sequence in which the material will be presented.

1.0 Political Issues

- 1.1 The Covenant between the U.S. and the CNMI
- 1.2 Immigration
- 1.3 Citizenship and nationality
- 1.4 Voting rights
- 1.5 Elections
- 1.6 The CNMI Constitution and the U.S. Constitution
- 1.7 Land tenure issues: Local / nonlocal ownership and usage
- 1.8 The roles and authority of the federal government in the CNMI
- 1.9 The roles and usefulness of the CNMI Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives
- 1.10 Ethics, corruption, and conflicts-of-interest in the CNMI Government
- 1.11 A unified CNMI identity
- 1.12 Minimum qualifications of elected and appointed government officials
- 1.13 The Executive Branch and local government
- 1.14 Efficiency in government services
- 1.15 Military land-use agreements / military issues
- 1.16 The CNMI budget
- 1.17 Citizen participation

2.0 Economic Issues

- 2.1 Foreign vs. local investment
- 2.2 Inflation
- 2.3 Standard of living
- 2.4 Taxes
- 2.5 Alien and local labor
- 2.6 Tourism and the visitor industry
- 2.7 Wage and salary scales
- 2.8 Unemployment and poverty
- 2.9 The economic effects of Federal takeover of immigration and the minimum wage

Northern Marianas College

Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

- 2.10 The effects of the loss of the garment manufacturing industry
 - 2.11 Land-use planning / zoning
 - 2.12 Village homesteads and agricultural homesteads
 - 2.13 Land alienation / Article XII
 - 2.14 Casino gambling / poker establishments
 - 2.15 Economic diversification
- 3.0 Social and Cultural Issues
- 3.1 Demographics
 - 3.2 Cultural diversity
 - 3.3 Religious diversity
 - 3.4 Community and cultural values
 - 3.5 Cultural change and conservation
 - 3.6 Languages
 - 3.7 Racial / ethnic prejudice and discrimination
 - 3.8 Health care
 - 3.9 Drug and substance abuse
 - 3.10 Domestic violence
 - 3.11 Suicide
 - 3.12 Teenage pregnancy
 - 3.13 A responsible CNMI society
 - 3.14 The role of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational institutions in the CNMI
 - 3.15 Northern Marianas College accreditation issues and status
 - 3.16 Opportunities for youth
 - 3.17 Organized crime
 - 3.18 Prostitution / bar girls
 - 3.19 Labor abuse
 - 3.20 Gambling
- 4.0 Environmental Issues
- 4.1 Terrestrial resources
 - 4.1.1 Forests
 - 4.1.2 Mangrove swamps
 - 4.1.3 Wetlands
 - 4.1.4 Agricultural land
 - 4.1.5 Pasture land
 - 4.1.6 Endangered indigenous species
 - 4.1.7 Introduced species

Northern Marianas College

Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

- 4.2 Marine resources
 - 4.2.1 Coastal resources
 - 4.2.1.1 Reefs
 - 4.2.1.2 Lagoon
 - 4.2.1.3 Beaches
 - 4.2.1.4 Fisheries
 - 4.2.1.5 Sea grass
 - 4.2.1.6 Recreational and economic uses
 - 4.2.2 Deep-ocean resources
 - 4.2.2.1 Fisheries
 - 4.2.2.2 The 200-mile exclusive economic zone
 - 4.2.2.3 Iron-manganese crusts and polymetallic sulfide deposits
 - 4.2.2.4 Precious corals
 - 4.2.2.5 Recreational uses
 - 4.2.2.6 The Marianas Trench National Monument
- 4.3 Man-made resources and related issues
 - 4.3.1 Power and electricity
 - 4.3.2 Water availability and quality
 - 4.3.3 Pollution
 - 4.3.4 Litter
 - 4.3.5 Unexploded ordnance (UXO)
 - 4.3.6 Sewage treatment
 - 4.3.7 Solid-waste disposal
 - 4.3.8 Public health and sanitation
 - 4.3.9 Traffic congestion

8. Instructional Goals

This course will introduce students to:

- 1.0 The interrelationship of the individual and the community in the CNMI;
- 2.0 A range of current political, economic, social, cultural, demographic, and environmental issues of relevance to life in the CNMI and the larger world;
- 3.0 The importance of identifying and objectively describing a variety of factors affecting current issues;

Northern Marianas College Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

- 4.0 The diversity of social and cultural values held by the people of the CNMI;
 - 5.0 The experience and value of daily exposure to the news by reading newspapers and watching televised news and community programs;
 - 6.0 The process of developing and supporting informed viewpoints and the experience of participating in a forum for the expression and exchange of views;
 - 7.0 The process of researching and writing an exploratory paper, 10 to 15 pages in length, and / or participating in and completing a project;
 - 8.0 The importance of an informed, aware, and active citizenry to the present and future well-being of the CNMI; and
 - 9.0 The use of reflective and reasoning abilities and decision-making skills.
- 9. Student Learning Outcomes**
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- 1.0 Describe the interrelationship of the individual and the community in the CNMI;
 - 2.0 Discuss a range of current political, economic, social, cultural, demographic, and environmental issues of relevance to life in the CNMI and the larger world;
 - 3.0 Contribute substantively to the level of discussion of a variety of factors affecting current issues;
 - 4.0 Show awareness of and an understanding for diverse ethnic customs and lifestyles in the CNMI;
 - 5.0 Evaluate news coverage of major issues and events;
 - 6.0 Recognize and distinguish differences in opinions on issues and engage in constructive dialogues;

Northern Marianas College Course Guide

Course: SO 297 Current Issues in the CNMI

- 7.0 Successfully complete a research paper on a current issue in the CNMI, or successfully participate in the preparation and presentation of a group report on a project on a current issue in the CNMI;
- 8.0 Actively solicit and manage guest speakers on approved topics; engage government agencies and offices in the search for information; and take part in civic projects; and
- 9.0 Apply effective reasoning abilities to specific projects involving community issues.

10. Assessment Measures

Assessment of student learning may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1.0 Participation in classroom discussions;
- 2.0 Written and oral reports on assigned topics;
- 3.0 Homework assignments,
- 4.0 Participation in community projects; and
- 5.0 A 10 to 15 page research paper or a group project.

For the group projects, the students will be individually graded on initiative, participation, and the quality of the final product that must include a written report describing the role and the accomplishments of each of the students involved. In addition, the group will share an overall project grade.