

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM

Academic Core Curriculum Committee – September 2016

WHAT IS THE DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED CORE CURRICULUM?

The Core Curriculum consists of three levels: Foundations, Perspectives, and Symposium.

Students must complete 39-40 credits to complete the program.

- Foundations level (24-25 credits)
- Perspectives level (12 credits)
- The Symposium (3 credits)

At the **Foundations** level, students engage in creative inquiry, cultivate curiosity, and develop foundational knowledge and skills in the disciplines. The Foundations level consists of two First-Year courses -- CTZN 110: *Inquiry into Citizenship* and ENGL 165: *Writing & Rhetoric* – and one course from each of six Pillar categories listed below. These Pillar categories are based on the student learning outcomes for the Foundations level.

- Historical & Contemporary Insights (3 credits)
- Human Behavior & Social Institutions (3 credits)
- Global Citizenship (3-4 credits)
- Aesthetic Expression (3 credits)
- Quantitative Reasoning (3 credits)
- Scientific Reasoning (3 credits)

At the **Perspectives** level, students develop and articulate informed perspectives essential to participation in civic and global life by integrating knowledge and skills across disciplines. Perspectives are disciplinary-based integrative learning experiences, intentionally designed to make explicit connections between courses, fields of study, and disciplines or between disciplinary knowledge and its application outside the classroom. Students choose one course from each of the following categories or pairs of categories:

- World Languages Perspectives
- Historical/Contemporary Perspectives OR Behavioral/Social Perspectives
- Global Perspectives OR Aesthetic Perspectives
- Quantitative Perspectives OR Scientific Perspectives

The culminating experience of the Core Curriculum is **The Symposium**. Students take CTZN 410: *Symposium on the Common Good*. CTZN 410 is designed to engage students in critical deliberation of citizenship and the issues citizens face in their communities.

The Symposium is organized around a broad theme, rotated on a regular basis, ideally three to six years. The Symposium and its theme create a common shared experience across sections of the course. Faculty design their Symposium section to support students' exploration of issues and challenges relating to the broad theme through a disciplinary lens. The Symposium course results in a public, campus-wide Symposium Day to move students from discussion to action and to highlight the Symposium course as a common experience for Longwood citizen leaders.

WHY THIS DESIGN?

- Builds more intentionally on our university mission to develop citizen leaders who are prepared to make positive contributions to the common good of society.
 - In our current General Education program, only Goals 1 (LSEM) and 13 (ENGL 400) explicitly mention citizen leadership.
 - As part of its work, the Academic Core Curriculum Committee developed a set of Guiding Principles, approved by Faculty Senate, that includes an academic definition of citizen leader: *A citizen leader is someone who is academically and personally transformed by knowledge, fundamental modes of inquiry, and informed civic engagement and who then applies the virtues of a Longwood education to serve and transform communities.*
- Connects the Core Curriculum more intentionally to a student’s major.
 - This design addresses the perception that General Education is just a “bunch of classes” students need to “get out of the way” before they get to their major coursework.
 - The Perspectives level is based on integrative learning experiences, so that students can make intentional and explicit connections between disciplines, courses, and fields or make connections between an academic discipline and a context outside the classroom.
 - In the Symposium course, students will collaborate with students from other disciplines. This collaboration will help them build connections between disciplines and fields of study to address a civic issue.
 - Students will be able to count up to three Core Curriculum classes – two Pillar courses and one Perspectives course – toward each major or minor, so they can better see the relationship between the Core and their courses for their degree program(s).
- Emphasizes skills students need to be engaged citizens and to lead successful and fulfilling lives. In addition to the content knowledge acquired in their courses, students will learn and practice
 - civil discourse, ethical reasoning, and critical thinking.
 - writing or speaking skills throughout the Core Curriculum.
 - thinking creatively and communicating through artistic production.
 - the ability to look at problems from different perspectives and to think in integrative ways at the Perspectives level and in the Symposium.
 - quantitative and scientific reasoning.
 - a world language to develop a better understanding of other cultures and languages, as well as their own.
- Reduces students’ required credit hours for the Core Curriculum and Additional Degree Requirements to give students more room to pursue minors or double majors.
 - Our current General Education program requires 38 credits plus potentially 4-8 additional credits of world language in order to fulfill the 201 requirement; the proposed Core requires 39-40 credits with no additional credits of world language.
 - The world language requirement is built into the Core as two courses, one at the Foundations level in the Global Citizenship Pillar and one at the World Languages Perspectives level. Students will be able to place out of the Global Citizenship language

course. Such a placement would not exempt a student from the Pillar requirement; the student will fulfill the Pillar requirement with a course from another discipline.

- Our current Additional Degree Requirements are 6-7 credits outside of General Education and in addition to the major. In the new Core, Additional Degree Requirements will be only an additional 3-4 credits because of the integrative nature of the Perspectives level courses.
- Aspires to make our assessment practices more efficient and meaningful.
 - Our current General Education program has 14 goals and 50 student learning outcomes; the new program has 3 levels and 19 student learning outcomes
 - SCHEV competencies are currently assessed outside of General Education; they will be assessed within the Core.
 - The current Writing and Speaking Intensive courses in the major will be replaced with Writing- and Speaking-Infused courses throughout the Core.
- Makes room for and encourages faculty creativity and collaboration.
 - There are opportunities to build team-taught courses that integrate disciplines and fields.
 - There is room to create and develop themed pathways or learning communities within the Core.

HOW WILL THIS PROPOSED CURRICULUM AFFECT MY PROGRAM?

- Each major or minor may offer courses in no more than two of the following categories: Historical & Contemporary Insights, Human Behavior & Social Institutions, Global Citizenship, Aesthetic Expression, Quantitative Reasoning, and Scientific Reasoning. Interdisciplinary majors and minors, such as Liberal Studies, are exempt from this policy.
- Inquiry into Citizenship sections and Pillar courses allow students to be exposed to and to explore your discipline.
- Majors may reserve up to 50% of seats in each section it offers in a Foundations course (First-Year and Pillar courses) or of a Perspectives course.
- Courses may be offered by a single department or may be cross-listed in different categories when the course is co-taught. If a course is cross-listed in different categories, students may count it toward the completion of only one requirement.
- Course Sizes: To provide more opportunities for classroom interaction, most Core Curriculum courses have caps of 25 students. The courses below have the following caps:
 - Scientific courses with labs have 24 students.
 - Inquiry into Citizenship sections have 20 students.
 - Writing & Rhetoric sections and Symposium on the Common Good sections have 18 students.
 - Aesthetic Expression courses with studios have 15 students.

- All Core Curriculum courses will have to incorporate writing-infused, speaking-infused, or arts-applied assignments (see descriptions of course requirements for communication assignments below).
- Any internship requirements will be decided by major programs. This provides major programs with the opportunity to develop alternative capstone experiences for their students.

WHEN WILL THE NEW CORE CURRICULUM BEGIN?

- If approved, freshmen entering in Fall 2018 would be under the new Core Curriculum. All other students would still be under the current General Education program.
- Transfer students entering in Fall 2020 would be required to follow the new Core Curriculum.
- The new Core Curriculum would be phased in one year at a time, while a teach-out plan for our current General Education program will be developed.

WHO WILL LEAD THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS?

- A new Core Curriculum Committee is being proposed for approval by Faculty Senate. This Committee will replace the current General Education Committee.
- A new Director of Core Curriculum and three Coordinators – for the Inquiry into Citizenship course, for the Writing & Rhetoric course, and for Symposium – will lead faculty in the development and coordination of the new curriculum.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE CORE CURRICULUM?

Foundations

Definition: At the Foundations level students will engage in creative inquiry, cultivate curiosity, and develop foundational knowledge and skills.

As they complete the Foundations, students will

- Investigate the foundations of citizenship, which include ethical reasoning, critical thought, and civil discourse.
- Describe and analyze continuity and change in one or more cultures.
- Evaluate cultural norms, societal institutions, and implicit and explicit assumptions about themselves.
- Develop skills for global citizenship through the study of world languages and cultures.
- Explore and/or engage in creative and artistic expression.
- Analyze which quantitative reasoning methods best address different types of questions and apply them to various problems in context.
- Use scientific reasoning to address a variety of questions in context.

- h. Analyze and use writing conventions appropriate to different audiences. Students will identify strengths and weaknesses in their own writing in order to improve.
- i. Analyze and use speaking conventions appropriate to different audiences. Students will identify strengths and weaknesses in their own speaking in order to improve.

Perspectives

Definition: At the Perspectives level, students develop and articulate informed perspectives essential to participation in civic and global life by integrating knowledge and skills across disciplines.

As they complete the Perspectives level, students will

- a. Locate, evaluate, and organize information from multiple disciplines to develop, refine, and address questions.
- b. Use valid data and evidence from multiple disciplines to construct well-framed and well-supported arguments.
- c. Articulate how different cultural perspectives influence an understanding of civic or global issues.
- d. Collaborate with others to develop an informed perspective on a civic or global issue.
- e. Reflect on the processes used to develop perspectives and reach decisions.

The Symposium

Definition: In the Symposium, students will prepare to serve the common good by applying their cumulative knowledge, skills, and perspectives from the whole of their university experience.

As they complete the Symposium, students will

- a. Examine the ethical consequences of their own decisions, so as to be responsible citizens.
- b. Examine the implications for themselves and others of decisions made in local, regional, or global contexts.
- c. Advocate for, and respond to criticisms of, a position while practicing civil discourse.
- d. Explore collaboratively how the complexities of a community issue require a variety of disciplinary approaches.
- e. Reflect upon how the core curriculum, their major, and their extracurricular activities have played and will continue to play a role in their transformation into citizen leaders.

WHAT ARE THE CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNICATION ASSIGNMENTS?

- Improving effective communication and expression require practice in a variety of contextual settings. As such, all courses in the Core Curriculum will explicitly infuse communication throughout the entirety of the course.
- CTZN 110: *Inquiry into Citizenship* will be speaking-infused. At least 15% of the final course grade will be awarded from communication-infused exercises/assignments.
- ENGL 165: *Writing & Rhetoric* will be writing-infused. At least 15% of the final course grade will be awarded from communication-infused exercises/assignments.
- Pillar courses may choose to be writing-infused or speaking-infused. Courses in the Aesthetic Expression Pillar may instead choose to be arts-applied.
 - For writing-infused or speaking-infused courses, at least 15% of the final course grade will be awarded from communication-infused exercises/assignments.
 - For arts-applied courses, at least 50% of the final course grade will be awarded from exercises/assignments that require the student to apply artistic skills and knowledge to produce art.
- Perspectives courses may choose to be writing-infused or speaking-infused. Courses in the Aesthetic Expression Perspectives category may instead choose to be arts-applied.
 - For writing-infused or speaking-infused courses, at least 10% of the final course grade will be awarded from communication-infused exercises/assignments.
 - For arts-applied courses, at least 50% of the final course grade will be awarded from exercises/assignments that require the student to apply artistic skills and knowledge to produce art.
 - The World Languages Perspectives course will be both writing-infused and speaking-infused. At least 10% of the final course grade will be comprised from writing-infused exercises/assignments and at least another 10% of the final course grade will be comprised from speaking-infused exercises/assignments.
- CTZN 410: *Symposium on the Common Good* will be both writing-infused and speaking-infused. At least 15% of the final course grade will be comprised from writing-infused exercises/assignments and at least another 15% of the final course grade will be comprised from speaking-infused exercises/assignments.

WHERE CAN I REVIEW ALL THE DETAILS?

- More details are at blogs.longwood.edu/acc/.
- Policy proposals are available at <http://solomon.longwood.edu/offices--departments/faculty-senate/reports/>