



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

General Education Curriculum Revision Faculty Council Update

Friday, November 10, 2017

The Big Claim

Focused, broad study in the liberal arts is the best way to provide students with mastery of the capacities they need to be outstanding leaders, public servants, and citizens; great workers and entrepreneurs; and lifelong learners.



Guiding Principles

1. Student-focused: What do students need?
2. Evidence-based: What approaches promote persistence and success for all students?
3. Capacity-driven: What capacities for thought and action do students gain from each experience?
4. Simplified: Current curriculum has many hours under requirement and is complex.





WHAT DO WE
KNOW FROM THE
STUDENT SUCCESS
RESEARCH ABOUT
LEARNING
OUTCOMES AND
THE KINDS OF
PRACTICES THAT
FOSTER INTENDED
OUTCOMES?

High-Impact Practices (HIPS) have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. They support both student persistence and heightened achievement on essential learning outcomes.

WHY ARE THEY EFFECTIVE?

- Demand considerable time and effort
- Facilitate how to approach real-world problems and situations
- Require meaningful interactions with faculty and peers
- Encourage collaboration with diverse others
- Provide frequent and substantive feedback
- Promote a change in students' worldviews and self-awareness

Kuh, G. D. 2008. *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

WHAT KINDS OF PRACTICES ARE HIGH IMPACT?

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences.
- Common Intellectual Experiences (“core curriculum”).
- Learning Communities (“cohorts”).
- Writing-Intensive Courses.
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects.
- Undergraduate Research.
- Diversity/Global Learning.
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning.
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects

Notes from literature:

- Recommended: At least two in a student’s college career and one in the first year.
- Cumulative effects on learning are seen as students experience more and more.

WHAT DO WE KNOW FROM OUR INTERNAL DATA?

- There are inequities in who accesses these experiences.
- Students who benefit most (such as first generation college students and Pell-recipient students) do not access at the same levels as other students.



HIGHLIGHTING
A FEW ELEMENTS
IN THE
PROPOSAL
ALIGNED WITH
THE EVIDENCE:



1. MORE STRUCTURE IN THE FIRST YEAR: We are proposing more structure to help students with their development in the first year around academics, advising, and wellness.
2. HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES IN THE FIRST YEAR FOR ALL STUDENTS.
 - Learning Communities (“cohorts” registered in courses together)
 - Common Intellectual Experiences around a framework of inquiry (FYS for depth and III for breadth)
 - First Year Seminars and Experiences
 - Writing Intensive Course: ENGL 105

3. ALIGNING PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES: We are proposing a set of requirements for all general education courses that are aligned with high impact practice research (collaboration, active learning, etc.) throughout the students' career.

High Impact Characteristics:

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Capacities: Linking Liberal Arts With Post-College Roles

- **Capacities** are ways of thinking, analyzing, understanding, and doing that can be used across multiple situations for multiple purposes.
- Example capacities:
 - Evidence-based reasoning
 - Communication and collaboration
 - Principled engagement
 - Impact

HIGHLIGHTING A
FEW ELEMENTS IN
THE PROPOSAL
ALIGNED WITH A
CAPACITIES
APPROACH



KEY CAPACITIES RECUR:

Learning requires repeated practice, so students will encounter key capacities numerous times in different amounts and different contexts.

1. **COURSES FOCUS ON SINGLE CAPACITIES:** General Education (GE) courses emphasize one Focus Capacity, taught through the course's topic.
2. **GE COURSES REINFORCE OTHER CAPACITIES:** Each GE course must include some element of each of several recurring capacities.

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Feedback: The First Year

- FYS Requirement will interfere with FYS quality, is too directive
- Ideas, Information, and Inquiry seems anonymous, overly regimented, impersonal, superficial
- Scheduling students in cohorts across two semesters will be unduly complicated



Amendments: The First Year

- Phase in FYS and III requirements over first three years, evaluating successes
- Consider a non-FYS first-year-only course type
- Design III to be dynamic, exciting, theme-organized, and generative
- Allow sufficient flexibility to handle student heterogeneity



Feedback: Distribution and Focus

- Combining US and Global Diversity
- Lack of specific topics (e.g., history, literature, arts, quantitative skills)
- Relying on College divisions for intellectual breadth
- GE Course requirements are too rigid, will make all classes the same



Amendments: Distribution & Focus

- Distribution based on Focus Capacity, not discipline
- Nine Courses, probably One Focus Capacity per course
 - Ethical, Civic, and Democratic Thinking
 - Diversity, Power, and Inclusion
 - Evidence-based Research and Inquiry
 - Engagement with the Human Past
 - Quantitative Reasoning
 - Aesthetic and Interpretive Analysis
 - Creative Expression
 - Natural Scientific Investigation
 - Global Engagement



Amendments: GE Course Expectations

- Each General Education course should, of course:
 - Cover a substantial intellectual topic, field, or subfield;
 - Be taught using techniques appropriate to the content area that encourage student learning at the highest levels;
 - Use assessments that fairly and appropriately measure students' learning and performance
 - Emphasize one Focus Capacity, taught through the course's content area;
- Each should include, in some measure, each of these Recurring Capacities:
 - Diversity of ideas, approaches, viewpoints, and frameworks to allow students:
 - a) to understand how human difference is related to the topic area; and
 - b) to evaluate and judge among legitimate debates in the field
 - Changes over time that explain, illuminate, or contextualize the topic area
 - Situation of the topic area in global context
 - Processes of active inquiry, evidence, and discovery
 - Creativity, judgment, and sound conclusions under ambiguity and uncertainty
 - Written, digital, and/or oral communication
 - Collaboration



Feedback

- Insufficient emphasis on global study
- Assessment and student learning outcomes imply standardized testing
- Campus Life Experience is too bureaucratic, too many required



Amendments

- Added global Focus Capacity
- Assessment is curriculum-level, not class-level, and is qualitative as well as quantitative; designed to make sure the curriculum is doing what we want it to do
- Consider mechanism and number of required campus life experiences



Curriculum Map

- First Year: FYS, ENGL 105, III, 7 other courses
 - Student Services Cohort (Advising, Career Services, MFIT, Life Skills)
- Throughout:
 - 9 GE courses
 - Foreign Language
 - LFIT
 - e-Portfolios/Reflection
 - High-Impact Experiential Education
 - Global Guarantee
 - Campus Life Experience
- Junior/Senior Year: Communication-Intensive Course



Feasibility & Design Committees

Is it feasible?

If so, what would it take and how should it be organized?

- General Education Course Availability and Scheduling
- General Education Courses – Criteria and Learning Outcomes
- The First Year
- Ideas, Information, and Inquiry Course
- Student Affairs Cohort
- Junior/Senior Communication-Intensive Course
- e-Portfolios
- Assessment and Amendment
- College Resourcing and Support
- Fully Engaging Students in Educational and Global Experiences
- General Education for Transfer Students and Transferred Credit



Questions, feedback, information

- Email: curriculum2019@unc.edu
- Web: <http://curriculum2019.web.unc.edu>
 - Nov. 13:
 - Revision memos detailing changes
 - Curriculum map
 - Feasibility & Design Committee Information
 - Later:
 - Full revised proposal
- Public Meeting: Dec. 4, 3:00 pm, 039 Graham Memorial





QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Email: curriculum2019@unc.edu

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