

Motion

The Committee on Educational Policies and Planning moves that the faculty adopt the new General Education Curriculum for Skidmore College as detailed in the February 28, 2017 Proposal.

Rationale

The Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) offers this new general education curriculum proposal for consideration and adoption by the faculty. Much of what is proposed is a new way of organizing what many of us already do. By reframing the general education curriculum and strengthening some areas we hope to offer significant benefits for our students, especially in their understanding of what the Liberal Arts can do; and, more specifically, how our curriculum at Skidmore provides a means of integrative and life-long learning.

Multiple assessment tools strongly indicate that our students are not meeting our Goals for Student Learning and Development particularly in the areas of

in relation to those of others, across social
varied forms of information; understand and use

The assessments that focus on social and cultural diversity include NSSE Reports (2010, 2013, and 2016), the Alumni Learning Census (2010, 2012, and 2016), 2012 CIGU Report: Graduating Students of Color Exit Interviews, 2012 HEDS

combined from the Non-Western or Cultural Diversity clusters during their time at the College.

Given the assessment data and research on the impact of courses addressing diversity, CEPP strongly believes the Bridge Experience: Power and Justice requirement in the curriculum, along with a separate Global Cultural Perspectives requirement, will better support the above-mentioned student learning goals.

Both direct and indirect assessments also indicate that Skidmore students and graduates are not adequately meeting goals for quantitative reasoning and scientific literacy. These assessments include the 2014 Skidmore Scientific Literacy and Quantitative Reasoning Exam (SLQR), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and the Alumni Learning Census (ALC). On the quantitative reasoning section of the 2014 SLQR, nonnatural science majors at Skidmore scored a mean of 44% and 52% reported that they never or only sometimes used numerical information to examine real-world problems. Most natural science majors (>80%) reported using numerical information more frequently. The natural science majors averaged a 60% on the quantitative

Finally, the Middle States Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation require written and oral communication, technological competency, and information literacy to be addressed in the curriculum either separately or integrated into academic disciplines. These competencies are already being taught in most departments and programs but could be done so with greater intentionality.

Resources will be made available, including / but not limited to / support for faculty developing new courses, modeling interdisciplinary and integrative approach

OVERVIEW

The general education c

INTEGRATIONS

Integration s/ that is, the student's making of meaningful and productive connections among the various courses, ideas, and experiences of a liberal arts education/ accurately describes what we aim to foster in students at Skidmore College. To integrate knowledge is to think beyond the simplicity of a single idea to the broader and deeper concepts that animate the world. It involves the realization that to be liberally educated one must understand that concepts, principles, ideas, experiences, and values do not end at the arbitrary borders of a course or a discipline, but are interwoven in a tapestry of complex knowledge. We hope to challenge our students to be more intentional about this process and about the concepts that undergird it. As such, the principle of Integration s forms the backbone of the new proposed general education curriculum. Its

Bridge Experience: Power and Justice

(1 course)

[A committee of stakeholders will further refine learning goals and criteria for approving courses. Departments, programs, and curriculum committee will determine appropriate credits for qualified courses.]

Students will take a course that interrogates the nature of power and justice / with a focus that may be historical, sociological, literary, anthropological, political, psychological, comparative, contemporary, philosophical, or all or some of these. The course will focus on power and justice through the lens of identity, (dis)ability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, religion, sexuality, and/or socio-economic class, and may also look at artistic expression and organized political action. Students should reflect on their own circumstances and how they influence knowledge acquisition and understanding. Students should interrogate their own assumptions and place them in relation to distinct cultural frameworks of power and justice. Ideally, students will take a Bridge Experience course in their second or third year.

CEPP COMMENT:

Our [Goals for Student Learning and Development](#)

(Denson, 2009; Chang, 2002; You and Matteo, 2013; Neville et al, 2014), especially when students took additional coursework and or workshops on diversity (Neville, et al.2014).Diversity courses are associated with gains in the critical thinking skills of students as well as their ability for complex thought (Bowman, 2010).Exposure to diversity in the curriculum has been shown to increase the ability of students to understand the perspective of others, to be open to having their views challenged, to be tolerant of differing beliefs, and to work with diverse groups of people (Gurin, Nagda, and Lopez, 2004; Hurtado, Ruiz, and Whang, 2012; Engberg and Porter, 2013)Evidence suggests the impact of diversity in the curriculum lasts well after students graduate from college (Bowman, Brandenberger, Hill, and Lapsley, 2011).

Under our current curriculum as part of the Culture -Centered Inquiry requirement, students take one course from either the Non-Western or Cultural Diversity clusters. For the graduating classes of 2013-2016, 46.0% of the graduates did not take a Cultural Diversity course during their college education and 33.5% did not take a Non -Western course. Of the 2013-2016 graduates, 59.4% took only one course combined from the Non-Western or Cultural Diversity clusters during their time at the College.

Given the assessment data and research on the impact of courses addressing diversity, we believe the Bridge Experience: Power and Justice requirement in the curriculum , along with a separate Global Cultural Perspectives requirement , will better support the aforementioned student learning goals.

Refereni

all courses

The culminating courses/projects/essays/presentations/exhibits/performances should demonstrate: 1. that graduating seniors have engaged with their academic work in an integrative and creative manner, and 2. that they have drawn relevant connections to academic discourse, to society, and between various academic experiences throughout their time in college. CEPP envisions that senior Coda projects may be made available to the Skidmore community at the end of spring semester.

CEPP COMMENT:

Our [Goals for Student Learning and Development](#) call for our students to

mathematical and quantitative reasoning skills to be successful in an AQR course and are prepared for other courses that use quantitative methods as part of the curriculum. Fundamental skills ensure that students will:

- x Be able to perform mathematical calculations involving estimation, basic formulas, units, percentages, fractions, statistics, probability, and geometry ;
- x Be able to formulate and apply basic algebra skills ;
- x Understand , interpret, and apply mathematical concepts and calculations in his/her daily life ;
- x Effectively communicate and discuss mathematical concepts and results both orally and in writing ; and
- x Appreciate the power and utility of mathematics and quantitative reasoning.

Students can demonstrate foundational skills through SAT/ACT mathematical test scores as before. New and transfer students not fulfilling this pre -requisite automatically through test scores will be required to complete an online QR placement test prior to registering for Skidmore courses. The test results will place students into one of the following three courses: AQR-level, foundational -level, or basic skills. In summary, students can fulfill the foundational QR content in one of the following ways:

- x Achieving a score of at least 650 on the MSAT I examination, a score of at least 570 on any Mathematics SAT II examination, or a score of at least 28 on the Mathematics ACT examination ;
- x Placing into AQR -level coursework through the QR placement test; or
- x Successfully completing a Fundamental Quantitative Reasoning (FQR) course

In addition, the possible outcomes of the placement test include:

- x Placement into A QR-level courses;
Placement into FQR-level courses; or
Placement into a basic mathematical skills course (MA 100).

FQR Courses

FQR courses are courses that ensure that students master the foundational skills outlined above. Students requiring a n FQR course must complete this course prior to enrolling in an AQR course. FQR courses are offered in a variety of departments and programs and are worth two or more credit hours. While some courses may be developed to specifically address FQR content, other courses may cover FQR content through a supplemental 1 -hour course meeting.

FQR Courses Approval:

For an existing course to be designated FQR, the course will need to be certified by the Quantitative Reasoning Program Director in conjunction with a Q R review team of two STEM faculty, appointed annually by the QR director in consultation with the curriculum committee and the Dean of the Faculty. New courses will need to first have curriculum committee approval prior to seeking FQR approval. To certify a course as FQR, the review team will consider the course syllabus as well as the FQR approval document which outlines the specific ways in which the course addresses the learning goals stated above. Once a course is certified as a FQR course, the course will be reviewed by the QR review team within 5 years of approval or at the discretion of the QR Director.

MA 100:

Quantitative Skills is a 3-hour course that currently exists and is the study of practical arithmetic and geometry, data gathering and analysis, introductory probability and statistics, size and bias in sampling, hypothesis testing, confidence intervals and their use in statistical analysis, linear relationships, interpolation and extrapolation, correlation, linear and exponential growth with practical applications.

Students requiring a basic skills course must complete this course prior to enrolling in an FQR-level course which must be completed prior to enrolling in an AQR course. Therefore, students needing MA 100 must complete this course or an equivalent course by the start of their sophomore year.

CEPP COMMENT:

Our [Goals for Student Learning and Development](#) emphasize the importance of knowledge of human cultures and the physical world through study in the arts, humanities, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. We expect students to analyze, interpret, and apply varied forms of information; understand and use evidence to solve civic, and scientific problems. We expect students to be able to critically examine results and claims about the world, to make informed decisions and choices, to communicate quantitatively based ideas and thoughts to others, and to develop and model solutions to many of the problems we face in our societies. Both direct and indirect assessments of Skidmore students and graduates indicate these goals are not adequately being met. These assessments include the 2014 Skidmore Scientific Literacy and Quantitative Reasoning Exam (SLQR), the National

Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and the Alumni Learning Census (ALC).
On the quantitative reasoning section of the 2014 SLQR, nonnatural science

CEPP COMMENT:

Courses from a number of disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences will

sienn6qm 0 g80(i)F2 11 1l 792 re W* n BT /F2 11 0 g 0 G Tf 1 0 0 1 142.55 662.7 Tm 0 g 0 G [(s)]

INQUIRIES

Artistic Inquiry through Practice

(1 course)

[A committee of stakeholders will further refine learning goals and criteria for approving courses. Departments, programs, and curriculum committee will determine appropriate credits for qualified courses.]

Students in a course that satisfies the artistic i

reflect upon human culture as expressed in historical tradition, literature and languages, art, film, performances, music, historical documents, cultural artifacts, and ideas and beliefs. Students will understand the unique value of the particulars within human contexts and the importance of subjectivity for human experience.

CEPP COMMENT:

Courses in this category are typically, but not exclusively, offered in art history, classics, dance theory and history, history, literature (in English and in other languages), music theory and history, philosophy, religion, political philosophy, and theater theory and history. Our [Goals for Student Learning and Development](#)

world through study in the arts, humanities, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. The CEPP committee will continue to work with departments and programs to ensure that these courses are designed to meet the learning goals and criteria for approving courses. Departments, programs and curriculum committee will determine appropriate credits.

[See links to further resources at the end of the proposal]

Scientific Inquiry through Practice

(1 course)

[Based on the recommendation of the 2011-2012 CEPP subcommittee on Science Literacy. A committee of stakeholders will further refine the learning goals and criteria for approving courses. Departments, programs and curriculum committee will determine appropriate credits.]

- x Inquiry based activities where students use an inductive and/or deductive approach to study and better understand an aspect of the world where the outcome of the study is not known beforehand;
- x Discovery based activities where students use an inductive and/or deductive approach to learn about known phenomena in the universe ; and
- x Problem-based activities where students develop their own inductive and/or deductive methodology to address a particular scientific question and/ or problem.

CEPP COMMENT:

Technology Literacy

[Departments and Programs will consider ways in which discipline-based technology skills can

model or by some other mechanism]

Definition:

A technology literate student is able to use effectively appropriate tools to acquire, manage, evaluate, create, and or communicate information, knowledge, or works of art.

Visual Literacy

[Departments and Programs will consider ways in which discipline-based visual literacy can be intentionally included in the major, either through application of the

model or by some other mechanism]

A visually literate individual is able to:

- x Determine the nature and extent of the visual materials needed;
- x Find and access needed images, objects, and visual media effectively and efficiently ;
- x Interpret and analyze the meanings of images and visual media;
- x Evaluate images, objects, and their sources;
- x Use images, objects, and or visual media effectively ;
- x Design and create meaningful images, objects, and or visual media; and
- x Understand many of the ethical, legal, social, and economic issues surrounding the creation and use of images, objects, and visual media; and access and use visual materials ethically (Adapted from Association of College and Research Libraries, [Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#), Oct. 2011)

Writing in the Major

No significant changes are proposed to the writing in the major requirement at this time.

CEPP COMMENT:

Our [Goals for Student Learning and Development](#) call for our students to

forms of information; understand and use evidence, 1

What does our ongoing Self-Stu

x " ' • - ~ › Ž œ 1 ' • • • Ž 1 • Š • Ž œ 1 z € À 1 Ð à À