

TO: Steering Committee of the University Senate  
FROM: University Senate Educational Policy Committee  
SUBJECT: Undergraduate Core Curriculum and Administration & Oversight  
Structure  
DISPOSITION: University Senate for Discussion

The Educational Policy Committee hereby forwards to the University Senate the attached report and proposal about the proposed new Core Curriculum and Administration & Oversight Structure. This report provides the background information and confirms that there has been active faculty involvement in the discussion and planning for the creation and implementation of the new core curriculum and oversight structure.

## PROPOSED

**Motion:** To approve the core curriculum framework with identified essential learning outcomes and rubrics AND to appoint an undergraduate core curriculum administration and oversight committee with the responsibility for the ongoing governance of the core curriculum with rotating faculty representation from every College/School and the Libraries.

### 1. Purdue Undergraduate Core Curriculum

***The need exists at Purdue University*** to provide a means by which undergraduate students share a similar educational experience and in so doing achieve a set of common goals or outcomes required of all graduates. The core curriculum is such a mechanism that is grounded in a framework for building common knowledge and intellectual concepts in students and facilitating the development of skills and knowledge considered important for all Purdue graduates. It is intended to impart a common set of educational outcomes that will better equip students for success in tomorrow's global marketplace.

<b>Foundational Outcomes</b>
Rubric Level 1*
<b>1. Written communication*</b> Select ONE: (Courses TBD)
<b>2. Information Literacy*</b> Select ONE: (Courses TBD)
<b>3. Oral communication*</b> Select ONE: (Courses TBD)
<b>4. Science, Technology and Mathematics</b> Select ONE of <b>EACH</b> (Specific courses TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Science (Physical and Life Sciences)</li><li>• Technology and Computer Science</li><li>• Mathematics, Statistics</li></ul>
<b>5. Human Cultures</b> Select ONE of <b>EACH</b> (Specific courses TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Humanities</li><li>• Behavioral/Social Sciences</li><li>• Technology and Society</li></ul>

- More than one learning outcome may be satisfied in an individual course if that course is approved by Administration and Oversight Committee as fulfilling the requirements of each learning outcome rubric.
- Students receiving credit by exam for a course listed within the core will also fulfill the requirements of the specific learning outcome(s) tied to the course.
- Students will be able to satisfy the requirements of the core in multiple ways (e.g., co-curricular activities such as learning communities and a common reading program, service learning, course content requirements).

\*Foundational outcomes also should be embedded within disciplinary areas and students are expected to demonstrate higher levels of learning in each area as indicated within rubrics.

**Framework:** Through successful completion of a Purdue undergraduate program of study, students will acquire competencies rooted within a common set of foundational and embedded learning outcomes (see Appendix A for learning outcomes). Students will experience common coursework focused on foundational outcomes (see Table above) in written and oral communication; information literacy; science, technology, and mathematics; and human cultures. Foundational courses will equate to approximately 24-27 credit hours and center on a “developing” skill level (rubric Level 1). Multiple outcomes may be satisfied by a single foundational course. In addition, most courses will be considered potentially portable and transferable across all Purdue Colleges/Schools. The exception is for science and mathematics courses tied to the content learning outcome of *Science, Technology, and Mathematics*. Courses associated with these outcomes would be listed in “clusters” according to the common requirements for certain programs. For example, students might take mathematics content in the differential calculus cluster or the algebra & trigonometry cluster. Disciplines in which calculus or algebra/trigonometry is considered an entry point will be clustered to better enable students to complete their coursework. By highlighting common content requirements for program areas, planning should be more efficient for students who are considering a change in major. Students must work with university academic advisors to identify the courses that best meet the requirements for their major or potential majors as well as for meeting the learning outcomes.

<p><b>Embedded Outcomes</b> (enhanced within disciplines)</p> <p>Rubric Levels 1-3*</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creative Thinking</li> <li>2. Critical Thinking</li> <li>3. Ethical Reasoning</li> <li>4. Global Citizenship and Social Responsibility</li> <li>5. Intercultural Knowledge<sup>a</sup></li> <li>6. Leadership and Teamwork</li> <li>7. Quantitative Reasoning<sup>b</sup></li> <li>8. Integrative Learning</li> <li>9. Written Communication (Levels 2, 3)</li> <li>10. Information Literacy (Levels 2,3)</li> <li>11. Oral Communication (Levels 2,3)</li> </ol>

- <sup>a</sup>Some foundational coursework from Humanities may meet rubric Level 1 for the learning outcome Intercultural Knowledge
- <sup>b</sup>Some foundational coursework from Mathematics, Statistics may meet rubric Level 1 for the learning outcome Quantitative Reasoning

Embedded learning outcomes addressed within courses and typically taught within a specific discipline or major are creative and critical thinking, ethical reasoning, intercultural knowledge and effectiveness, information literacy, global citizenship and social responsibility, quantitative reasoning, oral and written communication, and leadership and teamwork skills (see Table above). As outcomes are embedded within courses in each disciplinary structure, students will experience and be assessed on broad, deep areas of learning as reflected in the learning outcome rubrics indicating levels of knowledge and skill development increasing from “developing” (Level 1) to “emerging” (Level 2) to a “proficient” (Level3) level (see Appendix B for rubrics) (see Appendix C for sample assessment mapping). It is expected that all students will meet the embedded outcomes at a Level 3 by graduation.

**Operation:** Beginning Fall 2013, all newly admitted undergraduate students will be required to complete the targeted learning outcomes of the core curriculum during their undergraduate program of study. Students will have the entire duration of their undergraduate program to meet these outcomes. Students who were enrolled prior to Fall 2013 will not be required to complete the core curriculum requirements. Students who transfer to Purdue or those who enter with AP course credit may receive credit for their previous coursework if those courses have been approved as equivalent courses.

Development of Core Curriculum Framework, Learning Outcomes, and Rubrics. During Phase I of the core curriculum development, committee members identified some courses meeting foundational learning outcomes that will be portable across all Purdue programs. In addition, learning outcomes and their rubrics were developed and refined. Following initial approval by the Faculty Senate, core curriculum development will move to Phase II.

Development of Assessment System and Program Alignment to Learning Outcomes. In Phase II, core curriculum committee members will focus efforts on 1) working with Colleges/Schools to nominate foundational courses that meet learning outcomes at the foundational level and aligning their programs illustrating how students will meet embedded learning outcomes at increasing proficiency levels, 2) working with the Registrar’s Office and Purdue’s Director of Assessment to design a system for monitoring student progress through the core curriculum as they achieve learning outcomes, and 3) outlining recommendations for the ongoing administration and oversight of the core curriculum (e.g., auditing programs, approving new courses as part of the core curriculum for meeting learning outcomes).

**Portability:** With the exception of science and mathematics courses tied to the content learning outcome *Science, Technology, and Mathematics*, courses meeting foundational learning outcomes will be portable across all majors (approximately 24-27 credit hours). Courses in which embedded learning outcomes are met may not be portable across all majors and may be specific to students’ individual majors. Thus, students who change majors must work closely with their academic advisors to identify those learning outcomes associated with the courses that will transfer to their desired program of study.

## 2. Core Curriculum Administration and Oversight Structure

*The need exists at Purdue University* to provide a means by which ongoing administration and oversight of Purdue's undergraduate core curriculum can occur. To meet the ongoing workings of a sustainable core curriculum, faculty-led structures must be in place for determining and carrying out the operational guidelines associated with implementing elements of the core curriculum. Among the range of issues to be addressed by the faculty administration and oversight committee are approval of courses for inclusion within the core, establishment of guiding rules, regulation and monitoring of approved courses, and resolution of issues related to transfer students. It is recommended that this committee be established no later than the Spring 2012 semester.

Initial Recommendations for Administration and Oversight of the Core Curriculum:

Principles:

- The core curriculum will be faculty-governed.
- Learning outcomes within the core curriculum are designed to prepare students for continuous learning and expertise within disciplines. Purdue's core curriculum will be one that is outcomes-based.
- The core curriculum maintains high academic standards within the disciplines.
- The goal of the core curriculum is to design mechanisms to permit flexibility for both academic programs and students in meeting learning outcomes.

Procedures:

- This committee will be comprised of at least one faculty representative from **each** College/School and the Libraries as voting members. In addition, Ex Officio members will be added to include: regional campus representatives, Purdue Student Government representatives, and a head academic advisor. Faculty members will serve a 2-year term. It is recommended that faculty representatives serve no more than two consecutive terms before new faculty representatives are appointed.
- As the need arises for introducing new learning outcomes or eliminating those that are no longer relevant for Purdue graduates, it will be the responsibility of this committee to identify and vet those through a regular (at least every 5 years) reevaluation process.
- Any course accepted for Purdue's core curriculum must be approved by a majority vote of faculty members on this committee.
- All courses (or non courses) used to fulfill Purdue's core curriculum are limited to those or equivalencies approved by this committee.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Purdue University Senate Educational Policy Committee,

Teri Reed-Rhoads  
Chair, Educational Policy Committee  
Purdue University Senate

**Approving:**

Danita M. Brown  
James R. Daniels  
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Katherine Horton  
R. Neal Houze  
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Martin A. Lopez-de-Bertodano  
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Glenn G. Sparks  
Matthew Swiontek  
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**Disapproving:**

**Absent:**

Joan R. Fulton  
Ronald J. Glotzbach  
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