GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We aspire for our core curriculum experience to be a – or even *the* – signature program of Longwood University, an institution that provides students with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and opportunities for professional preparation in a range of disciplines.

The integration of the core curriculum experience and disciplinary study will fulfill

- the purpose of the University as a place where inquiry, critique, and discourse are cultivated and valued. We aspire to challenge our students and ourselves, in the words of Louis Menand, "to serve the public culture by asking questions that the public doesn't want to ask, investigating subjects it cannot or will not investigate, and accommodating voices it fails or refuses to accommodate."

- the purpose of the University as an institution that anchors community and responds to the demonstrated needs of society. We aspire to extend our students' academic experiences outside of the classroom by partnering with communities in a sustained and intentional way.

- our institutional mission to develop citizen leaders who are prepared to make positive contributions to the common good of society. 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.

In order to achieve these ideas, the core curriculum should

1. Enable students to develop their identity, values, and ethics; their ability to think critically, to reason, and to communicate effectively; their knowledge of the world; their empathy for others and their understanding of differences; and their health and well-being.

2. Excite our students about learning from the time they enter the university.

3. Empower our students with the academic skills and attributes necessary to engage in rigorous college-level work.

4. Motivate our students to feel ownership over their academic development, allowing them to integrate their core curriculum experience with their disciplinary major(s).

5. Provide multiple paths to accommodate those students who choose pre-professional programs or who transfer to Longwood – and also provide opportunities for exploration for those students who are undecided in their choice of major.

6. Excite and engage our faculty to teach in the core curriculum program – whether through interdisciplinary or disciplinary work, or project-based/inquiry-based learning – and to help address some of our workload issues along the way.

7. Provide opportunities for academic programs, especially the smaller ones, to recruit majors from the core curriculum classes.

8. Leverage our students' high level of campus involvement to address the needs of our local community.

9. Incorporate sound assessment as a means to improve student learning and the program, rather than as an end in and of itself.

10. Exhibit flexibility and a built-in mechanism for revision to stay relevant.

11. Be coherent and elegant enough to be easily understood by multiple constituencies – students, parents, legislators, members of the University community, etc.

In order for the core curriculum to be successful and sustainable, the institution must commit to

- New faculty lines necessary to teach appropriately-sized core courses that promote student inquiry and substantive instruction in communication skills. (1, 2, 3)

- Revised faculty workload calculations to incentivize the development of and participation in innovative teaching and learning environments. (1, 6, 8)

- Fully-funded and professionally-staffed centers that address student development in core competencies such as writing, speaking, and quantitative literacy. (1, 3)

- Ongoing professional development for all faculty, including contingent faculty, who will teach in the new core curriculum. (1, 2, 3, 6)

- Adequate staff to coordinate, foster, and sustain relationships between business and community partners, faculty, and students. (6, 8)

- Revised administrative policies and procedures that make it easier for faculty to create, implement, and refine innovative teaching and learning strategies. (6, 8)

- Technical support for BANNER and assessment software to implement the core curriculum as intended by the faculty. (9, 10)

- Enhanced advising structures to support undeclared students, transfer students, and the exploration of degree paths by all students. (4, 5, 7, 11)