

During the fall of 2007, the Committee on Majors reviewed the major in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration (ERM). The Committee received testimony from Stephen Pitti, Director of the program, and Patricia Pessar, Director of Undergraduate Studies. We also heard a report from the Director of the Teaching Fellow Program and the Deputy Provost for Undergraduate Education on enrollments and staffing in the ERM major. We sent out a questionnaire to all current majors and received 12 responses. Six current undergraduates and one recent graduate met with the committee and discussed their experiences in the major.

**The Committee on Majors recommends that the Yale College Faculty approve the Program in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration as an ongoing major program in Yale College.**

**The Committee further recommends that the College Faculty approve a revised curriculum presented by the faculty of ERM and attached to this report.**

The major in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration grew out of efforts to expand Yale's curricular coverage of ethnic studies beginning in the 1970's. The major itself was formed on a trial basis in 1997. It was last reviewed, and renewed for a five-year period, in 2002. The program has maintained a small but consistent enrollment, with graduating classes in the high single digits and some signs of growth in the last few years. This figure understates the reach of the program, however, as enrollment in ERM courses totals between 150 and 200 in most years, and the program offers non-majors and faculty who are studying issues of ethnicity an important intellectual resource. An interdisciplinary major similar in structure to International Studies or Ethics, Politics, and Economics, ERM draws on faculty in American Studies, Anthropology, English, History, and Spanish and Portuguese, none of whom have formal appointments in ERM.

ERM is a "second major," meaning that a student can only major in ERM along with another major. (Other majors taken by ERM students have ranged from Latin American Studies to Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry). Although some students object to having to pursue ERM as a second major, the program faculty has not proposed any change to this status, which ERM shares with International Studies and South Asian Studies. One result of this status is that ERM draws a particularly committed group of students, willing to make the necessary effort to complete two majors. It can, however, create a burden for students, particularly those with additional curricular goals such as teacher training or pre-med. The Committee suggests that the question of converting the major to primary major status be reviewed again in five years.

## **Curriculum**

The ERM program offers a national model for the interdisciplinary study of ethnicity. Whereas some of our peer institutions lack any ethnic studies programs at all and many other large universities have ethnic studies programs broken subdivided by ethnic group (Asian American, Chicano, etc.), ERM offers students and educators the opportunity to study ethnic groups comparatively. Students interviewed by the committee noted that they had learned a great deal about ethnic groups other than the one they set out to study.

Furthermore, ERM has a focus on global migration that extends well beyond the borders of the United States, so its students are learning about issues of ethnicity in a very broad

perspective. However, the program lacks the resources of some particularly prominent ethnic studies majors, such as the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford, which is hiring aggressively in this field.

Students were unanimous in their praise for the excellent teaching and advising they received in ERM. The program provides an opportunity for educators to engage issues about ethnic conflict and tolerance in an academic forum. The program does provide an opportunity for minority students to study their own heritages, but the multi-ethnic and international character of the major helps to ensure that it moves beyond the role of advocating for the interests of any particular ethnic group.

The proposed revisions to structure of the major, outlined in the attached document, maintain three required courses and a concentration area of six courses, but grant some added flexibility in the distribution of the remaining three courses. They also emphasize the importance of study abroad for the major. In these respects, they follow established and positive trends in the other interdisciplinary majors that the Committee has reviewed.

### **Resources**

Although there are no dedicated faculty lines for ERM, the number of faculty who study relevant materials and who teach in the program has grown steadily. There are now nine faculty members and three post-doctoral fellows actively involved in the program on a regular basis, and some 35 others who have offered courses or advised ERM students from time to time. The major has helped in the recruitment of scholars of ethnicity and migration.

The university already has the resources required to staff this major. Making it permanent will both confer a sense of legitimacy on a major whose students and faculty sometimes feel under-appreciated by the university and forestall the need to create separate majors in such fields as Chicano or Asian-American studies, a path which some other institutions have followed.

ERM would like to be able to make formal courtesy appointments to faculty members, and we suggest that the program discuss with the Provost's office ways to facilitate such appointments. Like other interdisciplinary majors, ERM lacks appointment power. However, the Committee urges the Provost and the Deans to encourage departments whose faculty teach in ERM to consult the program when conducting relevant searches and reviews for re-appointment, promotion, and tenure.

In conclusion, the Committee on Majors expresses its admiration for the commitment, talent, and rigorous standards of the faculty of the program in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration, and commends its renewal as a permanent major with revised requirements to the College Faculty.

Respectfully submitted,

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Revisions to the Major Requirements for Ethnicity, Race, and Migration

<b>Current requirements</b>	<b>Proposed requirements</b>
12 term courses	12 term courses
Required Introductory Course (ER&M 200a)	Required Introductory Course (ER&M 200a)
Required Senior Colloquium (ER&M 491a)	Required Senior Colloquium (ER&M 491a)
Required Senior Essay/Project (ER&M 492b)	Required Senior Essay/Project (ER&M 492b)
6 courses in concentration	6 courses in concentration
2 courses in 2 geographic areas	2 courses in 2 geographic areas
1 course on “structures of international migration”	1 course on “global migrations”
1 course on “theoretical perspectives”	“Evidence of interdisciplinary work related to ER&M in at least two departments”

1 course on the politics and economics of ethnicity	“Students are strongly encouraged to pursue academic research and other experiences abroad”
1 course on the history and cultures of peoples	
“Competence in foreign language”	Advanced work in foreign language study strongly advised