Report to Faculty Senate on General Education Curriculum Improvement, April 216, 2021

Presented by the General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee (GECIC):

Kristen Ball (Registrar’s Office, ex-officio)
Jennifer Cable (School of Arts and Sciences, co-chair)
Alec Greven (student, Richmond College)
Elisabeth Gruner (School of Arts and Sciences)
Timothy L. Hamilton (Robins School of Business, co-chair)
Jordan Jones (student, Westhampton College)
Adam Marquardt (Robins School of Business)
Carol Parish (Provost’s Office, ex-officio)
Heather M. Russell (School of Arts and Sciences)
Christopher R. von Rueden (Jepson School of Leadership Studies)
Sydney Watts (General Education Curriculum Review Committee, ex-officio)
Carol Wittig (School of Arts and Sciences)

Previous Members of the GECIC:

Kevin Cherry (School of Arts and Sciences) through May 2020
Dowha Karar (student, Westhampton College) June 2020-January 2021
Jennifer Munnings (student, Westhampton College) May 2019-May 2020
Armond Towns (School of Arts and Sciences) May 2020-December 2020

Executive Summary:

The General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee (GECIC) presents this document to outline the process and product of its work to propose a revised general education curriculum. This curriculum is defined by a set of Areas of Inquiry, nearly identical to the current Fields of Study, yet updated in significant ways. These intersect with Integrated Focus areas that incorporate recommendations of the General Education Curriculum Review Committee and widespread community feedback. The GECIC built upon the work of the General Education Curriculum Process Committee and the General Education Curriculum Review Committee to construct a curriculum that more effectively serves the mission and values of the University of Richmond. The proposed curriculum retains several aspects of the current general education model, including a shared first-year experience, a second language proficiency requirement, and a breadth of coursework in the liberal arts as set out by the Fields of Study nearly 30 years ago, and now imagined as Areas of Inquiry. It supplements these components with Integrated Focus areas that, among other things, address the current curriculum’s shortcomings in writing and numeracy. In addition, campus discussions and the University’s mission have led to the addition of an explicit requirement in diversity, equity, and inclusion. The remainder of this report outlines the details of our proposed curriculum along with its motivation and justification.
Table of Contents

Committee Charge

I. Introduction

II. Committee Work and Process

III. The Web of Inquiry Curriculum
   a. Vision Statement and Goals
   b. Overview of the Curriculum
   c. Recommendations for Implementation

IV. Areas of Inquiry

V. Integrated Focus areas

VI. Charge for the Implementation Committee

VII. Curriculum FAQ

Appendices:

A1. Proposal for an Integrative Learning Pilot Program

A2. Draft learning outcomes for Integrated Focus areas

A3. DEI requirements at other institutions

A4. Feedback: Student Survey and Faculty Straw Poll

Resources
The Charge from the General Education Curriculum Review Committee to the General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee (May 2019)

The Charge.
The General Education Curriculum (GEC) at University of Richmond is the set of required courses that all undergraduates must pass prior to graduation and currently consists of two units of First-Year Seminars, up to four units of a Second Language (Com II) requirement, up to six units of Fields of Study courses, and zero-unit Wellness courses. After a year-long evaluation, the General Education Curriculum Review Committee determined that the current GEC is not well suited to teach essential skills, abilities, and perspectives for undergraduates, or to fulfill our university’s mission of preparing students “for lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a diverse world.” While the structure of the curriculum is functional, the neglected GEC has become a list of boxes to check for students. The GEC contains redundancies and weaknesses in the instruction of writing, numeracy, and wellness.

The General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee is tasked to carefully sculpt and reshape UR’s GEC to patch its gaps and bring coherence to the curriculum. Given the GEC’s central role in our students’ educational experience, a well-designed, intelligible, and intellectually ambitious curriculum can invigorate the university’s faculty and students and create a sense of purpose for the university that attracts prospective students.

The Product.
Building on the suggestions and proposals outlined by the GEC Review Committee’s final report, the GEC Improvement Committee will prepare a revised general education curriculum proposal that addresses the shortcomings and incoherence of the current curriculum to present to the Faculty Senate.

The Process.
The GEC Improvement Committee will identify its chairperson or co-chairs before August 19, 2019. The GEC Review Committee chairperson will make available all documents and data generated by the review during 2018-19, including the review’s final report. By December 2019, the GEC Improvement Committee should coalesce around a draft curriculum so that relevant members of the administration (Vice President of Planning & Priority, the university registrar, etc.) can inspect the model and recommend changes. A complete and detailed proposal should be presented to the Faculty Senate, relevant faculty governance bodies, and administrators during Spring 2020 for approval (the committee should be prepared to spend more time shepherding the proposal, if necessary). If approved, the GEC Improvement Committee should create a draft charge for a new committee responsible for implementing the new curriculum.

Amended Charge (Approved at April 3, 2020 Faculty Senate Meeting)
I move that the Senate should extend GECIC’s (General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee) charge to allow them to continue their work during AY20-21, with a request that the GECIC provide the Senate with a detailed timeline of actual and discrete deliverables that will be presented to the Senate during the course of AY20-21 and a request that GECIC tie these deliverables directly and explicitly back to the work of the previous two general education reform committees.
I. Introduction

The General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee (GECIC) was formed at the end of the 2018-2019 academic year with the charge to propose a revision to the University’s general education curriculum. As stated in the charge, the general education curriculum is meant to include the current First-Year Seminars, Second Language (Com II) requirement, six units of Fields of Study courses, and Wellness courses. Following the work of the General Education Curriculum Process Committee (GECPC) and the General Education Curriculum Review Committee (GECRC), the GECIC set out to address the deficiencies of a curriculum described by the GECRC as being in an “unhealthy state.”

The University of Richmond seeks to prepare students for “lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a diverse world.” The general education curriculum, shared by all students, has the potential to be a cornerstone of a Richmond education. Previous committee work, which included faculty, student, and staff feedback, indicated that the curriculum required considerable attention.

The GECPC (Spring 2018) offered several recommendations to avoid common, and potentially ruinous, problems in the review and revision process. The first was to identify what problems needed fixing. Much of this was handled by the GECRC, and the GECIC has been careful to focus its efforts on those areas identified by the GECRC’s year-long review. Similarly, we have made efforts to consistently communicate to our academic community the importance of these areas and the importance of general education itself. A second recommendation was to value committee work and the importance of the process. The GECIC has worked to maintain a close relationship with both the administration and faculty, particularly the Faculty Senate. These relationships have led to a transparent and productive process. Third, the GECPC suggested that the general education curriculum should be considered in its own right, as a crucial foundation to the undergraduate curriculum. For this reason, as discussed below, the GECIC began its work with the construction and sharing of goals for the general education curriculum. This established our work to address a portion of the curriculum that is shared by the entire university and fundamental to the education provided at the University of Richmond. Finally, the GECPC recommended that the process be imagined as a “research-based exercise.” Thus, curriculum review was an empirically driven process, based on literature reviews and on-campus data collection. Following this, the improvement process took a design-thinking approach that included iterations and feedback from faculty, staff, students, and outside experts. The GECIC is grateful to the GECPC, as its work provided the necessary foundation to help ensure a successful general education reform effort.

The GECRC (Summer 2018 - Spring 2019) examined the current general education curriculum to identify areas that required improvement. Their process involved a review of general education at peer and aspirant institutions, including other reform efforts. They also collected verbal and written feedback from faculty, staff, and students. The GECRC found that the current general education curriculum does not adequately provide the “essential skills, abilities, and perspectives,” nor does it fulfill the University’s mission to prepare students “for lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a diverse world.” The GECRC’s report highlighted shortcomings in the current general education curriculum, particularly related to
FYS, writing, numeracy, wellness, and cohesion, and proposed that “[t]he definitions and boundaries of the Fields of Study should be examined in detail to provide the appropriate breadth and scope for learning in the 21st Century.”

The GECIC approached the reform process with these areas in mind, seeking to construct a curriculum that is more effective and better suited to the University’s mission. Since May 2019, the GECIC has been steadily working to craft a general education proposal that would recognize and highlight what Paul Gaston, co-author of the book *Revising General Education*, calls the “Essential Curriculum.” The GECIC, across the past 24 months, has offered ideas, possibilities, and models of what a revised “Essential Curriculum” at the University of Richmond might look like. Nicholas Lehmann, in his article “The Case for a New Kind of Core” (November 26, 2016, *Chronical of Higher Ed*) wrote about “a suite of intellectual skills that together would empower a student to be able to acquire and understand information across a wide range of fields, and over the long term. These skills can be thought of as making up a tool kit that would help a student become a more empowered user of the university; they ought to help one have a more successful education and also a more successful career and life.”

The GECIC took up its work upon the GECRC’s completion of its final report. Our process included frequent (often weekly) committee meetings (with time allotted for visitors), outreach to and meetings with campus stakeholders, and discussions at school faculty meetings and Faculty Senate meetings. We also held open forums in Spring and Fall 2020 to discuss curriculum models and more detailed curriculum ideas. Between January and March 2021, the GECIC met with nearly all departments in the Schools of A&S and Business, and with the faculties of the Jepson School and the School of Professional and Continuing Studies. The committee also hosted two forums in late February and there was a University Faculty Meeting devoted entirely to a review of the January 22, 2021 proposal on March 5. Finally, a straw poll was taken on the aspects of the proposal as outlined in the January 22 report. The committee sent members to both the 2019 and the 2020 AAC&U Summer Institute on General Education and Assessment and we have continued to be in communication with associated experts. Design of the final curriculum proposal followed an iterative process, whereby the curriculum was repeatedly updated and modified in response to feedback. Throughout the process, our objective has been simple: to create a curriculum that reflects the values of a University of Richmond education and best serves our students.

As the culmination of its work, the GECIC presents this report that outlines our proposal for a revised general education curriculum. The proposed curriculum involves elements that are nearly identical to the current Fields of Study, yet revises those descriptions to address the shortcomings of the fields of study highlighted in both the GECRC report and in the feedback from campus constituents. The proposed curriculum retains several aspects of the current model, including a shared first-year experience, a second language proficiency requirement, and a breadth of coursework in the liberal arts. It supplements these components with Integrated Focus areas that, among other things, address the current curriculum’s shortcomings in writing, numeracy, and oral competency. In addition, campus discussions and the University’s mission have led to the addition of an explicit diversity, equity, and inclusion requirement.
Relative to the current general education curriculum, the proposed curriculum involves several important differences:

1. Integrated Focus areas including embodied communication, written communication, and quantitative data literacy;
2. A requirement that addresses DEI (Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture);
3. Areas of Inquiry that update Fields of Study and emphasize their role as modes of academic inquiry;
4. Reduction of the First-Year Seminar to a single unit and revision to the program’s writing requirements.

**Motivation for Curricular Changes:**

- The General Education Curriculum Review Committee (GECRC) emphasized the need to bring a clear identity to the general education curriculum, one that is coherent and purposeful. They found that the current Fields of Study (FOS) do not effectively capture the “breadth and scope” of general education, and recommended an examination of FOS definitions and boundaries. Still, feedback from the campus community reiterated the need to ensure exposure across the liberal arts and emphasized that the FOS do this well. Therefore, we have built the proposed curriculum around Areas of Inquiry which address essential foundations of learning through the traditional methods of a liberal arts education. These Areas of Inquiry are largely similar to the current FOS, but emphasize the expansive breadth of a liberal arts education and create opportunities for focused exploration in the general education curriculum. Coupled with the Areas of Inquiry are the Integrated Focus areas that include writing, quantitative data analysis, embodied communication and diversity, equity and inclusion. These serve as overlays, enabling courses across different disciplines or academic approaches to include them as key components of the course. Thus students will receive a broad introduction to the liberal arts, while also developing fundamental competencies. The curriculum is also built on Engagements that include three distinct areas: the First-Year Seminar, Wellness, and Second-Language Proficiency.

- Among the shortcomings of the current general education curriculum, the GECRC identified particular weaknesses in writing, numeracy and wellness. The proposed curriculum reduces the First-Year Seminar (FYS) requirement, the primary vehicle for writing in the current curriculum, from 2 units to 1 unit and instead includes written communication as an Integrated Focus that students must satisfy twice beyond FYS, thus providing opportunities for iterated instruction and skills development in this important area. We retain a single FYS course as an introduction to academic inquiry and reinforce it with more specific learning objectives for writing and embodied communication. Similarly, the proposed curriculum includes quantitative data literacy to address numeracy and data analysis. Finally, a parallel committee has created and piloted WELL 100, “a 14-week course focused on issues intended to facilitate a positive, healthy start for all incoming first-year students.” The GECIC supports this as an effective approach to
wellness. We recommend that future work in implementing a revised curriculum be reconnected with the WELL100 program.

- Calls for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion have been widespread. The GECRC, in their final report, suggested a requirement that addresses Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Numerous faculty and student voices, particularly in response to the current socio-political landscape and events on campus and in the city of Richmond, echoed this sentiment. Moreover, DEI is a cornerstone of the University Mission and Value Statements. Still, the current general education curriculum lacks any explicit recognition of DEI. The proposed curriculum, therefore, features DEI as an Integrated Focus area, recognizing its importance without naming it either an “Area of Inquiry” or an “Engagement” both of which categories seem potentially to limit the possible approaches to the course material. The DEI (Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture) course, even more than other courses in the curriculum, should be characterized by inclusive pedagogy and a commitment to inclusion and an academic analysis of power and dispossession; further study is required, however, to fully outline the possible learning outcomes for such a course. This approach ensures that students engage with DEI in the general education curriculum, yet recognizes the multitude of approaches that examine this topic.
II. Committee Work and Process

The General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee (hereafter referred to as GECIC) was formed late in the spring semester of 2019. The committee began its work soon thereafter, beginning with meetings with GECRC members, allowing the GECIC to study, in depth, the work of that committee, as well as the work of the previous committee, the GECPC. Several members of the GECIC attended the AACU Institute on General Education & Assessment (IGEA) in June of 2019, and the GECIC engaged with their work across the remainder of the summer. Important early work included in-depth reviews of both the GECRC and the GECPC reports, investigating the resources contained in those reports, discovering additional resources for general education review and reform, meeting with campus leaders regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion, building upon the work begun at the AACU IGEA, and finally, constructing goals that would help to guide our committee’s work. We first shared our goals in community information sessions in early fall 2019. Those goals, which have continued to serve as the backbone of our efforts across the two years of our work, are:

1. Introduce students to modes of academic inquiry that lead to thoughtful, critical analysis and provide a foundation for lifelong learning.

2. Challenge students to integrate and synthesize knowledge in order to ask questions, solve problems, gain perspectives, and apply learning.

3. Engage students in thoughtful self-reflection and exploration of their place in relation to a dynamic and diverse community.

As fall 2019 progressed, the GECIC assembled the basics of three different models, each of which took into account the recommendations of the GECRC. We shared those models with our campus community in early 2020 for comments and feedback. While elements of nearly all of the models found some champions, it was clear that each of the models, as constructed at that time, also contained elements that were either not popular or raised concerns. Days before the committee was to present the three models, the campus was rocked by a series of racial hate crimes, which resulted in a loud and clear call for a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) component to be included in any general education revision. The GECIC took all of the feedback it received during the campus forums and went back to work on the models. In particular, we spent time in February undertaking a study of how other schools were incorporating DEI into their general education curricula. We also met with members of the ICC to help guide us in this work. In fact, our last day on campus, prior to the pandemic shut down, was spent in a meeting between GECIC and ICC members.

We expected to have additional models to share in late March/early April, yet the COVID-19 pandemic altered that plan. The GECIC realized just as UR went fully virtual in March of 2020 that we needed more time for our work. The task was simply too large to adequately complete in a single year, given that our community wanted more from us than a general education model; they also wanted questions answered concerning implementation, which was not a part of the committee’s original charge. Yet, it was clear that any general education model presented to the faculty for a vote had to include details about implementation, oversight, faculty training,
COVID-19 also slowed things down, as faculty were no longer fully invested in the work of the GECIC, given the necessity of pivoting to an all-online teaching format literally overnight. Faculty on the GECIC were also facing teaching challenges and those needed to be addressed first. While the GECIC continued its work, the committee did need a short period to refocus and reorganize, as basically everyone else on campus did after the spring pivot. Finally, we also needed time to educate ourselves as to what other schools were doing in bringing DEI into their general education curricula, and how we might do that at UR. The committee membership changed in May, with Kevin Cherry rotating off and Armond Towns coming onto the committee. Dr. Towns was an integral part of the GECIC’s work on bringing DEI into our curriculum revisions. So, with each of these things in mind, the committee requested more time in order to faithfully discharge its responsibility. The extension was granted, with the final draft report due to the Faculty Senate on January 22, 2021. This extension was helpful to us, as it allowed us to continue to both deepen and broaden the scope of our work, even during the pandemic lock down and beyond. The committee met regularly during our first year of work, for 90 minutes each week.

During the summer of 2020, a team from the GECIC attended a virtual AACU IGEA, this time bringing specific ideas and questions that followed our first year of work. The Institute was a high value experience for our team, particularly due to our interactions with our faculty mentors and other school teams. We were also able to develop a plan that we enacted as soon as the institute ended, resulting in the creation of multiple learning outcomes for several of our curricular revision elements (as well as allowing us time for consulting with campus stakeholders about the language of those learning outcomes and revising where necessary), a timeline for moving through the fall semester, and, importantly, the construction of the BQ Curriculum, which was the model submitted to Faculty Senate in the final draft report of January 22, 2021. Included in our summer 2020 work was the creation of our DEI learning outcomes. Dowha Karar, a Westhampton student, also joined our committee over the summer, replacing Jennifer Munnings who had just graduated.

Across the fall of 2020 we continued to meet with stakeholders and opened up the first thirty minutes of our weekly two-hour meetings to our community. We heard from multiple campus constituents (faculty, staff, and students) across those weekly 30-minute conversations, addressing topics across the BQ curriculum model. We also continued to meet with various faculty groups (such as junior faculty, second language proficiency faculty, the Humanities Advisory Board, and others) while also holding four community forums: two in October (15, 16) and two in November (19, 20). Finally, we also shared updates with the Faculty Senate, and joined faculty meetings of A&S, Business, and Jepson Schools. We are grateful to our colleagues who took the time to meet with the committee across the fall semester – their input was always heard and considered, and resulted in changes that strengthened the promise of the BQ Curriculum itself.

Midway through the semester we began work on a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document based, in part, on the questions that came to us from the campus forums. Working on the FAQ document also allowed us to view the BQ curriculum from multiple vantage points, which in turn helped us to sketch out what implementation might look like. Still, toward the close of the fall semester, the committee continued to hear concerns. The GECIC requested an extension of the
deadline for our final draft report from Faculty Senate so that we could continue to study and address those concerns. In response, members of the GECIC continued to worked on supporting documents across the winter break, and met with stakeholders prior to the start of classes in January 2021. Those meetings and other input resulted in additional changes to the model to respond to concerns about the perceived complexity and lack of breadth. The BQ Curriculum model, presented to the Faculty Senate on January 22, reflected those changes.

Following the submission of the BQ Curriculum model, the GECIC went on a “listening tour,” spanning late January – March 16, 2021, engaging in individual department meetings with nearly all departments in the School of Arts and Sciences and in the Robins School of Business. The GECIC also met with the faculties of the Jepson School of Leadership Studies and the School of Professional and Continuing Studies. The GECIC also held two forums in February and the Faculty Senate called a University Faculty Meeting (UFM) on March 5 to discuss the BQ Curriculum proposal. Following the UFM, a straw poll was made available to all voting faculty and was open for responses from March 5 through March 10. The results of that straw poll were then shared with the GECIC on March 11 (the straw poll results can be found in Appendix A4). The GECIC then took up the revision work, and this proposal, the Web of Inquiry general education curriculum, submitted to Faculty Senate and our campus community on April 2, is the result of that work. The Web of Inquiry curriculum represents the feedback shared with the GECIC across our listening tour, coupled with the straw poll results. The GECIC believes that the Web of Inquiry general education proposal brings together the GECRC’s call for general education revision with our campus community’s guidance as to how that revision should be put into practice.

The GECIC wishes to add to the record that, in every case, our meetings with faculty colleagues were inspiring, engaging, and thought-provoking. The GECIC membership was privileged to meet with so many of our colleagues over the course of our work, when our community shared thoughts about various general education models, reviewed learning outcomes, met with us in person (pre-pandemic) and via Zoom after the pandemic took hold. Our community’s feedback has helped us to improve our models, and we humbly thank our colleagues for sharing their time and attention with us. Since the GECIC’s first open forum on October 13, 2019, the committee has meet with at least 906 members of our campus community over the course of 62 meetings. We have been listening: taking notes, sharing possibilities, asking questions, and our colleagues have responded with ideas, suggestions, and comments.

One final element in the GECIC’s effort to receive feedback on our January 22 proposal involves our student survey. From February 15 through March 1, the GECIC conducted an online student survey to measure students' impressions of the BQ general education curriculum proposal. We received over 500 responses to the survey and the results can be found on the GECIC’s website and in Appendix A4. The results suggested a generally favorable perception among the student body.
III. The Web of Inquiry Curriculum Proposal

a. Vision Statement and Goals

The Web of Inquiry curriculum at the University of Richmond is designed to provide students with a grounding in the liberal arts & sciences. Historically the liberal arts provided an education for free people, preparing them for participation in civic life, and we envision this curriculum as providing an education both foundational and flexible enough for 21st-century citizenship. The Web of Inquiry begins with the central “hub” of its Engagement courses: a First-Year Seminar, Second Language Proficiency, and Wellness. Students are simultaneously exposed to a broad web, the Areas of Inquiry (AOI), that radiate across the liberal arts through courses grounded in traditional disciplines and interdisciplinary programs. These courses provide an introduction to various modes of academic inquiry, expanding students’ understanding of how we create, acquire, and examine knowledge. In addition, the curriculum features Integrated Focus areas represented as connecting threads that include Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (DEI), quantitative data literacy, written communication, and embodied communication. These aspects may appear in AOI courses, in elective courses, or as part of majors. They serve to develop student’s abilities in key areas that promote and enhance lifelong learning, while simultaneously acting as avenues for students to further explore course content. The Web of Inquiry locates DEI as an explicit focal area, recognizing its role in students’ intellectual and civic development.

The curriculum serves both those students who entered the University already committed to an academic pursuit, and those who hope to discover it here. The AOI and Integrated Focus areas expose students to multiple modes of academic inquiry and also to different disciplinary/content areas. This gives students the opportunity to explore new domains, as well as the foundation to approach a chosen pursuit from a variety of methods.

Every new curriculum is a leap of faith, and an investment in the future. Taking on this work is challenging and requires a commitment to student learning. There are always details to be worked out and that is also the case here. That said, this curriculum reflects the work not only of three committees over the course of almost four years, but also of the many colleagues who have provided feedback and experts whom we have consulted. The descriptions outlined here, we hope, will guide the development of robust new courses as well as revisions of current ones, many of which will transfer easily into this curriculum.

b. Overview of the Curriculum

The Web of Inquiry builds a liberal arts foundation with the AOI and weaves a set of proficiencies and understandings through a student’s coursework. The objective is to build literacies in key areas and introduce students to multiple modes of inquiry. The AOI are ways of engaging the world, ways of understanding and analyzing, ways of asking questions and creating knowledge. The Integrated Focus areas are ways of connecting, analyzing, and communicating the knowledges created in the areas of inquiry, ways of interrogating that knowledge, and ways of synthesizing and sharing.
Areas of Inquiry (1 unit each)
1. Historical Inquiry
2. Literary and Textual Inquiry
3. Natural Science Scientific Inquiry
4. Social Inquiry
5. Symbolic Reasoning Inquiry
6. Visual and Performing Arts Inquiry

Integrated Focus areas
1. Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (DEI) (1 course)
2. Embodied Communication (1 course)
3. Quantitative Data Literacy (1 course)
4. Written Communication (2 courses)

Engagements
1. First Year Seminar (1 unit)
2. Second Language Proficiency (Proficiency Standard: up to 4 units)
3. Wellness (proposed .25 unit WELL 100)

**c. Recommendations for Implementation**

This section provides GECIC recommendations for implementation of the Web of Inquiry as well as the rationale for these recommendations. If the Web of Inquiry is adopted by the UR faculty, the Implementation Committee that follows will ultimately determine implementation details including rollout, course approval, and assessment. (See the formal charge for the Implementation Committee in Section VI.)

The GECIC recommends there be consistent, thorough, and prudent oversight of all aspects of the Web of Inquiry curriculum. To this end, the GECIC recommends the appointment of a new Director of General Education to oversee the curriculum alongside the General Education, and FYS Committees, and other relevant committees.

- **Recommendation 1:** We recommend the appointment of a Director of General Education. The Director of General Education will, in partnership with relevant committees, have oversight of all elements of the general education curriculum, including Engagements, AOI, IF, and the IL Pilot Program. The Director of General Education will, partnering with IFX, oversee assessment of the Web of Inquiry curriculum and interface with the General Education Committee and other relevant committees. The GECIC also expects this new position to interface regularly with the new Director for Advising, First & Second Year programs, and FYS. The Director of General Education should come from the teaching faculty and have experience in general education and/or curriculum development. The position should carry with it course reassignment comparable to the Director of the Faculty Teaching & Learning Hub or an Associate Provost position, and should report to Academic Affairs to provide appropriate
oversight. The Director of General Education would work with faculty to craft successful proposals. The Director of General Education would also work, in partnership with the Faculty Hub and relevant committees and units, to offer opportunities for faculty development for those who are teaching general education courses. The GECIC recommends that the Director of General Education have ex-officio status on all relevant committees, including GEC and FYS.

- Recommendation 2: The GECIC recommends that the Implementation Committee thoroughly review the structure of the General Education Committee and other committees that currently review and approve courses (FYS, Student Co-Curricular Academic Initiative Committee, etc.) to streamline and integrate the course review and approval process to best empower faculty to propose and offer courses in the new curriculum, and to support the development of courses in an ongoing fashion.

Rationale: One of the shortcomings of our current general education curriculum is that there is no rigorous oversight of courses, in large part because the job is one that takes time and attention. Our recommended enhanced committee structure and a centralized Director of General Education should allow for more effective oversight of the Web of Inquiry both holistically and at the level of individual components.

The Director of General Education, together with the previously mentioned committees, will be important resources needed for the new curriculum to thrive at UR. The GECIC also recommends resources in the form of stipends and professional development for individual faculty interested in developing and adapting courses for the Web of Inquiry.

- Recommendation 1: We recommend that stipends be made available for faculty who are interested in developing and teaching courses for the Web of Inquiry. This could also involve an agreement by faculty members to offer the corresponding course a certain number of times.
- Recommendation 2: Professional development opportunities should also be available for faculty interested in developing courses. These could take the form of workshops dedicated to individual Integrated Focus Areas and to pedagogy to support them. These workshops could be hosted by external consultants or experts from within the faculty. These workshops should be encouraged, and perhaps required where no other expertise in an area can be demonstrated but not required. They could be offered in coordination with the UR Faculty HUB.

Rationale: Adapting and designing courses requires an immense amount of work, and faculty need support in this work. These faculty resources will enrich our curriculum, promote a greater number of course offerings, reinvigorate our faculty in their teaching of general education courses, and engage faculty in important discussions around best practices.

Here, the GECIC offers additional recommendations for curriculum logistics.
• Recommendation 1: We recommend that a single course carries no more than two attributes within the Web of Inquiry. No course should count for more than one Area of Inquiry, however a course may, for example, count as a single Area of Inquiry and a single Integrated Focus area. Alternatively, a course may count as two Integrated Focus areas. Designations should be driven by the appropriate pedagogy and content area focus of the course. One important exception: an FYS course should only count for FYS with no additional general education requirements.

• Recommendation 2: We recommend that AP / IB courses continue to be the responsibility of individual departments regarding institutional credit for specific Areas of Inquiry courses.

• Recommendation 3: We recommend study abroad courses count for any element of the curriculum in UR-based study abroad programs as long as they meet the learning outcomes for the specific Area of Inquiry or Integrated Focus courses.

• Recommendation 4: For multi-section courses, such as ECON 101, we recommend all sections must carry the same Integrated Focus designation.

Rationale: These recommendations are offered as a way to balance feasibility of the curriculum from the point of view of students and flexibility for individual faculty in terms of what they teach.

Finally, following the work of the Implementation Committee, the GECIC recommends a 2-year roll out of the Web of Inquiry and a thorough review/evaluation of the program after 5 years.
IV. Areas of Inquiry

Descriptions for the proposed Areas of Inquiry:

1. Historical Inquiry

Courses that engage in historical inquiry are designed to focus on broad questions directed at political, social, physical, and/or symbolic worlds within specific periods, across epochs and/or as frames of reference. They analyze the ever-changing historical contexts that influence human thought and action, and shape social institutions and systems cultural practices.

By emphasizing the critical analysis of sources and the interrelationships among ideas, institutions, social structures, and events within one or more interpretive frameworks, these courses foster students' awareness of the methods and perspectives for understanding past societies and cultures in historical context.

2. Literary & Textual Inquiry

Literary and Textual Inquiry courses raise questions about how meaning is made, focusing especially on multi-modal objects of inquiry such as literary works, film, media, and other forms of textuality. They engage diverse genres and cultural traditions, helping students situate themselves and others as products of and participants in literature (writ large) and culture.

Courses satisfying the literary & textual analysis requirement are centrally concerned with the textual analysis of primary works. They may consider a variety of interpretive frameworks and attend to one or more collateral areas of investigation, including the study of the process by which texts are created and received, the historical and cultural contexts in which they are created and received, and their relationships to each other and to other fields of experience and analysis. This area of inquiry brings its perspectives and methods to bear on imaginative and non-imaginative works alike.

3. Natural Science Scientific Inquiry

Natural Science Scientific Inquiry is designed to enhance students’ appreciation of the beauty of science, develop their understanding of the challenges of doing science, and provide a framework for further inquiry. Students will gain experience in the formulation and testing of hypotheses, thus developing an understanding of questions that are fundamental to science, as well as the process by which hypotheses are developed, evaluated, and interpreted. Students will also learn to engage with the ideas of science and participate in discourse related to the role of the natural sciences in the world today.

Based upon the generation and testing of hypotheses, Natural Science scientific Inquiry is restricted to the study of repeatable, measurable, and verifiable phenomena. Within this area,
knowledge may be gained either by controlled experiment or diligent observation, depending upon the phenomena being studied. Similarly, some methodologies rely upon quantitative analysis, while others are primarily qualitative. Given the focus on the process by which scientific knowledge is created and evaluated, courses should include a lab component.

4. Social Inquiry
Social Inquiry is the study of human social behavior and its determinants. This area relies on building theory in order to predict patterns in social behavior, employing systematic methods (whether quantitative or qualitative) to describe social behavior, and analyzing social behavior to test and refine theory. Students will learn to analyze individual and group behavior by utilizing a variety of theoretical and empirical frameworks.

Courses in this area may examine phenomena that include the psychological mechanisms giving rise to social behavior, the ecological, institutional, economic, cultural, or political environments that shape and are shaped by social behavior, or the social behavior of groups as well as individuals. Courses should include the reading of or involve students in empirical research on patterns of human behavior.

5. Symbolic Reasoning Inquiry
Symbolic Reasoning Inquiry focuses on cultivating the logical and procedural thinking skills essential to solving a wide variety of problems. It is distinguished by its attention to internal logical consistency and by its wide external applicability. This area emphasizes symbolic problem solving, a process that includes translating problems into terms that are amenable to treatment within a symbolic system, understanding consistent rules by which the information relevant to the problem may be processed in order to obtain a solution, recognizing important underlying principles that govern the application of these rules, and judging both the appropriateness of known solution methods to a particular problem and the quality or reasonableness of the solution obtained.

Courses in this area aim to develop in students the skills to obtain valid solutions using one or more symbolic systems, the ingenuity to translate new problems into appropriate terms for such systems, and the persistence to carry a solution method through to completion. The focus of a symbolic reasoning course should be on understanding the symbolic system and how it can be used to develop problem-solving tools rather than on the tools themselves.

6. Visual and Performing Arts Inquiry
The Visual and Performing Arts Inquiry considers questions about the forms, traditions, meanings, and historical contexts of works in the visual and performing arts, and explores issues of method and process in these works.
Courses satisfying this requirement are centrally concerned with the roles of creation and interpretation in the study of the arts. They develop in students an enhanced understanding of the arts by fostering intellectual appreciation of works of visual and performance art by involving students in the process of creating, embracing, exploring, cultivating, collaborating (when appropriate) and analyzing art works through a maker’s mindset. These courses are suffused with the notion that the arts are a powerful and profound influence on human perception and understanding.

Note: The AOI will eventually have learning outcomes that will be the responsibility of the Implementation Committee (see Implementation Committee charge, Section VI.)
V. Integrated Focus areas
Descriptions for the proposed Integrated Focus areas:

1. Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (1 course)

At the University of Richmond, we strive “to prepare students to contribute to, and succeed in, a complex, interconnected world.” In addition, we seek “to produce knowledge to address pressing problems faced by people around the globe,” while being aware of our socio-political-economic positions. Building on the Office of the President’s goal of “identifying inequities in the experiences and outcomes of students, faculty, and staff in order to address them systematically and ensure all members of our community can fully participate in the life of the institution,” we see inequities, exclusion, and a lack of diversity as systematic problems; therefore the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion must meet this problem at scale through systematic change.

This area must be systematic, meaning that it is not an issue reducible to individual feelings of inclusion or exclusion, but an issue inseparable from power relations that disproportionately affect people based on their differing social-structuring positions.

2. Embodied Communication (1 course)

Embodied communication focuses on the stewardship of meaningful communication and critical exchange. Embodied communication efficacy demonstrates understanding of the interdependence between thought and oral expression, purpose and audience, and content and form. Effective communication is informed, integrative and iterative, and serves to build student speaking, listening and questioning skills, confidence and emotional intelligence.

3. Quantitative Data Literacy (1 course)

Quantitative Data Literacy (QDL) is a competency in working with data using quantitative methods. Beyond organization and analysis of this data, application is an essential component of QDL. Individuals with strong QDL skills can develop and execute appropriate quantitative approaches to problems coming from a variety of contexts. Furthermore, they can interrogate and communicate arguments supported by quantitative evidence in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).

4. Written Communication (2 courses)

Writing intensive courses are distinguished by the intentionality of the course design; they recognize and employ writing as a technology of thought. They are not simply courses that require a certain amount of writing; rather, they focus on enhancing the ability of students to
communicate effectively as a core learning goal. They use writing as a primary means of understanding, exploring, distilling, analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting and reflecting on what is being taught and learned. They draw on a range of pedagogies to develop writing capacities for a variety of learners at all levels. Students will employ writing effectively across the curriculum to communicate their understanding and analysis of course content while also developing original insights and ideas.

Note: Draft learning outcomes for the Integrated Focus areas are in Appendix A2.
VI. Charge for Implementation Committee:

The Charge from the General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee to the General Education Curriculum Implementation Committee (draft April 2, 2021 April 16, 2021)

The Charge

After a two-year review and improvement process, the General Education Curriculum Improvement Committee settled on the Web of Inquiry model, approved by the University of Richmond Faculty on xxxx.

The General Education Curriculum Implementation Committee is charged with studying the feasibility, staffing, and other implementation issues surrounding the new general education curriculum with an eye to:

1. Writing a job description for a new General Education Director so that person can be brought on board during academic year 22-23. Detail provided in Recommendation #1, p. 12-13.
2. Developing a charge for a newly reconfigured General Education Committee (and related committees, if necessary, such as an Integrated Focus committee, etc.). The Implementation Committee will also review the possibility of amending committee charges both for the GEC and FYS committees to be sure they are providing appropriate oversight and faculty development.
3. Working with faculty working groups, IFX, and other relevant stakeholders to develop learning outcomes for the Areas of Inquiry, the Integrated Focus elements, and the Engagements.
4. Studying the feasibility of, and working with relevant campus units on, faculty development programs for FYS, DEI: Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture, Writing, Information Literacy, Quantitative Data Literacy, and Embodied Communication (the areas of Integrated Focus). This may include a redesigned Writing Center, as well as new collaborations with the Library, Speech Center, Academic Skills Center, and Faculty Hub.
5. If the Integrative Learning Pilot Program proposal passes, write a job description for the new Director of the program so that person can begin to build the FLC for the 2022-23 academic year; student participation would then begin in 23-24, the same year that the Web of Inquiry is brought online.
6. Updating the existing general education website (https://gened.richmond.edu) as the Web of Inquiry is brought online.
7. Developing a communication plan for the roll-out of the Web of Inquiry.
8. The GECIC recommends that the Implementation Committee thoroughly review the structure of the General Education Committee and other committees that currently review and approve courses (FYS, Student Co-Curricular Academic Initiative Committee, etc.) to streamline and integrate the course review and approval process to best empower faculty to propose and offer courses in the new curriculum, and to support the development of courses in an ongoing fashion.
9. The GECIC recommends that the Implementation Committee consider what, if any, elements of the Web of Inquiry curriculum need to be completed at the University of Richmond.

The Product
Building on the Web of Inquiry proposal and the suggestions outlined by the GECIC’s final report, the GEC Implementation Committee will prepare the Web of Inquiry general education curriculum to be partially in place by Fall 2022, and fully up and running by Fall 2023.

Membership of the Committee
There should be proportional representation from all the undergraduate schools. At least one member (maximum two) should carry over from the GEC Improvement Committee. The GECIC recommends that the carry over member(s) be a voting member of the Implementation Committee. The GECIC also recommends that a member of the Office of the Registrar be a member of the Implementation Committee.
Members should be selected according to the custom of the school (A&S elected; Business & Jepson appointed.)

The Process
The GEC Implementation Committee will identify its chairperson or co-chairs before August 19, 2021. The GECIC chairpersons will make available documents and data generated by the committee during 2019-2021, including the committee’s final report. By December 2021, the GEC Implementation Committee should coalesce around a draft proposal showing what elements of the Web of Inquiry curriculum could come online as early as Fall 2022 so that relevant members of the administration (Provost, Vice President of Planning & Policy, deans of the undergraduate schools, the University Registrar, etc.) can inspect the proposal and recommend changes. A complete and detailed proposal for bringing the complete Web of Inquiry curriculum online should be presented to the Faculty Senate, relevant faculty governance bodies, and administrators during Spring 2022 for approval (the committee should be prepared to spend more time shepherding the proposal, if necessary).

The GECIC recommends that the newly formed Implementation Committee send a team to the AACU IGEA in summer 2021. The GECIC found the AACU IGEA to be incredibly helpful to our work, and believes that the Implementation Committee team will receive help related to implementation and assessment.
VII. Curriculum FAQ

OVERVIEW:

What are the elements of the Web of Inquiry General Education Curriculum?
– Engagement: 1 unit First-Year seminar; 0 – 4 units Second Language Proficiency; Wellness (proposed at .25 units)
- Areas of Inquiry: 6 units Areas of Inquiry (as defined below)

-Integrated Focus areas: Integrated Focus areas can be taken as overlays, either with the Areas of Inquiry or in other courses (perhaps in the major); some require more than one unit in the area

In terms of size, how does the Web of Inquiry curriculum compare to the Fields of Study curriculum?
The Web of Inquiry curriculum is comparable in unit size to the current Fields of Study curriculum, and is, in fact, one unit less, as it contains 1 FYS rather than two. The Integrated Focus areas could all be addressed as overlays on the Areas of Inquiry or in major/minor courses, should departments wish to bring elements of the Web of Inquiry curriculum into their major or minor curricula.

What are the Areas of Inquiry?
The Areas of Inquiry
– provide students with what they need to ask questions and solve problems across an array of disciplines
– provide skills for lifelong learning that students will continue to draw on throughout their lives both to “produce scholarly and creative work” and to maintain an attitude of “thoughtful inquiry” to the world around them
– build a foundation for student growth

The Areas of Inquiry are:

- Historical Inquiry (1)
- Literary and Textual Inquiry (1)
- Natural Science Scientific Inquiry (1)
- Social Inquiry (1)
- Symbolic Reasoning Inquiry (1)
- Visual and Performing Arts Inquiry (1)

Please see section IV of this report for a detailed description of each Area of Inquiry.

What are the Engagements?

The Engagement courses are: FYS, Second Language Proficiency, and Wellness. The proposed curriculum reduces the First-Year Seminar (FYS) requirement, the primary vehicle for writing in
the current curriculum, from 2 units to 1 unit and instead includes written communication as an Integrated Focus area that students must satisfy twice beyond FYS, thus providing opportunities for iterated instruction and skills development in this important area. We retain a single FYS course as an introduction to academic inquiry and reinforce it with more specific learning objectives for writing and embodied communication. Similarly, the proposed curriculum includes an Integrated Focus area of quantitative data literacy to address numeracy and data analysis. Because of the importance of understanding the national and cultural perspectives of other language groups, the GECIC recommends that the Second Language requirement remain at the proficiency level which is commonly met with 0 – 4 units. Finally, a parallel committee has created and piloted WELL 100, “a 14-week course focused on issues intended to facilitate a positive, healthy start for all incoming first-year students.” The GECIC supports this as an effective approach to wellness. We recommend that future work in implementing a revised curriculum be reconnected with the UR WELL 100 program.

The Engagement courses are: FYS, Second Language Proficiency, and Wellness.

**What are the Integrated Focus areas?**
The Web of Inquiry curriculum features integrated focus areas represented as connecting threads that include Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (DEI), Quantitative Data Literacy, Written Communication, and Embodied Communication. These aspects may appear in AOI courses, in elective courses, or as part of majors. They serve to develop student’s abilities in key areas that promote and enhance lifelong learning, while simultaneously acting as avenues for students to further explore course content.

The Integrated Focus areas are:

Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (1)

Embodied Communication (1)

Quantitative Data Literacy (1)

Written Communication (2)

**LOGISTICS:**

Could any attributes of the Web of Inquiry curriculum be taken in the major? That will be entirely up to individual departments/programs, yet the GECIC hopes that various elements of the Web of Inquiry curriculum could either count for the major or could be taken in the major. For example, perhaps one of the Integrated Focus writing intensive courses could come in a department’s senior seminar. Or perhaps an Area of Inquiry could serve as a gateway to the major (just as many of our Fields of Study classes do now). Indeed, there is nothing to prevent any of a department’s courses being designated as Areas of Inquiry or Integrated Focus, thus easing the distinction between major and non-major courses if a department should so choose.
Won’t the Web of Inquiry curriculum be too complicated for both student and advisor to navigate?
It will take our community time to become knowledgeable about any new general education curriculum. While it may present some challenges early on, it will become more comfortable over time, just as our current general education curriculum has become. And the Web of Inquiry curriculum, while retaining elements of our current field-of-study curriculum, also offers more variety and flexibility than that curriculum, for both faculty and students.

What kinds / types of support will be available to help faculty to transition to the Web of Inquiry curriculum?
The GECIC recommends that training and stipends be made available to all faculty adapting or developing courses as we transition to the Web of Inquiry curriculum. Faculty will want to revise existing courses to adapt to the new curriculum, or create new courses to fit into the new curriculum. Faculty may need support and training for teaching courses that include the Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (DEI) Integrated Focus area, for example, or a refresher course on offering a writing intensive course.

What kind of oversight of the Web of Inquiry curriculum would be put into place?
The GECIC recommends that there be consistent, thorough, and prudent oversight of all aspects of the Web of Inquiry curriculum. We recommend the appointment of a Director of General Education, who could then interface with the General Education Committee and the Director of Advising, FYS, and First & Second Year Living and Learning Programs. One of the shortcomings of our current general education curriculum is that there is no rigorous oversight of courses, in large part because the job is one that takes time and attention. Thus the GECIC’s recommendation to create a Director of General Education, reporting to Academic Affairs, to provide appropriate oversight.

What will the approval process be for Web of Inquiry curriculum courses?
The GECIC expects that courses approved as Areas of Inquiry or Integrated Focus will be done through the General Education Committee, though the GECIC has asked the Implementation Committee to consider the viability of adding an Integrated Focus committee to review course requests for that area of the general education curriculum. FYS courses will continue to be approved through the FYS committee.

How many attributes can be in a single course?
We recommend no more than two attributes per course. For example, an Area of Inquiry may also have an Integrated Focus overlay.

What is the timeline? What comes next?
The GECIC will deliver the Web of Inquiry curriculum to the Faculty Senate on April 2, 2021, and post it on the GECIC website. There will then be two weeks for community discussion on the proposal. The GECIC will submit their final proposal to the Faculty Senate on April 16, 2021. Faculty Senate will then determine next steps as regards voting on the proposal. If the proposal passes, the GECIC will then offer the charge for the Implementation Committee.
ELEMENTS OF THE WEB OF INQUIRY:

How do we define the Engagements?
The Engagements introduce students to, and engage them in, university work in the First-Year seminar and Wellness course, and engage them with the world through Second Language Proficiency.

How do we define the Areas of Inquiry?
Areas of Inquiry courses focus especially on ways of engaging the world, ways of understanding and analyzing cultural, physical, and conceptual phenomena, and ways of asking questions and creating knowledge.

How do we define the Integrated Focus courses?
Integrated Focus courses focus especially on ways of connecting, analyzing, and communicating the knowledges created in the Areas of Inquiry, ways of interrogating that knowledge, and ways of synthesizing and sharing. There are, of course, always overlaps between and among the Areas of Inquiry and the Integrated Focus areas, but to the extent that they can be separated, we can think of the Areas of Inquiry as moving outward and the Integrated Focus areas as moving across.

How much attention must a course give to an Integrated Focus overlay for the course to receive that attribute?
While this will be up to the implementation committee, the GECIC anticipates that courses receiving the Integrated Focus attribution will need to dedicate explicit instructional time to that attribute, and to build it into the learning goals for the course. In applying for an Integrated Focus attribution, an instructor/department would indicate the Integrated Focus area woven into the course by demonstrating its inclusion in the learning outcomes.

Will faculty be able to receive training necessary for teaching the Integrated Focus area that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion?
Yes, this is something that the GECIC would expect to see as the Web of Inquiry curriculum is brought online.

Weren’t there two diversity, equity, and inclusion units proposed in the BQ Curriculum? Why did the GECIC drop down to one DEI unit in the Web of Inquiry curriculum?
The GECIC recommended two units of DEI in the BQ curriculum because our research into this area of a general education curriculum led us to this conclusion. An in-depth study of general education curricula at other institutions that included a DEI component, and conversations with experts in this area, both on-campus and off, made clear that this element should not be treated as a “one and done” course. Yet, the results of the Straw Poll (see Appendix A4) made it clear that while our community supports inclusion of a DEI course in our general education curriculum (74%), the majority of our community was simply not ready to support two units of DEI, principally due to concerns about staffing (43.8% supported one DEI course, while 30.4% supported two DEI courses.) Thus, the Web of Inquiry proposal includes one unit in this Integrated Focus area, allowing our campus to embrace at least one diversity, equity and inclusion requirement as a part of an Area of Inquiry, major, or elective course.
Why are there two writing intensive units in the Integrated Focus courses, in addition to the emphasis on writing in FYS?

One of the recommendations that came to the GECIC from the GECRC was to increase our students’ engagement with writing. We hope to scaffold writing across the general education curriculum and, perhaps even beyond, if departments choose to bring one of the writing intensive units into one of their major courses, such as a senior seminar. A deliberate engagement with writing would, in that case, start in the FYS, build in another general education course, then move into the major, allowing for a writing intensive experience within the student’s chosen discipline.

Would there be an enrollment limit for writing intensive classes?

The GECIC recommends limiting the enrollment in writing intensive courses, as decades of research have demonstrated that smaller class sizes allow for more focused attention on writing. We recommend further study of the issue, especially the impact on staffing, by the implementation committee. The FYS classes already have a 16-student limit on enrollment, and the GECIC supports that same limit going forward for FYS. However, the GECIC recognizes that departments must choose for themselves what their class enrollment numbers should be.

What is embodied communication?

Embodied communication focuses on the stewardship of meaningful communication and critical exchange. Effective communication is informed, integrative and iterative, and serves to build student speaking, listening and questioning skills, confidence and emotional intelligence. Examples of embodied communication in the classroom include but are not limited to oral presentations, speeches, debate, peer work, seminar discussion, historical role play, ASL, and various forms of artistic expression.

What is integrative learning? How does IL fit into the Web of Inquiry curriculum?

Integrative learning is an understanding that students build across the general education curriculum, major, and/or various co-curricular programs. Students begin by making simple connections among ideas and experiences and progress by synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. Integrative learning requires students to reflect on specific elements of their college experience, and construct a coherent narrative that draws on carefully selected learnings and signature work.

We share a proposal for an Integrative Learning Pilot Program in Appendix A1 of this report.

Why do we need to retain a Symbolic Reasoning Area of Inquiry? Isn’t the Integrated Focus Quantitative Data Literacy requirement the same thing? Isn’t that two Math classes in the general education curriculum?

The QDL competency is a response to the results of the GECRC’s report, which concluded that numeracy is lacking in the present general education curriculum. This is distinct from the Symbolic Reasoning Area of Inquiry. The Symbolic Reasoning Area of Inquiry requirement introduces students to a broad field of problem-solving built on abstraction and logic. QDL however, focuses on application, providing a specific set of skills that permeates multiple areas of inquiry. Similar to how writing spans several disciplines, QDL is a fundamental competency for working with quantitative data in the social sciences, natural sciences, and the humanities, as
well as for understanding and analyzing the plethora of quantitative information we live with today.

In the Web of Inquiry curriculum, we anticipate that courses that fulfill the Social Inquiry and Natural Science Scientific Inquiry Areas of Inquiry will contribute to the QDL competency as much as, if not more than, courses aligned with Symbolic Reasoning.

**What about AP and IB? Could a student receive credit for any of the Web of Inquiry curriculum using AP or IB?**

In our current general education curriculum, it is possible for a student to receive credit by examination for almost any given area of the general education curriculum at the University of Richmond.

Decisions regarding which elements of the Web of Inquiry curriculum that must be completed at UR will be one of the important charges of the implementation committee. Departments currently determine whether they want AP or IB scores to count for any courses in their area; the GECIC is not recommending any changes to that current policy.

**OTHER:**

**Could a student fulfill aspects of the Web of Inquiry curriculum while studying abroad?**
Yes, though, as with AP/IB, there are likely to be few one-to-one correspondences, and courses may not carry the same Area of Inquiry, Engagement, or Integrated Focus area in the abroad institution that they would at UR. Close examination of syllabi and assignments will be required to determine Web of Inquiry curriculum credit at non-UR study abroad programs. Students could complete any element of the Web of Inquiry curriculum in UR-based study abroad programs as long as they meet the learning outcomes.

**Could any Second Language Proficiency classes also include an Integrated Focus attribute?**
Yes, though it will be up to the individual departments to determine whether it is pedagogically appropriate to include an Integrated Focus attribute in their SLP general education classes.

**How will faculty request approval for courses in the Web of Inquiry Curriculum?**
Just as they do now, through the GEC or relevant committees.

**How will attributes be handled for multiple sections of courses?**
For multi-section courses, such as ECON 101, all sections must carry the same Integrated Focus attribute (if they carry that attribute). In other words, in multiple sections of a single course, those courses must all carry the same Web of Inquiry Curriculum attributes when it comes to Integrated Focus. So, ECON 101 might have the same Integrated Focus attribute (for example, Embodied Communication), for all sections of that class.

**How will attributes be handled for individual courses (without multiple sections of the same course)?**
A faculty member can submit for any attribute from the Web of Inquiry curriculum; once the
GEC has approved the request, the faculty member would need to submit a proposal to make any changes (switching to a different Integrated Focus area, for example).

Can an FYS course have any other Web of Inquiry attributes?
No, it cannot. Because FYS has its own learning outcomes that include writing and embodied communication, as well as information literacy, adding more learning outcomes associated with other attributes would not be pedagogically appropriate.

What about a faculty member asking to teach a Web of Inquiry curriculum class when they do not have a terminal degree in that area?
For SACS-COC accreditation, faculty need to have credentials in the subject area in which they teach. Integrated Focus and Areas of Inquiry combine an emphasis on course framework, pedagogy, and (in some cases) subject matter: for those in which subject matter is central to the learning outcome, faculty will need demonstrable expertise, as they would for any other course.

How will transfer students fulfill the general education requirements?
Transfer students are exempt from the FYS requirement. All other requirements must be fulfilled. Transfer courses may be reviewed for Web of Inquiry curriculum requirements.
Appendices

Appendix A1. Proposal for an Integrative Learning Pilot Program

Part 1: Introduction

General Education curricula have long been viewed as the foundation for lifelong learning. Our current General Education curriculum is reflective of this perspective. While there are many strengths to this approach, a pronounced deficiency is that it neglects to emphasize the importance of integrative learning.

Integrative learning is an understanding that students build across the general education curriculum, major, and/or various co-curricular programs. Students begin by making simple connections among ideas and experiences, and progress by synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. Integrative learning requires students to reflect on specific elements of their college experience, and construct a coherent narrative that draws on carefully selected learnings and signature work.

Leveraging the work of the two prior General Education committees, the GECIC promotes incorporating integrative learning in two separate and distinct ways. First, our General Education Web of Inquiry curriculum proposal incorporates integrative learning through the integration of three key elements: 1) Areas of Inquiry, 2) Integrated Focus areas (Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture, Writing Intensive, Qualitative Data Literacy, and Embodied Communication) and 3.) Engagements (FYS, Second Language Proficiency, and Wellness). The integration of these elements allows for the creation and communication of the UR Learning Experience, which will serve to distinguish and differentiate the University of Richmond and our students. Second, the GECIC proposes the adoption of a pilot program to explore and examine the incorporation of formal integrative learning programming (e.g., piloting an ePortfolio1 program option, etc.).

Part 2: Integrative Learning Pilot Program Proposal

The GECIC proposes a five-year Integrative Learning pilot program, with the first year spent in preparation to recruit and organize a group of faculty and staff (see possible partners in Rationale section below) to participate in the development and execution of this program.

The GECIC envisions an individual (the pilot program director) who would oversee the pilot program, keep track of the students involved, routinely collect data, navigate challenges, assist with implementation, and locate help and assistance for technical glitches. The pilot program director should be onboarded prior to rolling out this initiative, in order to be a part of the

---

1 An ePortfolio is a common electronic/web-based platform to house a student’s signature work, reflecting ideas and crossing boundaries between disciplines and experiences. ePortfolios are student-driven and student-owned. Ownership is essential to a student’s investment in a high-quality and meaningful product that would be a key asset as they move beyond the University. The ePortfolio serves as an opportunity for students to envision a future trajectory, building on prior experiences that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts.
recruitment and organizing of faculty and staff who will participate in developing the program. The pilot program director could be a faculty or staff member, who is experienced in advising and who has demonstrated experience in bringing integrative learning components into classes or through other programs. The GECIC recommends that the Implementation Committee consider appropriate compensation or a course release for the pilot program director, understanding that the pilot program student participation numbers will continue to grow with each year of the pilot program, thus causing ever increasing time demands on the program director.

The GECIC offers a timetable and implementation plan here:

Year One: An initial year of planning and organizing, which will involve bringing on board an individual who will oversee the pilot program and recruit faculty/staff for the program. The GECIC recommends that consideration be given to the formation of a Faculty Learning Community for this first year of work. The GECIC anticipates that this first year of planning and preparing would take place 2022-23 (following the first year of work by the GEC Implementation Committee). Holistic advising and integrative coaching would be available for all students who participate in the pilot program.

Year Two: Begin with students in five Endeavor classes (75 students) and 75 FY students who agree to participate and who are not in a living-learning program. Assess the work at the end of the academic year by surveying both student and faculty participants.

Year Three: Introduce Integrative Learning to new FY students, again splitting between Endeavor and those not in a living-learning program. Also, continue to track the 150 students who began the pilot program in their first year as they continue to collect work. Arrange for check-in points with the different cohorts so that support is readily available across the academic year. At the end of the year, gather data about what is being collected, average time spent on task, where students are storing their collections, and other areas that need review. Assess the work at the end of the academic year by surveying both student and faculty participants.

Year Four: Begin with another 150 FY students, again splitting between Endeavor and those not in a living-learning program. Also, continue to track the second year and third year students by regular (recommend monthly) check-ins. Assess the work at the end of the academic year by surveying both student and faculty participants.

Year Five: Begin with another 150 FY students, again splitting between Endeavor and those not in a living-learning program. Also, continue to track the second, third and fourth year students by regular (monthly) check-ins. Senior participants should have at least one one-on-one session with the pilot program director, or a session with the major advisor and the pilot program director, to thoroughly assess the work collated across the four years and the growth and development of the student. Should it be deemed useful, a survey could be utilized that could assess the effectiveness of the program, the strengths of the program, and the benefits of the program. For the other three classes, assess the work at the end of the academic year by surveying both student and faculty participants.
At the end of the fifth year, the pilot program director, the Integrative Learning pilot program faculty/staff involved in the program, the new Director of General Education, the GEC, and the new Director of Advising, FYS, and the Living Learning programs, assesses the data collected across the four years and, ultimately, determines the viability of moving the program university wide.

Part 3: Rationale

The Integrative Learning component of general education provides students with an opportunity to step back and examine the many ways learning and growth have occurred throughout their journey at UR, to find connections between experiences, and to think about how all of this will translate beyond their undergraduate experience. Through integrative learning programming, students engage in the creative exercise of shaping and telling the unique story of their journey at UR, while also developing wisdom and confidence across the course of their experiences.

In fact, students are hungry for integrative learning, making connections between the various fundamentals that they study. Incorporating Integrative Learning into our UR learning experience will provide many of our students with “Eureka” moments; ideas that they experience as newly discovered. Integrative Learning will help our faculty to inspire an even greater segment of our student population as different students are drawn to different things, i.e. disciplinary, integrative, quantitative, qualitative, formal, informal, different modes of communication, increasing skills in writing and information literacy, etc. – e.g., learning. The ability to synthesize knowledge from a variety of fields and perspectives will serve our students well in their post-baccalaureate studies and throughout their careers. Many institutions strive for this goal, but it is not easy to achieve. We have all of the necessary ingredients to be leaders in this space: bright students, talented faculty, rich resources.

The primary objective underlying integrative learning is to change the way students think about and direct their own learning, and to graduate with a deeper understanding of all that they have accomplished.

Integrative Learning can and should start as early as the first year, when students begin to consider what papers, presentations, etc. they would like to highlight within their ePortfolio website, folder, or other “demonstrative container(s)” the students would like to use for collecting and curating their work. Other additions, such as research work, lab work, artistic creation or performance, athletic performance, job experiences on or off campus, could continue over their time at the University. As students advance through their UR career, programs such as SSIR could also play a role in the student’s development of their portfolio. Study abroad experiences, service work, student leadership, and public presentations of signature work (such as student work shared at the A&S symposium) all have the potential for making connections across seemingly unrelated parts of a student’s education. Finally, key works developed during a student’s senior year, e.g., activities such as senior seminar, honors work, or other culminating experiences could also be included in the student’s ePortfolio or other Integrative Learning repository.
Integrative learning programming can build in opportunities for students to reflect during and after each semester or academic year, and be selective about how and why these elements are meaningful. Through the process of asking questions such as: Which classes and experiences was I most passionate about? What did I learn? Where did I feel challenged, and how did I meet that challenge? Collecting signature work related to these questions, students begin to see interconnections and themes over time.

The GECIC recognizes that complex, higher-order skills such as auditing, synthesizing, and connecting seemingly divergent competencies requires guidance and support as students learn how to navigate these learning experiences. In order for students to feel directed and successful in integrative learning, they will also need mentorship and instruction. Reflection is a practice that must be developed over time. There is a balance to be struck here, because these ePortfolios, websites, folders, etc., should be student-owned and student-driven. The GECIC strongly advocates that our students should have opportunities for guidance and support, yet also be free to be independent and creative.

Yet a crucial question remains – How much academic credit should be given for Integrative Learning work? The GECIC realizes that colleagues are concerned with unknowns. This pilot program would set out to determine: 1) How much academic credit would be attached to a class or classes that focus on Integrative Learning?, 2) Who would teach that course or courses?, 3) How much extra time and effort would be added to our advising loads?, and 4) Who would oversee the Integrative Learning work? A learning community of committed faculty and staff would begin by charting the Integrative Learning curriculum goals, requirements and implementation; they would construct a model (see Pilot Program proposal), and then run it to amass the data and working knowledge from their experiences over several years. The GECIC proposes to pilot Integrative Learning with various student cohorts, some that may be linked to an academic experience (such as Endeavor), and others that draw on students who are not part of an organized program. The GECIC envisions multiple partnerships in this important work, including Alumni Affairs, Academic Advising, the Career Development Center, International Education, the CCE, Student Affairs, and others, in addition to the faculty who will participate in this program.

While the work of collecting and curating evidence and artifacts -- examples of high impact practices, signature work, and pre-professional experiences -- is student-driven, the success of Integrative Learning is dependent upon strong faculty involvement, mentorship, and advising. As mentioned above, while there is a need for a credit-bearing course, perhaps in the third year, it is also critical to consider embedding Integrative Learning into classes early in a student’s academic career. The GECIC includes our learning outcome rubric here, sharing the goals of an Integrative Learning program:

**Integrative Learning Learning Outcomes (to be reviewed by the Integrative Learning Pilot Program FLC)**

1. **Connection**: Students will combine ideas, knowledge and experiences, connecting them in creative ways to inspire questions, insights and/or answers.
2. **Synthesis**: Students will incorporate disparate forms of learning via transferable talents, skills and experiences, and synthesize them into a coherent whole.

3. **Reflection**: Students will collect and curate examples of learning and growth over time, articulating strengths and challenges, while recognizing influences that affect the development of the self.

The GECIC suggests that students would be able to fulfill the learning outcomes for Integrative Learning through a number of ways, including but not limited to: the creation of a wide variety of signature works, including an ePortfolio, a personal narrative, a senior seminar or honors work, or any other department program that highlights reflection and integration across multiple areas.
Appendix A2. Draft learning outcomes for Integrated Focus areas

The GECIC shares here drafts of learning outcomes for the Integrated Focus areas. Our intention in sharing these drafts is to offer a starting point for the GEC Implementation Committee, as the GECIC met with colleagues across our institution for feedback and suggestions throughout the process of drafting the learning outcomes below.

1. **Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture** (1 course)

   At the University of Richmond, we strive “to prepare students to contribute to, and succeed in, a complex, interconnected world.” In addition, we seek “to produce knowledge to address pressing problems faced by people around the globe,” while being aware of our socio-political-economic positions. Building on the Office of the President’s goal of “identifying inequities in the experiences and outcomes of students, faculty, and staff in order to address them systematically and ensure all members of our community can fully participate in the life of the institution,” we see inequities, exclusion, and a lack of diversity as systematic problems; therefore the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion must meet this problem at scale through systematic change.

   This area must be systematic, meaning that it is not an issue reducible to individual feelings of inclusion or exclusion, but an issue inseparable from power relations that disproportionately affect people based on their differing social-structuring positions.

   Equity, Power, Identity, and Culture (DEI) learning outcomes:

   1. Students will systemically analyze the origins and dynamics of domestic and global structural power imbalances within and across groups as reflected through social, historical, and cultural forms and practices, and, if applicable, learn strategies to promote equity.

   2. Students should demonstrate knowledge of similarities and differences in attitudes, beliefs, and experiences transnationally, cross-culturally, and across groups.

   3. Students should systematically analyze how their own and others’ attitudes and beliefs are shaped by context, including both their self-identification with particular groups and the way that they may be identified with particular groups (including, but not limited to, gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, ability status, religion, class).

2. **Embodied Communication** (1 course)

   Embodied communication focuses on the stewardship of meaningful communication and critical exchange. Embodied communication efficacy demonstrates understanding of the interdependence between thought and oral expression, purpose and audience, and content and
form. Effective communication is informed, integrative and iterative, and serves to build student speaking, listening and questioning skills, confidence and emotional intelligence.

Embodied Communication Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will develop and deliver a central message with organization and clarity, drawing on a variety of supporting materials (explanations, examples, evidence, etc.) to inform and support.

2. Students will employ appropriate delivery and listening approaches and techniques, particularly as related to language, vocal expressiveness, and nonverbal communication choices.

3. Students will adapt delivery and content choices given different situations, contexts, audiences and interactions

3. Quantitative Data Literacy (1 course)

Quantitative Data Literacy (QDL) is a competency in working with data using quantitative methods. Beyond organization and analysis of this data, application is an essential component of QDL. Individuals with strong QDL skills can develop and execute appropriate quantitative approaches to problems coming from a variety of contexts. Furthermore, they can interrogate and communicate arguments supported by quantitative evidence in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).

QDL Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will represent information and formulate questions in quantitative form, recognizing multiple approaches to communicating quantitative information.

2. Students will apply relevant numerical approaches to solve problems and analyze data.

3. Students will evaluate assumptions, identify limitations, and recognize ethical implications of particular analytical frameworks and study designs.

4. Students will assess outcomes, draw appropriate conclusions, and communicate findings using relevant numerical evidence.

4. Written Communication (2 courses)

Writing intensive courses are distinguished by the intentionality of the course design; they recognize and employ writing as a technology of thought. They are not simply courses that
require a certain amount of writing; rather, they focus on enhancing the ability of students to communicate effectively as a core learning goal. They use writing as a primary means of understanding, exploring, distilling, analyzing, synthesizing, interpreting and reflecting on what is being taught and learned. They draw on a range of pedagogies to develop writing capacities for a variety of learners at all levels. Students will employ writing effectively across the curriculum to communicate their understanding and analysis of course content while also developing original insights and ideas.

Written Communication Learning Outcomes:

Students will produce effective academic writing that is generally:

1. contextually attentive to audience and situation
2. persuasive, claim-driven, and/or governed by a clear perspective
3. supported by thoughtfully chosen evidence, responsibly cited
4. reflective of disciplinary conventions, as appropriate
5. composed with clarity, fluency, concision, and minimal error
Appendix A3. DEI requirements at other institutions

Pomona College
DEI is an “overlay” requirement (the other two are writing intensive and speaking intensive), called “analyzing difference”
Students must pass at least one Analyzing Difference course to graduate. Analyzing Difference courses “are primarily focused on a sustained analysis of the causes and effects of structured inequality and discrimination, and their relation to U.S. society. Such courses will make use of analyses that emphasize intersecting categories of difference. Examples include, but are not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, citizenship, linguistic heritage, class, religion and physical ability. The Critical Thinking Committee certifies approved courses. A course fulfilling the Analyzing Difference requirement may also be used to fulfill a Breadth of Study area requirement and/or a Writing Intensive or Speaking Intensive requirement.”

“An Analyzing Difference Committee certifies approved courses. The committee includes at least three faculty (appointed by the Executive Committee, in consultation with the President’s Advisory Committee on Diversity) and two students (appointed by ASPC). The Executive Committee may elect to appoint additional faculty based on their ability to support the charge of the committee. The committee maintains learning outcomes related to the requirement, provides sample syllabi of approved courses, and creates evaluative criteria and standards related to the approval of courses.”

Brandeis
Brandeis has a new general education curriculum as of fall 2019 that includes two DEI courses, as listed below. (Other requirements include a University Writing Seminar, courses that satisfy designations of writing intensive, oral communication, and digital literacy within every major, quantitative reasoning, world language/culture, and four “schools of thought” (creative arts, humanities, science, and social science). Courses may “double count.” Requirements for the DEI courses are outlined below (all material taken directly from the Brandeis website):

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Studies in the United States

Objectives
Contemporary U.S. society is marked by demographic and cultural changes that have both advanced and challenged the nation’s commitment to the realization of individuals’ unalienable rights as human beings. Scientific, technological, legal, political, and aesthetic developments have created significant opportunities throughout the U.S., even as they have also entrenched existing injustices. As part of the global engagement requirement, diversity, equity and inclusion studies in the United States courses prepare students to engage with the dynamics, developments, and divisions within U.S. society in the twenty-first century.

To be active and productive participants in a society undergoing significant ethno-racial, political, environmental and cultural change, students will need to understand the important role that a commitment to social justice has played in the advancement of the United States. They will also need to address the role that inequality has played in the country’s formation and
continues to play in its development. Courses may draw on a variety of disciplinary approaches to address any of the following:

- The critical study of race, class, gender, sex, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, age, color, nationality and religion, with a specific emphasis on historically marginalized populations;
- The close assessment of laws, regulations, procedures, and policies that have enforced or opposed inequity and injustice;
- The analysis of theories that explain, analyze or critique inequality;
- The empirical examination of coalition and community-building, collaboration across difference, and other practices aimed at increasing inclusion.

Learning Goals

- Articulate evidence-based understandings of difference and how they work within frameworks of social hierarchy in the United States
- Increase one’s ability to learn from, and demonstrate respect towards, different peoples, cultures, and world-views
- Identify historical and contemporary strategies to address issues of social justice in the United States
- Examine US political, economic, legal, educational, environmental, social, religious, and cultural institutions, values and practices and their historical and contemporary impact in shaping power, privilege and disadvantage

How to Fulfill the Requirement

For students entering Brandeis beginning fall 2019, students will complete one semester course that satisfies the diversity, equity and inclusion studies in the United States requirement. Courses that satisfy the requirement in a particular semester are designated "deis-us" in the Schedule of Classes for that semester. A list of diversity, equity and inclusion studies in the United States courses is available in the Courses of Instruction.

Difference and Justice in the World

Objectives

Today’s world has been shaped by forces that cannot be understood without taking a broad global perspective. Human experience has been influenced by the expansion of democracy; technological, environmental, moral and aesthetic changes; greater attention to the protection of human rights; and the improvement of economic conditions for many. However, progress has not been equal, and for many, circumstances have worsened. Our world and its peoples continue to be deeply challenged by new forms of age-old problems. Religious, ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual differences are used as grounds for persecution, exclusion, and other forms of unequal treatment. The effects of climate change are likely to exacerbate already growing global economic inequality, food insecurity, and competition for natural resources. These phenomena are interrelated with the legacy of colonialism; world, civil and regional wars; diasporic migration; and terrorism.

As members of local and global communities, our students must be able to engage with the world’s greatest problems and issues with courage and resiliency by applying critical analytical skills and historical perspectives, and by developing empathy for, and a deep understanding of
other cultures and perspectives, and how they have been formed and continue to evolve. By learning to appreciate diversity and communicate across difference, Brandeis students enter the world better prepared to replace conflict with cooperation.

As part of the global engagement requirement, difference and justice in the world courses will allow students to focus on the social, cultural, political, environmental and economic diversity of human experience within the global/transnational context. Looking beyond singular or dominant understandings of the world, students will engage in the study of peoples outside the U.S., their histories, arts, cultures, politics, economies, environments, and religions. They will address problems such as:

- the ways in which different cultures, societies and social groups define and express themselves and are defined by others;
- how categories of difference are constructed, and how they intersect with one another;
- the production and mediation of social and cultural power in different contexts;
- the unequal effects of globalization and climate change on different cultures and groups in all spheres of human experience, across histories and geographies.

Learning Goals
- Increase one’s ability to understand different perspectives and learn from peoples, cultures, and world-views different from those that are familiar
- Develop skills to engage in comparative analyses of how historical legacies have shaped contemporary global and environmental realities
- Understand global, transnational and interconnected issues of social justice beyond the United States
- Evaluate strategies that address relevant challenges of global or local significance
- Promote alternative non-traditional ways of knowing that challenge conventional disciplinary logics

How to Fulfill the Requirement
For students entering Brandeis beginning fall 2019, students will complete one semester course that satisfies the difference and justice in the world requirement. Courses that satisfy the requirement in a particular semester are designated "djw" in the Schedule of Classes for that semester. A list of difference and justice in the world courses is available in the Courses of Instruction.

University of Virginia
UVA has three general education curricula running concurrently right now, though the traditional curriculum will likely be phased out in the near future. (It is a fairly standard distribution model.)

The other two are the Forums and the New College Curriculum. The Forums is a theme based curriculum, and all of the themes have the potential to incorporate DEI elements. Current examples include Corruption, Governance, and Institutions; Ideals & Injustices; The World Gone Wrong; Visions of the Good; Humans, Nature, and Evolution; Religion, Politics, and Conflict; and Via Asia.
The New College Curriculum involves a set of “Engagements” interdisciplinary seminars in the first year, followed by “literacies” (writing and foreign language) and disciplines (traditional distribution model). The Engagements include “Engaging difference,” but students are not required to take courses in all four engagements areas (the other three are Engaging Aesthetics, Empirical and Scientific Engagement, and Ethical Engagement).

**Davidson**

Students have abundant opportunities for exploring the complexities of a diverse, interconnected, unequal and changing world through academic coursework. Each student must complete a course that fulfills the **Cultural Diversity Requirement** (defined below), a course with a significant focus on the cultural experiences of a group differing from that of the dominant cultures and social identities of the United States and Europe. In addition, students must also complete a course that fulfills the new **Justice, Equality and Community Requirement** (defined below). These courses focus on the struggles for justice and equality in various communities, locales, nations or regions of the world. Students also are strongly encouraged to supplement their education with high-impact learning experiences such as studying abroad, studying away (at other locations in the United States), community-based learning opportunities, internships, fellowships, shadowing and alternative breaks.

Starting with the class of 2021, each student must take one course that satisfies the Justice, Equality, and Community (JEC) requirement.

These courses (JEC) address the manifestations of justice and equality in various communities, locales, nations or regions, and focus on methods and theories used to analyze, spotlight, or remedy instances of injustice and inequality. Through these courses, faculty members guide students as they examine how justice and equality have been distributed, enacted, problematized and idealized in historical or contemporary settings.

Courses meeting this requirement will address justice and equality as they appear in various communities in local, regional, national, and/or global dimensions, and focuses on methods (i.e., legal, intellectual, creative, political, cultural, aesthetic, or scientific) that have been used to foster awareness of or to remedy inequalities and injustice. Depending on disciplinary affiliation, subject of study, and traditions of inquiry, a majority of the course content of a JEC course will:

- examine historical or contemporary manifestations of injustice or structural inequalities that have impinged on the political, cultural, medical, economic, moral, religious, or social well-being of persons and groups who have been subordinated, marginalized, or put in positions of precarity by others, and
- do so by exposing students to the relevant theories, methods, strategies, and ideas (i.e., ethical, juridical, religious, scientific, creative, philosophical, aesthetic, etc.) that make it possible to identify, analyze, and/or remedy structural inequalities and injustice.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Identify and/or evaluate assumptions (personal, disciplinary, cultural, etc.) regarding justice, equality, and community.
2. Identify, accumulate, and/or evaluate information related to historical or contemporary cases of justice, equality, and community.

3. Describe, discuss, interpret, and/or analyze competing understandings and applications of justice, equality, and community.

All students must complete 32 credits, earn a 2.0 GPA in their major and fulfill the requirements below in order to graduate.

Ways of Knowing Requirements

All students must fulfill the college's **Ways of Knowing requirements**. In these courses students will examine complex problems through diverse methods of inquiry, understand how different kinds of knowledge are generated, and identify appropriate standards for evaluating knowledge in different realms.

1. Writing Requirement

   New students must fulfill the **Writing Requirement** in their first year.

2. Foreign Language Requirement

   To fulfill the **Foreign Language Requirement**, students must successfully complete the third-semester level (201 or higher) of a Davidson foreign language course, by an approved transfer course at equivalent level, or by equivalent proficiency as determined and certified by the appropriate Davidson foreign language department. We strongly recommend that students complete this requirement before entering their senior years.

3. Cultural Diversity Requirement

   Students must complete one course satisfying the **Cultural Diversity Requirement**.

Courses that satisfy the cultural diversity requirement focus on one or more cultures that differ from the main cultures of the United States or Western Europe. Through these courses, faculty members guide students as they explore cultural differences from an academic perspective.

4. Justice, Equality, and Community Requirement

   Students must complete one course satisfying the **Justice, Equality, and Community Requirement**. * Defined earlier in this document.*

5. Physical Education Requirement

**Denison**

The General Education requirements ensure that students develop core liberal arts competencies and encounter a broad range of liberal arts inquiries — social, scientific, humanistic, and artistic — embraced by the Denison University faculty. In addition, the requirements expose students to
a diversity of perspectives that enable them to interact more effectively in an increasingly interdependent world. Thus, the General Education program seeks to accomplish three goals:
  1. development of competencies,
  2. exposure to a broad variety of disciplines and,
  3. development of a global perspective.

**General Education: Summary of Requirements**

One W 101 - First-Year Writing Workshop (First Year writing intensive workshop)

Two courses from the Fine Arts

Two courses from the Sciences (one fulfilling a lab requirement)

Two courses from the Social Sciences

Two courses from the Humanities

One interdivisional course from one of the following areas: Black Studies, Data Analytics, East Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, International Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Queer Studies, and Women’s and Gender Studies.

Foreign Language

NOTE: Only one course from a single department may be used to fulfill the divisional requirements.

*Five of these general education courses (or other courses) must fulfill these competencies:*

One power and justice requirement

One quantitative requirement

One oral communication requirement

Two writing intensive course requirements (one of which must be completed by the end of the sophomore year)

From the catalogue:

**p. 5 General Education**
The General Education Program is designed to provide intellectual breadth, through experience with a variety of disciplines and appreciation for the diversity of human culture. This program requires broad exposure to various fields and development of essential abilities: listening, reading, and observing; reasoning critically and quantitatively; and expressing ideas convincingly in oral discourse as well as the written word. Approximately one-third of the curriculum is reserved for General Education.

Oberlin

**Cultural Diversity requirement.** At least nine credit hours in courses dealing with cultural diversity, including foreign languages, are required. These must be taken in at least two departments or programs and may also count toward the nine hours required in each division.

This requirement encourages students to understand cultural diversity in complex ways and in multiple contexts by taking courses that attend to questions of difference, imbalances in political and social power, diversity in cultures and the interactions among and between cultures, and methodological approaches to the study of diversity. In awarding Cultural Diversity (CD) credit for international study away programs and some U.S. study away programs, this requirement recognizes that study away is a profound pedagogical encounter with diversity that complements the engagement of diversity in courses across the Oberlin curriculum.

**Boston College** - 1 course in Cultural Diversity

Cultural Diversity courses could be designed as departmental offerings or as interdisciplinary courses and could approach the culture in various ways: through its religious or ethical values; from an understanding of its historical development; from the perspective of its social, economic and political systems; or from an appreciation of its literary, artistic or other cultural achievements.

- Can also satisfy a requirement of the Core or the major

Can be satisfied by:
- courses on Asian, African, Middle Eastern and Latin American cultures
- courses on minority cultures of the United States derived from these cultures
- courses on Native American cultures
- courses that address the concept of culture from a theoretical and comparative perspective either separately or in the context of the courses listed above

Examples of Major Courses Fulfilling the Core Requirement - **Spring 2020**

Communication
English
Arts
Slavic Studies
Sociology
**Colgate University** - Communities and Identities Course  
- Part of the common core

Courses in the Communities and Identities (CI) component are designed to provide a textured understanding of identities, cultures, and human experiences in particular communities and regions of the world. They seek to examine critically the multiple forms of social life that contribute to the world’s cultural diversity, and to analyze the ways in which any one society functions as a unified whole and yet encompasses multiple, sometimes conflicting identities (based, for example, on gender, race, status, class, sexual identities, religion, and language).

**Georgetown University**  
**Overview:** Georgetown’s “Engaging Diversity” requirement is a two course requirement: one domestic and one global. This is part of their Core curriculum in which courses are tagged to satisfy one or more requirements.

Language from the Core Curriculum website:  
https://provost.georgetown.edu/academicaffairs/core-curriculum/

“The engaging diversity requirement will prepare students to be responsible, reflective, self-aware and respectful global citizens through recognizing the plurality of human experience and engaging with different cultures, beliefs, and ideas. By fulfilling the requirement, students will be better able to appreciate and reflect upon how human diversity and human identities shape our experience and understanding of the world.

The two “engaging diversity” courses ensure the opportunity to engage with diversity issues in two different contexts: One domestic and one global. Courses fulfilling this requirement are indicated with the DIVG (global) and DIVD (domestic) attribute tags in the schedule of classes.

**Note:** Many courses that meet the diversity requirement also meet other curricular requirements (e.g., core, major, minor) in each school. Please note that while some courses may carry both tags (i.e., global and domestic), students are still required to take two engaging diversity courses in total.”

Courses satisfying the requirements: I searched undergrad courses with these two tags on the Georgetown Course Catalog page to get an idea of what is included and what departments are represented.  
(Click on Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 Schedule links from this page: https://schedule.georgetown.edu/)

Departments that have one or more DIVD course: African American Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Education, English, Global Health, Government, Human Science, Linguistics, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish

Departments that have one or more DIVG course: Art History, Classics, English, Global Health, International Affairs, Medieval Studies, Portuguese, Spanish, Theology

Possible Contact: A possible future contact person for us at Georgetown if we want more info is Michelle Ohnona. She is both the Assistant Director for Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives and the Diversity Requirement Coordinator. (https://cndls.georgetown.edu/people/mo607/)
University of Michigan
Overview: At University of Michigan, the Race and Ethnicity (R&E) Requirement has students take one course with the R&E tag. Here is a description of R&E courses which is also found at this link:

https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/academics/lsa-requirements/race-and-ethnicity--r-e--requirement.html

“Race and Ethnicity (R&E) Requirement

At some point before graduation, students must receive credit for one course of at least three credits chosen from a list of Race and Ethnicity (R&E) courses offered each term in the LSA Course Guide. Credits transferred from another college or university do not meet the R&E Requirement except by successful petition to the Academic Standards Board.

These courses address issues arising from racial or ethnic intolerance and meet the following criteria:

Required content. All courses satisfying the requirement must provide discussion concerning:

- the meaning of race, ethnicity, and racism;
- racial and ethnic intolerance and resulting inequality as it occurs in the United States or elsewhere;
- comparisons of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, social class, or gender.

Required focus. Every course satisfying the requirement must devote substantial, but not necessarily exclusive, attention to the required content. Although it is hoped that many of these courses will focus on the United States, it is not required that they do so. Courses that deal with these issues in other societies, or that study them comparatively, may also meet the requirement.

Credits used to satisfy the R&E requirement also may be used to satisfy other College requirements.”

Specific Courses: I again searched the university’s catalog (http://www.lsa.umich.edu/cg/) for courses satisfying this requirement. There are many. Here are the departments that have at least one course: Afroamerican & African Studies, Applied Liberal Arts, American Culture, Cultural Anthropology, Armenian Studies, Asian Studies, Asian/Pacific Island American Studies, Communication and Media, Comprehensive Studies Program, Dutch and Flemish Studies, Education, English, French; Film, Television, and Media Studies; German, Art History, History, International Studies, Islamic Studies, Italian, Judaic Studies, Latino/a American Studies, Linguistics, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Middle Eastern and North African Studies, Middle East Studies, Nursing, Philosophy, Psychology, Polish, Public Health, Public Policy; Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies; Religion, Slavic Languages and Literatures, Sociology, Women’s Studies

History of the R&E Requirement at Michigan: The university has a somewhat well-documented history regarding this requirement and events involving racism on their campus. The information
available to us regarding the R&E requirement provides a lot of insight into how the requirement has evolved, the movements on campus that brought it into being, and the work being done more recently to assess and improve it.

Here are some links I found useful.

1. Road to the R&E Requirement Timeline: This graphic describes the formation of the R&E requirement and places it in the context of events on campus at Michigan. [https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/lsa-site-assets/images/images/undergrad-ed-images/UGEDImages/Timeline052816b.png]

2. Reviewing R&E: This website describes the committee that was active 2015-2016 reviewing the R&E requirement and making suggestions for the strengthening of the requirement and courses. [https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/faculty-staff/undergraduate-education/academic-initiatives.html]

3. DEI Strategic Plan: While I could not find a copy of the report from the above committee, this strategic plan seems to include a lot of the committee’s work. In particular, there is an Assessment plan for the R&E Courses starting at the bottom of p 30. [https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/lsa-site-assets/documents/dei-documents/2018-Oct-UM-LSA-DEI-plan-full.pdf]

DEI Courses at Peer Institutions

**Brown University: Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)**

- DIAP Courses: Race, Gender, and Inequality [https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/degree/DIAPcourses]
- These courses “examine issues of structural inequality, racial formations and/or disparities, and systems of power within a complex, pluralistic world”
- Professors may apply to have their course included among those listed as meeting the DIAP requirements by providing a syllabus and highlighting the focus on these issues in terms of both course content and assignment. Verification is made by the College Curriculum Council, the senior associate dean for diversity and inclusion, and at least two faculty members who have appropriate expertise in the issues. DIAP courses are regularly reviewed to be sure they are meeting the goals.
- 151 courses being offered this semester meet the requirements. The majority of these are in social science/humanities department; there is, for instance, only one in biology, two in archaeology, and five in economics. (None showed up for chemistry or physics.)
- Brown’s recent report [https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/sites/oidi/files/Task%20Force-Diversity%20in%20Curriculum-September-2016.pdf] engaged the question of whether there should be a university-wide diversity requirement. The faculty task force decided against one, in part reflecting Brown’s longstanding commitment to an open curriculum. However, there were also concerns about whether a requirement would serve as a “disincentive” and whether it would, in fact, promote “deep and meaningful engagement with issues of inequity or racism.” Far better, the report concluded, to increase and make more visible the various opportunities that existed for students to learn about these issues.
- The task force also called for the creation and identification of courses in Race, Power, and Privilege (designated RPP). This seems not to have been followed.
• The task force called for ongoing commitments to developing courses that reflect this content, to fostering inclusive pedagogy, and to support scholarly engagement with these issues.

• Brown’s philosophy department signals courses in two different ways: Some courses are focused on diversity and inclusion (FDI); some courses are merely relevant to diversity and inclusion (RDI).

**Bucknell University**

• One of the core requirements at Bucknell is “Diversity in the United States,” which requires students to take a course that meets the following description:

  Students will acquire contextualized knowledge about some aspect of complex group interactions in the United States. Students will use concepts and tools of inquiry from at least one discipline to analyze issues related to the diversity of cultural experiences in the United States. Students will reflect critically on the ways in which diversity (broadly understood) within the United States shapes the experience of citizens and persons residing in the United States.

• Bucknell’s recent strategic plan about diversity calls for, inter alia, these things:


  “3. Enhance students’ diversity-related educational opportunities and experiences to ensure that all students graduate with knowledge, skills and habits of mind necessary for living and working effectively as members of a diverse, global society.
  
  • Track departments’ contributions to the understanding of diversity and increase training for faculty to address diversity effectively
  • Articulate an integrated approach to diversity education from orientation through graduation, especially via first-year seminars and experiences and by sponsoring “undergraduate research on social justice issues” and “incentives for high quality diversity-focused IP [Integrated Perspectives, part of the core] courses”
  • Develop and facilitate “diversity-focused student learning opportunities,” including regular assessments of the curriculum and evaluation of whether students are meeting this goal
  • “Explore new majors, minors, and residential colleges focused on diversity”
  • Inclusive pedagogy

  “4. Reflect institutional commitment to diversity by establishing a culture of accountability around diversity initiatives, practices and policies”
  
  • Monitor progress via various large-N data; focus on diversity in all reports; database of diversity efforts
  • Establish/strengthen structures that promote diversity, including a special fund supporting research
  • Revise existing structures to be sure they foster diversity
  • “Review and revise/create policies that ensure a focus on diversity, inclusivity, equity, and compliance”

• Its new plan calls for “fostering an inclusive, diverse campus” and acknowledges that, despite making progress, the university fell short of the goals articulated in the prior plan. The initiatives mentioned have little to do with the curriculum:

  1. Realign residential and social spaces
  2. Revise Diversity Plan (Spring 2020)
3. “Implement a program of ongoing, progressive education for faculty and staff that focuses on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion”

[https://www.bucknell.edu/sites/default/files/offices_resources/president/strategicplan2025_0.pdf]
Appendix A4. Feedback: Student Survey and Faculty Straw Poll
GECIC Student Survey: February 15 - March 1, 2021

Survey Questions (rated on scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree):

1. I find the proposed BQ Curriculum exciting.
2. I find the proposed BQ Curriculum preferable to the current general education curriculum.
3. The proposed BQ Curriculum makes clear the relevance and importance of general education as part of my undergraduate education through emphasis on exploration and core competencies and understandings.
4. I find the inclusion of BQs that cut across the curriculum to be a strength of the proposed curriculum.
5. The possibility that gen ed courses could be integrated into majors is a strength of the proposed curriculum.
6. The focus on competencies/understandings is a strength of the proposed curriculum.

Summary Results:
All questions included available responses: Strongly Agree(5), Agree(4), Neither Agree or Disagree(3), Disagree(2), Strongly Disagree(1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>% Strongly Agree or Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find the proposed BQ Curriculum exciting.</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find the proposed BQ Curriculum preferable to the current general education curriculum.</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed BQ Curriculum makes clear the relevance and importance of general education as part of my undergraduate education through emphasis on exploration and core competencies and understandings.</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find the inclusion of BQs that cut across the curriculum to be a strength of the proposed curriculum.</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The possibility that gen ed courses could be integrated into majors is a strength of the proposed curriculum.</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus on competencies/understandings is a strength of the proposed curriculum.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The number of responses ranges from 390 to 393 students for each question.
Q1: I find the proposed BQ Curriculum exciting.

Q2: I find the proposed BQ Curriculum preferable to the current general education curriculum.
Q3: The proposed BQ Curriculum makes clear the relevance and importance of general education as part of my undergraduate education through emphasis on exploration and core competencies and understandings.

Q4: I find the inclusion of BQs that cut across the curriculum to be a strength of the proposed curriculum.
Q5: The possibility that gen ed courses could be integrated into majors is a strength of the proposed curriculum.

Q6: The focus on competencies/understandings is a strength of the proposed curriculum.
The following tables summarize results from the faculty straw poll administered March 5 - March 10, 2021.

Total includes 199 survey responses; Bus includes 33 responses from Business School; Jep includes 7 responses from Jepson School; AS includes 150 responses from School of Arts and Sciences; Arts and Sciences divisions 1 (AS1), 2 (AS2), and 3 (AS3) include 42, 64, and 44 responses, respectively; 3 responses from Law School and 6 unidentified responses not reported as subgroups.

### Question 1 - How satisfied are you with the current General Education Curriculum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Sat.</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Dis.</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.420</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Questions 2a-2e - Please indicate your level of support for the following elements of the current GECIC proposal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.275</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.286</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.258</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: (Question 2b) A focus on Core Competencies & Understandings instead of Fields of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.286</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td>0.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>0.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: (Question 2c) Inclusion of specific Core Competencies & Understandings such as DEI, Writing, and Quantitative Data Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.454</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.395</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: (Question 2d) Reducing number of First-Year Seminars from 2 to 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.340</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.293</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.409</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: (Question 2e) Increased oversight of General Education through a Director of General Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.258</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 3 - Regarding the core structure of the general education curriculum, I most strongly support:

- CC&U: Moving to a model based on Core Competencies & Understandings
- FOS: Maintaining the Fields of Study in their current form
- FOS + CC&U: Maintaining the Fields of Study but adding some Core Competencies & Understandings, such as DEI, Writing, and Quantitative Data Literacy, as over-lays
- Updated FOS: Maintaining the Fields of Study but updating their descriptions and learning outcomes
- Other: Other (please elaborate)

Table 7: Core Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CC&amp;U Model</th>
<th>FOS</th>
<th>FOS + CC&amp;Us</th>
<th>Updated FOS</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC&amp;U Model</td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOS + CC&amp;Us</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated FOS</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Core Structure (by School)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CC&amp;U Model</th>
<th>FOS</th>
<th>FOS + CC&amp;Us</th>
<th>Updated FOS</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 4 - Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) in the general education curriculum, I most strongly support:

Table 9: DEI

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 DEI course</td>
<td>0.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 DEI courses</td>
<td>0.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>0.258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: DEI (by School)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 DEI Course</th>
<th>2 DEI Courses</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td>0.304</td>
<td>0.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.636</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>0.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>0.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.545</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 5 - Regarding writing intensive coursework in the general education curriculum, I most strongly support the following in addition to the FYS writing experience:

Table 11: Writing

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Restriction</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 in Major</td>
<td>0.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Writing (by School)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Restriction</th>
<th>1 in Major</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.445</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>0.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0.714</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>0.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.476</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.436</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>0.226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>0.386</td>
<td>0.250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Question 6** - Do you favor the GECIC proposal as currently drafted?

Table 13: Current Proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes with Revision</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jep</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.714</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS3</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

University of Richmond general education review previous committee reports
GEPC and GECRC reports – link on GECIC website

Engagement with Off Campus Expertise

AACU IGEA: UR team GECRC/GECIC June 2019

AACU IGEA: GECIC team, June 2020. Met privately with AACU IGEA faculty: Dr. Paul Hanstedt (our faculty mentor, W&L; also met with Paul on January 15, 2021); Kimberly Filer, (Virginia Tech); Sybril Brown (Belmont University); Helen Chen (Stanford); Jose Moreno (CSU Long Beach); Kate McConnell (AACU); Ashley Finley (AACU); Paul Gaston (AACU)

Other schools that we met with for discussion and feedback during the AACE IGEA 2020: La Verne University, University of New England, SUNY Old Westbury, Washington and Lee, NC A&T State University, North Central College


ePortfolio:

Eynon and Gambino: High-Impact ePortfolio Practice

ePortfolios@edu: What We Know, What We Don't Know, and Everything In-Between. edited by Mary Ann Dellinger and D. Alexis Hart


General Education:

Integrated learning at Connecticut College, William & Mary, and Davidson (pdf report available)

Jane Schmidt Prezi slideshow: https://prezi.com/2qmklef6v6do/general-education-requirements/#

Madeleine F. Green, “In Search of Curricular Coherence,” The Teagle Foundation

Paul Gaston, General Education Transformed: How We Can, Why We Must (AACU publication)
http://blogs.rollins.edu/endeavor/2020/05/12/distinctive-learning-experiences-can-we-identify-the-signature-pedagogies-of-residential-liberal-arts-institutions/

AACU VALUE Rubrics: https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics


Data sets of general education classes at UR, other data documents

Ethics:


DEI:

https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/06/18/colleges-shouldnt-simply-focus-diversity-and-inclusion-also-attack-systemic-racism

https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2019/03/08/colleges-should-have-required-core-curriculum-racial-literacy-opinion
Selling Students on Gen Ed

For many students the term “general education” evokes visions of drudgery: mandated coursework on subjects that can feel remote. Professors wish students were excited to foray into philosophy or art or science, but in truth students don’t always see the big picture. They just know it has to be done.

So when Boise State University wanted to better explain the purpose of its general-education curriculum, it turned to an often-untapped source: students. One of them, Daniel Hopkins, spent three years on an undergraduate research project for the University Foundations Program, as Boise State’s gen-ed program is called.

Hopkins, whose major combined history, political science, and secondary education, says he was well-positioned to understand his classmates’ skepticism. As a freshman, he, too, didn’t understand why he had to take gen-ed courses. He felt they were irrelevant to his educational goals. “The purpose, the intent,” he says, “was never really communicated to me.”

Hopkins, who recently graduated, worked with a couple of other students under the direction of John Bieter, acting director of the University Foundations Program, to craft clear answers to three fundamental questions: What are these courses? Why do I have to take them? How are they going to help me? They studied how other colleges organize their general-education curricula,
reviewed academic literature, interviewed undergraduates, and experimented with a variety of communication strategies.

Just because the questions were elemental, the group found, doesn’t mean they were easy to answer. For one, Hopkins says, Boise State had a confusing course-labeling system. As a freshman, he thought there were just two courses in the program, because they were the only ones labeled University Foundations. Interviews with other students revealed that many were similarly puzzled.

One of the first changes the team made was to integrate the word “foundations” into every course in the program. “Disciplinary Lenses in Literature and Humanities,” for example, was renamed “Foundations of Humanities.”

“To have even the names linked, you can start to see connections between courses more easily,” Hopkins says. “These aren’t just bundles of information we’re throwing at you. This is a coherent plan.”

The “why” question proved more complicated to answer. A year and a half into the research project, Hopkins and Bieter, a history professor, began visiting each section of University Foundations 100, the first course in the program, to talk about the purpose of general education to first-year students. They explained how the courses teach “ways of knowing,” to stress that they’re designed to teach students how to think differently: like a scientist, for example, or a historian.

Hopkins illustrated that idea with stories from his own experiences with general education. “My go-to is my Theater 101 class,” he says. He told students that even though he was part of the research project, he had fallen into the trap of thinking, What am I doing here? Once he realized he had been resisting involvement in the class, he committed himself to learning about the history of theater, appreciating plays, and analyzing playwriting. “I was like, OK, I might as well take full advantage of it, to help me think more creatively or differently.” He began applying concepts he learned in the course, like rising action and climax, to the TV shows and movies he watched.

He and Bieter also presented statistics on the percentage of college graduates who hold a job related to their major (only 27 percent) and how the average person will hold 12 jobs over the course of his or her professional lifetime.

That information, Hopkins says, helps students see value in the notion that general education teaches people how to become better learners. As the statistics show, people continue to learn
and adapt as they move through life. Knowing something about a wide range of disciplines can ease that process.

Hopkins, who is working on an article about his experience that he hopes to publish in an academic journal, says his team also developed recommendations for incorporating more experiential learning into the general-education curriculum. Connecting classroom and hands-on learning, he says, can help answer the final question: How are these courses going to help me?

Throughout the process, Hopkins says, he learned a lot. For one, confusion over general education seems to be universal. He also learned the value of clarity and connection. In addition to the course renamings, the group also reached out to student-government representatives and trained students in the University Foundations 100 course to act as learning assistants and ambassadors for the program on campus. They will continue the communication work that Hopkins and his peers started.

His advice to other colleges hinges on these experiences: Include students in general-education reform. Communicate the value of the programs clearly. Be uniform in describing courses. Connect the program to students’ future lives.

“So much of it is communication, and so few students truly grasp or are able to understand the philosophy behind it,” he says. “That’s why I was so lucky to participate in this research project.”

Have you worked with students to help revamp a course or a program? What difference did their participation make? Drop me a line at beth.mcmurtrie@chronicle.com and your story may appear in a future newsletter.