

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

**DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU**

---

Academic Affairs Publications

Academic Affairs

---

3-27-2018

## **Integrations Curriculum: Engaged Learning in the Liberal Arts & Sciences**

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/academic\\_pubs](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/academic_pubs)

---

### **Recommended Citation**

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, "Integrations Curriculum: Engaged Learning in the Liberal Arts & Sciences" (2018). *Academic Affairs Publications*. 9.

[https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/academic\\_pubs/9](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/academic_pubs/9)

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Academic Affairs Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csbsju.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csbsju.edu).

# **Integrations Curriculum: Engaged Learning in the Liberal Arts & Sciences**

Submitted by the ReInvigorating Shared Education (RISE) Committee

Co-chairs: Pam Bacon and Shane Miller

*Faculty members:* Carol Brash, Amelia Cheever, Jeff Dubois, John Kendall, Bill Lamberts,  
Anna Mercedes, Anne Sinko, Allison Spenader, and Erica Stonestreet

*Student representatives:* Sarah Gorman and Farrad Williams

*Ex-officio:* Emily Esch and Kyhl Lyndgaard

March 27, 2018

## **Integrations Curriculum Vision**

The College of St. Benedict and St. John's University provide students an education grounded in two key traditions: the Catholic Intellectual Tradition as guided by the Benedictine principles of the colleges' founders, and the liberal arts tradition of broad, multi-disciplinary, inquiry. Based on these traditions, we built a model of general education that has students use these values to study a complex, dynamic and diverse world. Our curriculum challenges students to integrate every aspect of their learning – to see relationships among the arts, the sciences and the humanities. Our graduates learn to make connections across their studies, their lives, and their communities, and in so doing, learn how to use numerous methods and perspectives to work toward the common good.

## **The Formation of RISE and Its Charge**

On October 11, 2017, the Joint Faculty Senate created a committee and charged it to develop a general education curriculum proposal to be voted on by the JFA by April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The members of the committee, all nominated by Senators, were selected by the Executive Committee and then the slate of names was voted on by the JFS at the October 11, 2017 meeting. The committee is comprised of 11 voting representatives from at least two departments in each division, along with four Ex-Officio members, two of whom are students.

The October 11, 2017 motion from the Joint Faculty Senate: The Senate hereby establishes the following charge for RISE: Following the Process and Design Principles from the *Making Connections* report, working with the Learning Outcomes approved by the Senate in 2016-2017 as a starting point, and taking into account feedback from the vote last spring, RISE will design a new or significantly revised curriculum model. RISE will bring the model to the Senate for discussion and input at least twice in the 2017-18 academic year, and to a meeting of the Department Chairs at least once. RISE will work with the appropriate standing committees as needed and will hold open forums at its discretion. RISE will have a final proposal ready for distribution to the Joint Faculty Assembly by March 27th, and the JFA will vote electronically on the proposal by April 20th, 2018

## Table of Contents

1. GOALS OF THE INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM.....	4
Goal 1: Integration .....	4
Goal 2: High-Impact Practices .....	5
Goal 3: Liberal Arts and Sciences .....	7
2. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM AND CONNECTION TO GOALS .....	8
Figure 1. Major Components of the Integrations Curriculum.....	10
3. INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM OVERVIEW .....	11
Writing Sequence .....	11
5 Ways of Thinking and Thematic Coursework .....	12
Culture and Social Difference Courses .....	13
Theology Sequence .....	14
Engagement Requirements .....	14
Quantitative Reasoning Designation .....	15
Language .....	15
Required Events .....	15
4. SCAFFOLDED LEARNING GOALS .....	16
5. DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS .....	21
Integrated Portfolio .....	21
Writing .....	25
<i>Writing Foundation</i> .....	26
<i>Writing Exploration (optional)</i> .....	27
<i>Writing Integration</i> .....	27
Themes and Ways of Thinking .....	29
<i>Ways of Thinking</i> .....	29
<i>Themes</i> .....	32
Culture & Social Difference.....	37
<i>Culture and Social Difference: Identity</i> .....	37
<i>Culture and Social Difference: Systems</i> .....	38
Theology.....	39
<i>Theology I</i> .....	40

<i>Theology 2</i> .....	40
Engagement Requirements .....	41
Quantitative Reasoning .....	51
6. IMPLEMENTATION .....	53
Implementation Plan Development.....	53
Staffing .....	54
Faculty Development .....	54
Assessment .....	56
Procedures to Monitor and Adjust the Integrations Curriculum .....	57
Integrations Curriculum Program Review .....	57

# 1. GOALS OF THE INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM

The need for a new general education curriculum has been demonstrated both from outside consultants and internal faculty discussions. The decision to develop a new curriculum was determined by the JFS in direct response to the weaknesses identified with the Common Curriculum. Those weaknesses included, but were not limited to, a lack of common, or shared, coursework or experiences within general education; a cafeteria-style approach that required breadth of coursework without any rationale or guiding purpose; the ability for students to transfer in high school credits that replaced a considerable portion of their general education; and student dissatisfaction with a set of disconnected requirements. Unlike the last curricular revision, this time the entire process of developing a new curriculum has been initiated, developed, and implemented by the faculty.

After much discussion with faculty, staff and students and an examination of the national scholarship on curriculum design, RISE, the committee charged with working on reforming the general education program at CSB/SJU, has focused its attention on the following broad goals for a new general education curriculum.<sup>1</sup> In this section, we describe the goals and why we feel they are important. In the next section, we explain how the key elements of our proposed curriculum work toward these goals.

First, a brief note about the process. One of the more common complaints about the current Common Curriculum (and general education curriculums more generally) is the lack of cohesion among the coursework. This lack of cohesion can be traced in part to the process by which the Common Curriculum came into being, in which a grounding philosophy for the curriculum was notably absent. In an attempt to address this complaint, CCVC developed a process that would reveal the desires our faculty had for our graduates and to turn these desires into a conceptual foundation for the reforms. The RISE committee has built on this work. RISE has developed a curriculum that meets as many of these goals as possible. These are broadly categorized under the goals of *integration*, *the intentional use of high impact practices*, and *highlighting the value of a liberal arts and sciences education*, and are the focus of this section.

The Integrations Curriculum will begin with students enrolled in the Fall of 2020; students enrolled before Fall 2020 will complete the Common Curriculum. Faculty will have well over a year to design IC courses for first-year students, more for IC courses that occur after the first year. RISE anticipates that there will be challenges in getting the new curriculum in place, some expected and others not foreseen, which is why we have built in over two years between approval and implementation. If some aspects or aspects of IC are found to be unworkable, the Director of the Curriculum will work with the JFS to make the appropriate changes.

## Goal 1: Integration

We begin with *integration*. The lack of an agreed upon process in the creation of the Common Curriculum, and, in particular, the lack of a common understanding of what the faculty wanted a

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Making Connections: Transforming Education at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University* for a more thorough discussion of the principle guiding reform.

general education program to accomplish, led to a product that many found unsatisfactory.<sup>2</sup> The Common Curriculum is a type of general education curriculum that is called in the literature “cafeteria style.” Cafeteria style curriculums ask students to choose from a variety of courses in different boxes, with little or no attempt to integrate their learning. Cafeteria style curriculums were quite common throughout the twentieth century but have recently come under heavy criticism in the literature.<sup>3</sup> Our own faculty also stated their dissatisfaction with this style of curriculum and wanted to provide students with opportunities to make meaningful connections among their courses. This desire led RISE to put the concept of integration at the center of our proposed curriculum.

## Goal 2: High-Impact Practices

The faculty also expressed a desire to be *more intentional with the placement of high-impact practices* in the new curriculum. High-impact practices, of which there are now 11, are practices that have been shown to improve student learning.<sup>4</sup> High impact practices are “institutionally-structured student experiences inside or outside of the classroom that are associated with elevated performance across multiple engagement activities and desired outcomes, such as deep learning, persistence, and satisfaction with college”.<sup>5</sup> CSB/SJU has a long track record of using many high-impact practices, but we have not been as intentional as we could have been about making sure that all students encounter multiple high-impact practices during their college career.<sup>6</sup> We do not include all 11 practices in our proposed curriculum for a couple of reasons. First, some high-impact practices that are well established, for example Undergraduate Research, are better suited for the majors. Second, we have limited resources (both time and money) and we would rather make sure that those high-impact practices that we include are done well.

We have intentionally integrated 7 high-impact practices across the four years of the curriculum. Most of these are familiar from the Common Curriculum (though with revisions) and one is new.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ottenhoff, John, Kathy Wise, and Charlie Blaich. Wabash Team Report to CSB/SJU. October 13, 2011. See also the minutes from department meetings on the CCVC website.

<sup>3</sup> Fong, Bobby. “Looking Forward: Liberal Education in the 21 st Century.” *Liberal Education* 90.1 (2004): 8-13; Kuh, George D. “Why Integration and Engagement are Essential to Effective Educational Practice in the Twenty-First Century.” *Peer Review* 10.4 (2008): 27-28; Ferren, Ann S. “Intentionality.” *General Education & Liberal Learning: Principles of Effective Practice*. Ed. Paul L. Gaston. Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities. 2010. 25-32; Huber, Mary Taylor, Patrick Hutchings, and Richard Gale. “Integrative Learning for Liberal Education.” *Peer Review* 7 (2005): 3-7; Gaston, Paul L. “Principles of Strong General Education Programs.” *General Education & Liberal Learning: Principles of Effective Practice*. Ed. Paul L. Gaston. Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2010. 17-24; Gaston, Paul L. *General Education Transformed: How We Can, Why We Must*. Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> 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. Watson, C.E. et al. Kuh “ePortfolios: The Eleventh High Impact Practice.” *International Journal of ePortfolio*. 2016, Volume 6, Number 2, 65-69.

<sup>5</sup> Watson, C.E. et al. Kuh “ePortfolios: The Eleventh High Impact Practice.” *International Journal of ePortfolio*. 2016, Volume 6, Number 2, 65-69.

<sup>6</sup> See 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 for the importance of students encountering more than one high-impact practice and its disproportional affect on underrepresented students.

Our list includes:

- First Year Seminars and Experiences
- Writing Intensive
- Collaborative Learning
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service/Community Based Learning
- ePortfolio

Where these high-impact practices are placed in the new curriculum will be discussed in more detail in the next section. Here, we provide a quick overview of what these practices are. CSB/SJU is already quite familiar with First Year Seminars and Experiences and we currently follow the best practices described in the 2008 Kuh article: “The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies” (9). In the Common Curriculum, FYS doubles as the locus of our Writing Intensive practice.

Like the Common Curriculum, the new curriculum will have an Experiential Engagement designation. Service/Community Based Learning is a subset of experiential-based learning, which includes using classroom experiences in real world settings in the local community to analyze and solve problems and then reflecting on these experiences in the classroom. While not all ways of meeting this designation will count as Service/Community Based learning, we expect that our current Service/Community Based Learning programs will continue in the new curriculum.

Kuh 2008 describes the Diversity/Global Learning practice as programs of study “which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore ‘difficult differences’ such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad” (10). The Common Curriculum and our Study Abroad program go some way toward meeting the Diversity/Global Learning high-impact practice, but this area is more substantially developed in the Integrations Curriculum.

There are two high-impact practices that we have imbedded in the Integrations Curriculum that we have historically not done as an institution. While many faculty use the high-impact practice, Collaborative Learning, in their classrooms – which Kuh explains as meeting two key goals: “learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one’s own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others” - there is no current requirement of assessment of collaborative learning in the Common Curriculum. In addition to being a high-impact practice, being able to work effectively in a team is consistently one of the top skills employers claim they are looking for.<sup>7</sup> The fourth high-impact practice listed above, Common

---

<sup>7</sup> Hart Research Associates, “Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success.” Selected Findings from Online Surveys of Employers and College Students Conducted on Behalf of the Association of American Colleges & Universities (2015).

Intellectual Experiences, is another high-impact practice that we have not pursued as an institution. While we do have a set of required courses in the Common Curriculum, there is a wide range of topics and activities within each required type of course. There are no common readings or other intellectual demands made of all students. Over the years, we have heard that both faculty and students would like to see increased attention to the development of Common Intellectual Experiences.

### **Goal 3: Liberal Arts and Sciences**

A third goal is the development of a curriculum that recognizes more explicitly *the value of the liberal arts and sciences*. We understand the goals of a liberal arts and sciences education to include the acquisition of a broad base of knowledge, the development of general intellectual, creative and communication skills, and the ability to integrate knowledge across different domains. A liberal arts and sciences education also encourages students to appreciate how exposure to the arts, humanities, and the sciences can enrich their personal and professional lives.

In this way, our goal of highlighting the value of the liberal arts and sciences includes many subsidiary goals that were also important to the faculty: to let the mission of CSB/SJU guide the development of our new curriculum; to provide opportunities for cross-disciplinary conversation among faculty and students; to ensure that students acquire a broad base of disciplinary methods and perspectives; to develop core academic and ethical competencies, especially written communication.



## 2. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM AND CONNECTION TO GOALS

There are several key components of the Integrations Curriculum, each of which contributes to the goals outlined above. How these components connect to the goals is the subject of this section. Detailed explanations of each of these components are found in Section 5. See Figure 1 for a visual depiction of the curriculum.

At the heart of the proposal is the *Integrated Portfolio*. The Integrated Portfolio is an ePortfolio, which is used in over 50% of colleges and universities in the US.<sup>8</sup> ePortfolios are both a product (a digital collection of artifacts) and a process (selection of what to add to the collection; reflection on what the artifact means and how it affected one's learning). It is a virtual space where students can collect their work (essays, research projects, photos, videos, multimedia presentations, resumes, etc.) as they move through their classes, which they can use to reflect on their learning and growth. ePortfolios are both a pedagogical activity (meant to generate learning) and an assessment tool (meant to document progress).

The Integrated Portfolio is at the center of the two required and one optional Writing courses, which are, perhaps obviously, the way we incorporate the Writing Intensive high-impact practice. One of the goals of the final writing course is to provide for an opportunity to integrate student learning across courses, co-curricular activities, and life experiences under the tutelage of a faculty member. We also expect that the Integrated Portfolio will help students to articulate their own understanding of the value of liberal arts and sciences education they have participated in, as well as provide one of the Common Intellectual Experiences of the students. Finally, ePortfolios are themselves considered a high-impact practice.

The proposed curriculum takes seriously faculty concerns about the writing abilities of our students, which have been raised in many settings. In contrast to the Common Curriculum, the new curriculum makes sure that Writing requirements are met throughout the student's college career. The Writing courses are full of high-impact practices: First Year Seminar, ePortfolio, Writing Intensive, and Common Intellectual Experience. These courses are crucial to the development of core academic competencies and the integration of the student's learning. In addition to the writing courses, we have also built writing requirements into The Human Experience Way of Thinking and Theology 2.

We are in the process of developing five *Themes* that will help students make connections and integrate their learning across coursework. These themes will also contribute to the high-impact practice of a Common Intellectual Experience, as well as the development of ethical competencies. We have heard over and over again from faculty and students of their desire for cross-disciplinary conversation; teaching in a theme will provide opportunities for faculty to

---

<sup>8</sup> Kahn, S. "E-Portfolios: A Look at Where We've Been, Where We Are Now, and Where We're (Possibly) Going." *Peer Review* Winter 2014, Vol. 16, No. 1

collaborate outside of their department and will provide opportunities for enriched conversations among students inside and outside of the classroom. Since students will be expected to take three same-themed courses in the different Ways of Thinking (discussed below) this also satisfies our goals of giving our students a broad base of disciplinary approaches and methods. By having three different Ways of Thinking on the same topic, students will see the distinctive value different disciplines bring to bear on an issue.

This curriculum requires that students take courses in the following five Ways of Thinking: Abstract Reasoning, Artistic Creation and Interpretation, The Human Experience, Scientific Inquiry About the Natural World, and Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups, and Individuals. Instead of using the administrative divisional structure to develop the five Ways of Thinking, RISE consulted with a variety of faculty to develop Ways of Thinking based on methodology and disciplinary approaches. This element of the curriculum is designed to fill the goals of a broad base of disciplinary methods and perspectives, core academic competencies, and explaining the value of a liberal arts and sciences education.

The proposed curriculum includes two sequential courses on Culture & Social Difference. These courses examine the ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity structure and impact our lives and how these differences are made to matter in society. Students will learn why none of these categories, in isolation, is sufficient to conceptualize either individual or social identity and will learn to think critically about their own gendered, racial, and ethnic identities as well as identify the social and cultural factors that shape and contribute to each. In addition, students will critically analyze the ways in which these forms of identity raise questions of justice in regard to access and participation in communal life. RISE believes that in addition to being a Diversity/Global Learning high-impact practice, as well as contributing to our desire for developing students' ethical competencies, these courses help support the mission of CSB/SJU. Additionally, development of courses that address racial, gender, and other inequities has repeatedly been supported and encouraged in our conversations with students.

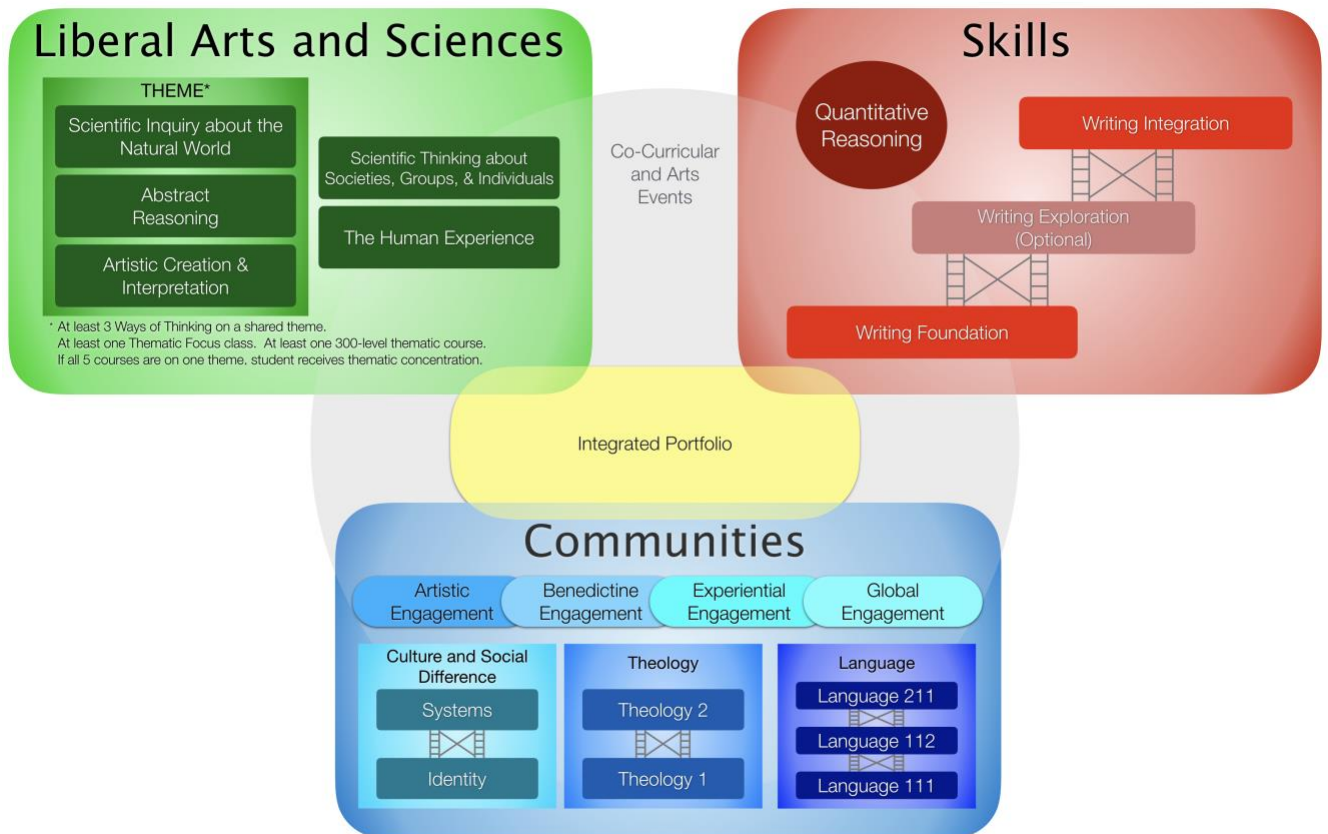
Reflecting the Catholic and Benedictine mission of our schools in multiple ways, the new curriculum includes two sequential courses in Theology and an engagement component with Benedictine community and practice. First, within the two theology courses, students engage in theological reasoning and analyze religious engagement in society. In addition to Theological Reasoning and Religious Engagement, the two Theology classes in the new curriculum carry other general education learning outcomes: the first of the two theology courses carries a Common Good outcome and the second carries a Write outcome. In this way, the theological courses are well integrated with other outcomes of the students' general education. Further integration of the schools' mission is ensured through the Benedictine Engagement requirement—one of four Engagement requirements which can be met through a class or outside of a class as explained below.

The new curriculum includes four Engagement Requirements: Experiential Engagement, Global Engagement, Artistic Engagement and Benedictine Engagement. RISE has concluded that these four requirements are fundamentally about getting students to have certain kinds of “real-life” experiences together with a structured reflection that helps them derive meaningful lessons from these experiences. The common elements of the four Engagement requirements are an

experiential activity and formal reflection, and they can be done inside or outside of credit-bearing class. The Engagement aspects of students' education will be incorporated into their work on the Integrated Portfolio.

The other components of this curriculum include a language proficiency requirement and a Quantitative Reasoning designation. We expect that many students will also encounter a Global Engagement requirement in their language classes. Quantitative Reasoning has been embedded in the Scientific Inquiry About the Natural World Way of Thinking, but can also be completed through other coursework.

**Figure 1. Major Components of the Integrations Curriculum**



design by Ben Faber

### 3. INTEGRATIONS CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This curriculum was developed using scaffolded learning outcomes. With the exception of Quantitative Reasoning, students will encounter the 12 Core Learning Outcomes at least twice (and some three times) with increasing rigor. Students may also encounter a third level of rigor for the outcomes within their majors. These learning outcomes are not discipline-specific and were developed with the direct input of around 50 faculty members; they are based on the learning outcomes approved by the JFS in Spring 2017. They have been integrated broadly across the curriculum with the intention that students will encounter different levels of the learning outcomes in different types of courses.<sup>9</sup>

As we hope is evident from the preceding section, the curriculum we propose intentionally places high-impact practices throughout students' four years. We expect that students will encounter multiple high-impact practices during each of their four years.

In the following section, we include brief descriptions of each of the required courses and placement of the learning outcomes. To see a listing of all of the learning outcomes along with the language for each level of the learning outcome, see Section 4. In Section 5, we provide more detail about each of these courses. The next few pages are designed to provide a quick overview of how a student might move through the curriculum.

Approval for these courses will go through faculty governance committees. More details can be found in Section 6: Implementation.

#### Writing Sequence

*Writing Foundations* (fall semester, first year, general education only)

This is the first in a series of two four-credit course focused on Writing and is taken by all first-year students in the fall semester. One common book is included, which will be chosen collectively by the faculty teaching the course. The course also introduces students to the Integrated Portfolio. Beyond the common book, individual faculty choose their own topic for the course. This course cannot count toward a major.

Information Literacy 1

Metacognition 1

Write 1

Requirement: one Fine Arts event must be incorporated into the course.

*Writing Exploration* (2-credits, optional)

This is an optional part of the writing sequence. There are two different options, one which focuses on developing communication skills in a variety of media and one that focuses on

---

<sup>9</sup> For more detailed discussion about this issue please see pages 22-24 of *Making Connections: Transforming Education at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University*.

professional development. These courses cannot be offered in a major. Students can take none, one, or both.

Speak 2  
Write 2

*Writing Integration* (4 credits; junior or senior year; completion of the thematic coursework and all four Engagement requirements is a pre- or co-requisite)

This is the final course in the writing sequence. It cannot be done in a major. In addition to meeting the learning outcomes, the Integrated Portfolio is completed in this course.

Common Good 3  
Metacognition 3  
Speak 2  
Write 3

## 5 Ways of Thinking and Thematic Coursework

There are five Ways of Thinking: Abstract Reasoning, Artistic Creation and Interpretation, The Human Experience, Scientific Inquiry About the Natural World, and Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups, and Individuals. Students must take 4 credits in each Way of Thinking. These courses can count toward majors. Students may satisfy no more than 2 Ways of Thinking in the same department.

Students are required to take three courses on the same theme and each of the three same-themed courses must be on a different Way of Thinking. Any combination of 1, 2, and 4 credit courses, totaling 4 credits in a single Way of Thinking can satisfy that Way of Thinking. The equivalent of two 4-credit Ways of Thinking courses can be (but need not be) un-themed. At least one of the same-themed courses must be a 200 level Thematic Focus course and at least one of the same-themed courses must be at the 300 level.

*Thematic Focus* (*Writing Foundation* is a prerequisite and *Culture and Social Difference: Identity* is a pre- or co-requisite)

Students will take at least one of these courses. While these courses can count toward the major, they have several obligations to the general education program. These courses are wholly dedicated to a single theme, are associated with a Way of Thinking (or two Ways of Thinking if they are team-taught by two faculty members with different methodological approaches), include a common reading on the theme, use the Integrated Portfolio, and introduce students to the liberal arts and sciences goal of studying a diverse array of disciplinary approaches. They can be on any topic within the theme. In cases where these courses are team taught by two faculty members with different methodological approaches, they can count as two distinct Ways of Thinking.

Analyzing Texts 2  
Collaboration 2  
Information Literacy 2

Requirement: one co-curricular event on the theme must be incorporated into the syllabus. This could be an Arts event but does not need to be.

### *Thematic Encounter*

Students will take these courses on the same theme as their Thematic Focus course. These courses must be associated with a Way of Thinking. At least one-quarter of a 4-credit course is devoted to one (and only one) of the themes.

There are no general education learning outcomes associated with the Thematic Encounter coursework. This allows for maximal flexibility. We assume that most, if not all, Thematic Encounter courses offered would also count toward the major; thus, the learning outcomes would include the department outcomes. These courses could be 100, 200 or 300 level. They can be taken in any order.

## **Culture and Social Difference Courses**

*Culture and Social Difference: Identity* (either semester, first year, could count toward a major)  
In this course, students will learn why none of these categories, in isolation, is sufficient to conceptualize either individual or social identity. Students will learn to think critically about their own gendered, racial, and ethnic identities as well as identify the social and cultural factors that shape and contribute to each. *Culture and Social Difference: Identity* must address gender, race, and ethnicity in the contemporary United States, though it can do this through the study of texts that are not primarily about the contemporary United States. This is the first of two courses focused on gender, race, and ethnicity. Faculty can choose their own topic, as long as it meets the learning outcomes. This course can count toward majors. This course must be completed in the first year and may not be used to satisfy a Way of Thinking.

Collaboration 1  
Gender 1  
Race and Ethnicity 1  
Speak 1

Requirement: one event related to gender and one event related to race and/or ethnicity must be incorporated into the syllabus. These could be Arts events but do not have to be.

*Culture and Social Difference: Systems* (*Culture and Social Difference: Identity* is a prerequisite)

In this course students will demonstrate an understanding of how constructions of race, gender, and ethnicity shape cultural rules and biases and how these constructions vary across time,

cultures, and societies. In addition, students will critically analyze the ways in which these forms of identity raise questions of justice in regard to access and participation in communal life. This is the second of a two-course series on Culture and Social Difference. This course can be on any topic that meets the learning outcomes and criteria. It can be taught in any department and can count toward majors but may not be used to satisfy a Way of Thinking.

Common Good 2  
Gender 2  
Metacognition 2  
Race and Ethnicity 2

## Theology Sequence

*Theology 1* (first three semesters)

This is the first of two courses focused on theology. Students think critically about sources and themes of the Christian tradition and begin to explore religious engagement with society. It is likely that this course will be developed under one course number to provide a degree of common grounding for the second theology course, though courses will vary by instructor.

This class also includes a grounding in Benedictine Hallmarks such that students are prepared to meet their Benedictine Engagement (BEN) requirement later. (The first theology class helps prepare students for the requirement but does not itself carry a BEN designation.)

Analyzing Texts 1  
Common Good 1  
Religious Engagement 1  
Theological Reasoning 1

*Theology 2* (*Theology 1* is a prerequisite)

This is the second of two courses focused on theology. This 300-level course can be on any topic that meets the learning outcomes, moving students into interpretation of theological sources and analysis of religious engagement with society. The second theology courses can be on a variety of topics. As in the current curriculum, these topics can continue to include religions other than Christianity.

Religious Engagement 2  
Theological Reasoning 2  
Write 2

## Engagement Requirements

There are four requirements that have experiential components at their center: Experiential Engagement (EXP), Global Engagement (GLO), Artistic Engagement (ARTE) and Benedictine Engagement (BEN). RISE has concluded that these four requirements are fundamentally about



getting students to have certain kinds of “real-life” experiences together with a structured reflection that helps them derive meaningful lessons from these experiences. The common elements of the four Engagement requirements are an experiential activity and formal reflection, and they can be done inside or outside a credit-bearing class.

Study Abroad fulfills the Experiential Engagement and Global Engagement requirements. Additionally, students who study a semester abroad can take courses through the educational programming that counts toward the Ways of Thinking requirements. They may also have the opportunity to take *Culture and Social Difference: Systems*. Students are required to write an essay for their Integrated Portfolio that meets the requirements for Experiential Engagement and Global Engagement. This assignment will be part of the class taught by the CSB/SJU faculty director.

### Quantitative Reasoning Designation

There is a Quantitative Reasoning designation that could be met through a Way of Thinking (Abstract Reasoning, Scientific Inquiry about the Natural World and Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups, and Individuals are all likely to contribute) or through the major. We do not expect that this will add to the student load, but we did want to ensure that students received college-level quantitative reasoning.

### Language

Students must meet a proficiency standard equivalent to three semesters of language classes as they do in the Common Curriculum. Students may test out of the requirement.

### Required Events

There are three types of required events. ARTE-designated events are a selective category of artistic events including literary readings, exhibitions, productions and performances that have an interactive, educational component as a part of the event. Arts events could include ARTE events, but may also include artistic events including literary readings, exhibitions, productions and performances that do not have the educational component. Co-curricular events might include speakers, panel discussions, or films with a guided discussion.

There are 10 required co-curricular, arts, and ARTE events. Specifically:

- 4 ARTE events (as part of the ARTE Engagement Requirement)
- 3 arts events embedded in classes (1 in Writing Foundations and 2 in the Artistic Creation and Interpretation Way of Thinking class)
- 2 arts or co-curricular events embedded in the Culture and Social Difference: Identity course (one focused on gender and one focused on race or ethnicity)
- 1 co-curricular or arts event related to the theme of their Thematic Focus course



## 4. SCAFFOLDED LEARNING GOALS

There are twelve scaffolded learning goals listed in alphabetical order. (The goals are listed at the top; the outcomes are Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced.) See Table 1 for a curriculum map identifying the placement for each of the 12 scaffolded learning goals.

**ANALYZING TEXTS:** Elicit and construct meaning from texts.

**Beginner:** Students read or interpret a variety of texts for comprehension, adjusting strategies based on the genre, nature of the text and context of the assignment.

**Intermediate:** Students evaluate texts for significance, relevance to the students' goals, and make connections among texts and/or disciplines.

**Advanced:** Students integrate knowledge among different texts, including independently finding supplemental texts to help understand the main text(s).

**COLLABORATION:** Interact effectively in a group while incorporating diverse perspectives.

**Beginner:** Students identify the different roles in the group, engage group members by acknowledging their contributions, articulate the importance of multiple and diverse perspectives in a group, and complete all individual tasks on time.

**Intermediate:** Students use group roles effectively, build constructively on the work of others, incorporate multiple perspectives into the work of the group, and produce independent work that advances the project.

**Advanced:** Students perform different roles appropriate to the context, are self-reflective about their own roles and contributions, build constructively on the work of others and encourage advanced participation by all group members, and leverage diverse perspectives of group members.

**COMMON GOOD:** Develop a conception of a moral life that incorporates concern for the common good.

**Beginner:** Students explain the moral dimensions of situations, perspectives, and actions in their lives and recognize that there are competing, yet legitimate, conceptions of what defines the common good.

**Intermediate:** Students evaluate different historical or contemporary situations, perspectives, or actions, giving reasons why some more effectively contribute to the common good. Their analyses demonstrate their understanding of the complexities of moral life and moral responsibilities on an individual and civic level.

Advanced: Students apply the moral understanding they have gained to articulate and defend some vision of a responsible life and character, and connect these to the common good. This vision demonstrates how complex values are embedded in everyday life and institutions.

**GENDER:** Examine the social construction of gender and related individual and systemic inequities.

Beginner: Students identify a diversity of gender identities. Students identify social and cultural factors that shape their own gender identities and how these factors influence their self-conception and worldview.

Intermediate: Students analyze historical and/or contemporary constructions of gender. Students analyze how factors such as race, ethnicity, age, class, sexuality, disability, religion, or nationality intersect with gender.

Advanced: Students analyze structural and systemic differences based on gender and articulate ways to address inequities.

**INFORMATION LITERACY:** Identify, evaluate, and responsibly use information.

Beginner: Students access appropriate information through common search strategies, accurately cite the source, and articulate the value of accurate citation.

Intermediate: Students locate relevant information using well-designed search strategies, evaluate and use appropriate and multiple resources, and articulate why using information has many ethical and legal implications.

Advanced: Students use well-designed search strategies to find information, evaluate and use appropriate and diverse resources, and follow the ethical and legal standards for their discipline.

**METACOGNITION:** Optimize one's own thinking and learning processes.

Beginner: Students identify their intellectual abilities and dispositions, problem solving processes, and learning strategies.

Intermediate: Students reflect on the weaknesses and strengths of their intellectual abilities and dispositions, effectiveness of their problem solving processes, and efficiencies of their learning strategies.

Advanced: Students apply their metacognitive knowledge to improve their problem solving processes, and to strengthen learning strategies.

**QUANTITATIVE REASONING:** Solve quantitative problems and develop and communicate arguments supported by quantitative evidence. (Designation—both the beginner and intermediate will be met in the same course)

**Beginner:** Students describe and draw conclusions from quantitative arguments, recognizing that assumptions, errors, and fallacies may affect the argument's validity.

**Intermediate:** Students construct an appropriate representation of data and perform calculations to interpret a situation, drawing appropriate inferences.

**Advanced:** Students create their own arguments supported by quantitative evidence and clearly communicate those arguments and assumptions that may impact the argument's validity.

**RACE AND ETHNICITY:** Examine the social construction of race and ethnicity and resulting inequities.

**Beginner:** Students identify factors that shape their racial and ethnic identities and explain how these factors influence their self-conception and relationships to their communities.

**Intermediate:** Students demonstrate how historical and/or contemporary constructions of race and/or ethnicity shape cultural rules and biases. Students analyze how factors such as gender, age, class, sexuality, disability, religion, or nationality intersect with race and/or ethnicity.

**Advanced:** Students critically analyze structural and systemic differences based on race and/or ethnicity and articulate ways to address inequities.

**RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT:** Analyze religious engagement with society.

**Beginner:** Students identify and explain one or more forms of religious engagement with the world.

**Intermediate:** Students analyze forms of religious engagement by drawing on sources that may come from a range of academic disciplines.

**Advanced:** Students evaluate forms of religious engagement in conversation with their primary academic disciplines or with their involvement in a campus, community, or professional project.

**SPEAK:** Construct ideas, opinions and information in appropriate oral forms.

**Beginner:** Students organize a presentation with a central message that is partially supported by relevant material(s). Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable, although students may appear tentative or uncomfortable.

Intermediate: Students organize a presentation with a clear central message that is consistent with relevant supporting material(s). Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting, and students appear comfortable.

Advanced: Students skillfully organize a cohesive presentation with a compelling central message, support it with relevant material(s) that establish their authority on the topic.

**THEOLOGICAL REASONING:** Think critically about sources, doctrines, and themes of the Christian tradition.

Beginner: Students identify elements of Christian theological sources, which may include scripture, practices, texts, or art forms. They explain a theological teaching, doctrine, or theme.

Intermediate: Students interpret theological sources and their contexts. They compare perspectives on a teaching, theme, or doctrine.

Advanced: Students demonstrate creative theological reasoning in evaluating contemporary social issues, conducting interdisciplinary research, or constructing their own theological argument.

**WRITE:** Construct ideas, opinions and information in appropriate written forms.

Beginner: Students are aware of the context, audience, and purpose of their writing and appropriately use content to explore their ideas. They organize and present the writing in ways that are appropriate, which includes relevant evidence to support ideas. The language is clear, but may include some errors.

Intermediate: Students demonstrate consideration of the context, audience, and purpose of their writing and use compelling content to clearly support ideas. They consistently organize their arguments using relevant evidence. The language is clear and straightforward, with few errors.

Advanced: Students demonstrate a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose and use relevant and compelling content. The language is clear, fluent and virtually error-free.

**Table 1. Integrations Curriculum Map**

This chart shows where the learning outcomes will be assessed.

<b>Goal/Outcome</b>	<b>Write 1</b>	<b>Culture &amp; Social Difference 1</b>	<b>Theo 1</b>	<b>Write 2 (Optional)</b>	<b>Theme Focus</b>	<b>Culture &amp; Social Difference 2</b>	<b>Theo 2</b>	<b>Write 3</b>
Analyzing Texts			<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>			
Collaboration		<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>			
Common Good			<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>
Gender		<b>1</b>				<b>2</b>		
Information Literacy	<b>1</b>				<b>2</b>			
Metacognition	<b>1</b>					<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>
Quantitative Reasoning*								
Race and Ethnicity		<b>1</b>				<b>2</b>		
Religious Engagement			<b>1</b>				<b>2</b>	
Speak		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>				<b>2</b>
Theological Reasoning			<b>1</b>				<b>2</b>	
Write	<b>1</b>			<b>2</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

\* Quantitative Reasoning is a designation that could be added to any course in a major or program. Both levels 1 & 2 of Quantitative Reasoning will be met in the same class.

## 5. DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

In Section Five we provide more details on the key components of the Integrations Curriculum: Integrated Portfolio, Themes and Ways of Thinking, Writing, Culture & Social Difference, Theology, Engagement, and Quantitative Reasoning.

### Integrated Portfolio

Portfolios have been used in education for a long time; as technology has evolved the paper portfolio has transformed into the electronic portfolio. Portfolios can serve many purposes: archiving a student's work, showcasing a student's best work, assessing individuals or programs. Our proposal for the Integrated Portfolio might do all of these things, but its primary purpose is to make learning visible to the student (and faculty and others) as they develop intellectually, personally, and professionally over their years at CSB/SJU and to provide an opportunity for them to integrate their knowledge across their coursework, co-curricular activities, and life experiences.

The ePortfolio is both a product (a digital collection of artifacts) and a process (selection of what to add to the collection; reflection on what the artifact means and how it affected one's learning). It is a virtual space where students can collect their work (essays, research projects, photos, videos, multimedia presentations, resumes, etc.) as they move through their classes, which they can use to reflect on their learning and growth. ePortfolios are both a pedagogical activity (meant to generate learning) and an assessment tool (meant to document progress).

ePortfolios have been widely adopted by all types of institutions of higher education (and K12). In 2016, the AAC&U added ePortfolios to its list of High Impact Practices. High impact practices are "institutionally-structured student experiences inside or outside of the classroom that are associated with elevated performance across multiple engagement activities and desired outcomes, such as deep learning, persistence, and satisfaction with college".<sup>10</sup> As of 2014, over half of all American institutions of higher education were using ePortfolios.

In their 2014 paper, "What Difference Can ePortfolio Make? A Field Report from the Connect to Learning Project," Eynon, Gambino, and Torok describe the Connect to Learning Project ([C2L](#)), a project started in 2011 that includes 24 campuses in a community of practice around the ePortfolio. They note,

The practices and data from C2L campuses, while not conclusive, suggest that reflective ePortfolio pedagogy helps students make meaning from specific learning experiences and connections to other experiences, within and beyond the course. Integrative ePortfolio strategies prompt students to connect learning in one course to learning in other courses, co-curricular activities, and life experiences. Ultimately, students recursively connect their learning to consideration of goals and values, constructing a more intentional and

---

<sup>10</sup> Watson, C.E. et al. Kuh "ePortfolios: The Eleventh High Impact Practice." *International Journal of ePortfolio*. 2016, Volume 6, Number 2, 65-69.

purposeful sense of self. (101)

Eynon, Gambino, and Torok found evidence that ePortfolios contribute to student success measures, such as retention, GPA, and pass rate (96-98). More importantly for our purposes, there is suggestive evidence that ePortfolios can have a significant effect on deep learning and integrative knowledge (Eynon, et al., 98-105; Peet et al., 18-21).

### *Conceptual Issues – Integrated Knowledge and Reflection*

Two key concepts guide our approach to the Integrated Portfolio. First, there is “reflection.” There has been a steady stream of research in educational pedagogy on the role of reflection in deep and lifelong learning. Various theorists use different terminology - self-regulated learning, self-authorship, metacognition, etc. – but we have chosen to stick with the traditional phrase “reflection,” which has its roots in the philosophy of John Dewey. The second key concept is “integrative knowledge.” The curriculum has been carefully designed to create opportunities for students to make meaningful connections among their courses, co-curricular activities, and life experiences.

“Reflection” is often used in vague and imprecise ways. In an effort to be more rigorous in our use of reflection in the Integrated Portfolios, we suggest following Dewey’s four criteria for reflection, as discussed by Carol Rodgers (845).<sup>11</sup>

1. Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible, and ensures the progress of the individual and, ultimately, society. It is a means to essentially moral ends.
2. Reflection is a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking, with its roots in scientific inquiry.
3. Reflection needs to happen in community, in interaction with others.
4. Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others.

RISE recommends that these four criteria guide our understanding of the kind of reflection that we expect to see in assignments for the Integrated Portfolio.

We are also using the work of the University of Michigan to ground our own understanding of integrative knowledge. The University of Michigan has developed a “conceptual model and pedagogy for portfolio-based integrative and lifelong learning,” which is being used by many

---

<sup>11</sup> “Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking”  
*Teachers College Record*, 104:4 (2002).

institutions.<sup>12</sup> These institutions include: Boston University, Clemson University, DePaul University, Norwalk Community College, Long Island University, and Mercy College, Oberlin College and Portland State University (15).

The efficacy of this model has been tested and supported by a study on over 600 students on two campuses at the University of Michigan (Peet et al., 2011).

Peet et al. distinguish six dimensions of integrated knowledge (12):

1. Identify, demonstrate and adapt knowledge gained within/across different contexts (i.e., the ability to recognize the tacit and explicit knowledge gained in specific learning experiences and the capacity to adapt that knowledge to new situations);
2. Adapt to differences in order to create solutions (i.e., the ability to identify and adapt to different people, situations, etc., while working with others to create positive change);
3. Understand and direct oneself as a learner (i.e., the ability to identify one's prior knowledge, recognize one's strengths and gaps as a learner, and know how one is motivated to learn);
4. Become a reflexive, accountable and relational learner (i.e., the ability to reflect on one's practices and clarify expectations within oneself while also seeking feedback from others);
5. Identify and discern one's own and others' perspectives (i.e., the ability to recognize the limitations of one's perspective and seek out and value the perspectives of others); and
6. Develop a professional digital identity (i.e., the ability to imagine how one will use current knowledge and skills in future roles and how one will create an intentional digital identity).

The UM used these six dimensions to create what they call the Integrative Knowledge Portfolio Process Model: “The purpose of the Integrative Knowledge Portfolio Process Model (IKPP) is to facilitate learners’ in identifying, integrating, and synthesizing their emergent knowledge, skills and identities over time, across contexts and in relation to others. In doing this integrative process, students develop a sense of personal agency and the capacity to respond to complex

---

<sup>12</sup> Peet, Melissa; Lonn, Steven; Gurin, Patricia; Boyer, K. Page; Matney, Malinda; Marra, Tiffany; Taylor, Simone Himbeault; Daley, Andrea. “Fostering Integrative Knowledge through ePortfolios.” *International Journal of the ePortfolio*, v1 n1 p11-31 (2011). See Peet, M. (2012). *The Integrative Knowledge Portfolio Process: A Program Guide for Educating Reflective Practitioners and Lifelong Learners* from Open Educational Resources.



social issues” (14). As part of this process they designed several “Core Activities,” which are the result of seven years of research. Examples of these core activities include, among other activities, *Identification and Organization of Key Learning Experiences*, *Structured Meta-reflection*, and *Reflection on Institutional Learning Outcomes*.

RISE recommends that we begin our development of the Integrated Portfolio by studying these core activities and learning from other schools that have implemented the e-portfolio as part of their general education curriculum.<sup>13</sup> Faculty have repeatedly said, going back to the 2015 faculty workshops, that they would like CSB/SJU graduates to be self-directed learners. One of the most promising aspects of ePortfolios is their role in improving the skills required for self-directed learning.<sup>14</sup>

*Which courses are required to use the Integrated Portfolio?*

While all faculty are welcome to use the Integrated Portfolio in their classes, its use will be required in at least the following: *Writing Foundation*, *Writing Integration*, *Culture and Social Difference: Identity*, and the three Thematic courses. Students who take the optional *Writing Exploration* course will also be required to use the Integrated Portfolio.

*Writing Foundation* is taken in the student’s first semester, so they will be responsible for introducing the philosophy behind the Integrated Portfolio and the technical aspects of using it.

In addition to these courses, students will be required to write essays demonstrating their learning in the four Engagement requirements: Artistic Engagement, Experiential Engagement, Global Engagement, and Benedictine Engagement. These essays will need to be completed by the end of their *Writing Integration* course.

Some of the submissions to the Integrated Portfolio will be responses to standardized assignments. This is important for many reasons. First, it will allow us to design the assignments for the Integrated Portfolio in an intentional and coherent way, taking in account how the various assignments relate and build on each other. Second, this will assure that there is consistency across the Portfolios and the students’ opportunities for integrated learning. Finally, having the same assignment across all students will make assessment easier and more meaningful.

In our research into schools that have already adopted the ePortfolio, a consistent theme from those who have been successful is the inclusion of students into the process. We suggest that if this proposal is approved, a committee is formed that includes faculty, staff and students, which

---

<sup>13</sup> See Ring, G., & Ramirez, B. (2012). Implementing ePortfolios for the Assessment of General Education Competencies. *International Journal of ePortfolio*, 2(1), 87-97; Reardon, R. C., Lumsden, J. A., & Meyer, K. E. (2005). Developing an e-portfolio program: Providing a comprehensive tool for student development, reflection, and integration. *NASPA Journal*, 42(3), 368-380; Challis, D. (2005). Towards the mature ePortfolio: Some implications for higher education. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/La revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie*, 31(3).

<sup>14</sup> Beckers, J., Dolmans, D., & Van Merriënboer, J. (2016). e-Portfolios enhancing students' self-directed learning: A systematic review of influencing factors. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 32(2).

is responsible for designing the Integrated Portfolio template, which will include the standardized assignments. The Writing Center tutors should be included in recruitment of student participants, since they have experience in thinking about faculty assignments. We recommend that this committee will start with reading the literature on ePortfolios that is cited in this proposal. These particular readings were chosen from the voluminous literature on ePortfolios because they align with the goals we have for the Integrated Portfolio: to provide an opportunity for students to integrate their knowledge, to produce self-regulated learners, and to offer both formative and summative assessment opportunities for both students and programs.

There is one other item from our research that we would like to suggest: an incentive for students to do their best work. Many of the schools that have successfully implemented the ePortfolio have created incentives by offering cash awards to students who do outstanding work on their portfolios and agree to let their work be used as examples.

*Implementation issues –What platform will we use? What technical and other support will be available?*

There are many different platforms that can be used for ePortfolios, including Canvas. A committee will be assigned to investigating various platforms if the proposal is passed.

We recognize that implementing an ePortfolio system will be a big change for our institutions and will need to be a focus of our professional development. As Academic Affairs has noted, there are significant funds available for the next three years of professional development and we expect that a part of this will be directed toward the Integrated Portfolio. As mentioned above, ePortfolios have been used for a long time, and there is a growing literature surrounding their use. This literature will guide us in our implementation efforts. There is a journal devoted to ePortfolios and there are a number of annual conferences either wholly or partially on the topic.

In addition to consulting these national resources, there will be intensive efforts on campus to ensure that faculty are prepared to use this technology consistent with best practices by 2020. We also plan to train staff, including the Media Center staff, the Writing Center staff, and the librarians. We expect that these staff resources will then be available for ongoing student and faculty support.

## Writing

The Writing requirements are spread across the student's college career. The development of core academic competencies and the integration of the student's learning are at the center of the Writing requirements. Several high-impact practices are built in: First Year Seminar, ePortfolio, Writing Intensive, and Common Intellectual Experience.

The Writing courses include many common elements to ensure that all students receive appropriate grounding in these high-impact practices and the learning outcomes. The courses also retain faculty autonomy through many class-specific elements such as instructor-chosen topics.

## *Writing Foundation*

This 4-credit course will be taken in the student's first semester. It is capped at 18 students. It functions as both an introduction to their general education experience at a Catholic, Benedictine college, and as a writing-intensive course. Students will demonstrate reflection on their learning through an introduction to the Integrated Portfolio. The topics of these courses are diverse and intended to be taught by faculty from across all divisions.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### Write 1

Students are aware of the context, audience, and purpose of their writing and appropriately use content to explore their ideas. They organize and present the writing in ways that are appropriate, which includes relevant evidence to support ideas. The language is clear, but may include some errors.

#### Information Literacy 1

Students access appropriate information through common search strategies, accurately cite the source, and articulate the value of accurate citation.

#### Metacognition 1

Students identify their intellectual abilities and dispositions, problem-solving processes, and learning strategies.

### **Common Elements in Each Section of *Writing Foundation* (program-specific)**

- Common Reading – (to be decided upon by program faculty teaching the course, in consultation with general education committee)
- Introduction to Integrated Portfolio (IP)
- One Fine Arts event embedded in the course
- To assess the Write 1 learning outcome, one essay will be collected for the IP. An essay template will be created in consultation with current FYS instructors and the Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness as a common starting point to aid in individual course design.
- One required class session drawing on the expertise of research librarians.
- Students will be required to attend one session with Writing Center peer tutors (inside or outside of class).<sup>15</sup>

### **Class-specific Elements of the *Writing Foundation* (determined by the instructor)**

- Instructor-chosen topic of semester with appropriate topical readings and assignments
- Writing/discussion/activities of material—text, video, music, etc. (to be assessed/graded by instructor).
- These writing/discussion/activities would incorporate the Information Literacy 1 and Metacognition 1 learning outcomes. Sample activities and templates will be created with campus experts, such as research librarians or Media Services.

---

<sup>15</sup> See: Rapp Young, Beth. "Using Archival Data to Examine Mandatory Visits." *Academic Exchange Quarterly* 18:4 (Winter 2014). Rapp Young's study uses empirical research on more than 80,000 writing center visits over a ten-year period to show the value of this practice. Many other studies of smaller scope have had the same findings.

### *Writing Exploration (optional)*

These optional 2-credit writing courses could be taken any time after the completion of the Writing Foundation. These optional writing courses function as writing enrichment opportunities for composing multimodal and professional writing. These courses will include one critically reflective essay which integrates relevant coursework and other related activities and goes into the Integrated Portfolio. There are two different options of this course, one that focuses on developing communication skills in a variety of media and one that focuses on professional development. These courses cannot count toward majors.

#### Media Focus

The 2-credit course will be developed in consultation with Media Services.

OR

#### XPD Focus

The 2-credit course will be developed in consultation with XPD.

#### **Learning Outcomes** (these learning outcomes are also in two required courses)

##### Write 2

Students demonstrate consideration of the context, audience, and purpose of their writing and use compelling content to clearly support their ideas. They consistently organize their arguments using relevant evidence. The language is clear and straightforward, with few errors.

##### Speak 2

Students organize a presentation with a clear central message that is consistent with relevant supporting material(s). Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting, and students appear comfortable.

#### **Class-specific Elements**

- Instructors choose appropriate readings and assignments
- Writing/discussion/activities of material—text, video, music, etc. (to be assessed/graded by instructor).

### *Writing Integration*

This 4-credit course will be taken in the student's junior or senior year after they have taken their three same-themed courses. It will be capped at 18 students. It functions as both a culminating general education experience and a writing-intensive course. Students build on their writing skills acquired in the foundations writing class and any optional exploration writing classes, with a focus on the integration and transfer of student learning across their college experience. Students must demonstrate reflection on their learning and how they address complex values. The topics of these courses are diverse and intended to be taught by faculty from across all divisions. This course cannot count toward a major.

This course is intended to provide the students with an opportunity to integrate their coursework. In particular, this will be an opportunity to draw connections among their thematic coursework and integrate their general education courses and co-curricular activities. In thinking about the design of this course, RISE is guided by the following interpretation of Dewey's first criterion for reflection, as discussed by Carol Rodgers (845).<sup>16</sup>

Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible, and ensures the progress of the individual and, ultimately, society. It is a means to essentially moral ends.

The Integrated Knowledge Essay is the culminating act of the general education curriculum. The Integrated Knowledge Essay is both a product and a process, a pedagogical activity and an assessment activity. As mentioned in the above section, there will be staff resources and support for the Integrated Portfolio.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### Common Good 3

Students apply the moral understanding they have gained to articulate and defend some vision of a responsible life and character, and connect these to the common good. This vision demonstrates how complex values are embedded in everyday life and institutions.

#### Metacognition 3

Students apply their metacognitive knowledge to improve their problem-solving processes, and to strengthen learning strategies.

#### Speak 2

Students organize a presentation with a clear central message that is consistent with relevant supporting material(s). Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting, and students appear comfortable.

#### Write 3

Students demonstrate a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose and use relevant and compelling content. The language is clear, fluent and virtually error-free.

### **Common Elements in Each Section**

- Culmination of Integrated Portfolio
- Integrated Knowledge Essay (details below)

---

<sup>16</sup> "Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking"  
*Teachers College Record*, 104:4 (2002).

### **Class-specific Elements**

- Instructor chooses the topic for the course and appropriate readings and assignments.
- Instructors design the daily activities.
- Instructors choose their own assignments for assessment of the Metacognition 3 and Speak 2 learning outcomes.

### **Integrated Knowledge Essay**

- Meets Common Good 3 and Write 3.
- This should build on work from thematic courses, engagement requirements, co-curricular activities and other experiences from their time at CSB/SJU.
- The essay will be done in multiple drafts.
- The essay will be approximately 2500-3000 words (10-12 pp.).
- Main question: what is a responsible life and how does it connect to the common good?
  - Students will describe their own vision of a morally responsible life and how it connects to the common good in the context of their main theme.
  - Students will draw on their coursework and other experiences to provide evidence and support for their vision.
- Must also address:
  - Students need to demonstrate how the issues they are discussing are embedded in everyday life and institutions.
  - Students need to demonstrate how their coursework in themed Ways of Thinking illustrates the different approaches to the same theme and how thinking about an issue through different approaches might be valuable.

## **Themes and Ways of Thinking**

The Thematic coursework and the Ways of Thinking coursework intersect. Students must take 4 credits in each Way of Thinking. Of those classes, three must be on a shared theme. This requirement was developed in order to help students see the value of different methodological approaches to a single theme, which is a hallmark of a liberal arts and sciences education. The other two Ways of Thinking might not be on any theme, on different themes, or on the same theme as their other themed coursework. Any combination of 1, 2, and 4 credit courses, totaling 4 credits in a single Way of Thinking can satisfy that Way of Thinking. Based on positive feedback from students, we are working on a way to provide students who take all five Ways of Thinking on the same theme with a special notation on their transcript, similar to the way we denote completion of the Honors program.

### *Ways of Thinking*

In order to ensure breadth across the curriculum, we are requiring students to take courses with different methodological approaches. There are five Ways of Thinking and students will be required to take a class on each of the five. While closely associated with our administrative

divisions, these Ways of Thinking were developed by faculty ad hoc committees (RISE members, CCC members, and other volunteers) to capture the conceptual distinctions among the different methodologies and perspectives we believe are important for students to be exposed to. It's possible (and probable) that departments will offer distinct courses that can meet more than one Way of Thinking. (For one example, a creative writing course from the English department would meet Artistic Creation and Interpretation and a Shakespeare course in English would meet The Human Experience.) Below is the draft language for the five Ways of Thinking developed by the ad hoc committees. The Common Curriculum Committee will be reviewing these Ways of Thinking to ensure the descriptions would allow CCC members to determine if a course met the proposed Way of Thinking.

### *Abstract Reasoning*

This Way of Thinking gives explicit attention to the formal and/or symbolic representation of structures and relationships. In this Way of Thinking, real-world objects are set aside to concentrate on their representations, on the roles they play in structures or patterns, and on the relationships they have to one another. Abstract Reasoning is done using formal rules—that is, rules that are well-defined and systematic. Thus, courses qualifying for this Way of Thinking will refine students' skills in developing, understanding, and manipulating representations (numeric and otherwise) appropriate to the subject they are studying. They will learn to move between concrete applications and abstract representations fluidly, and in both directions. Examples of Abstract Reasoning include but are not limited to: music theory; symbolization and evaluation of arguments' validity; analysis and composition of algorithms; development and analysis of mathematical models; linguistic analysis; deductive arguments and formal proof.

### *Artistic Creation and Interpretation*

Artistic creation and interpretation includes the making, performance, or study of artistic works through a lens of direct engagement with individual works. An experiential and critical understanding of artistic ways of thinking emerges from: the creative impulse leading to artistically informed production; direct engagement with artistic expression, with an orientation to the relevant art form, style, or context; and intentional reflection on the experience. Artistic knowledge, whether as contextual understanding, critical analysis, or artistic practice, will most successfully emerge from multiple experiences of this process, allowing students to discover and communicate their thoughts.

As a way of thinking, Artistic Creation and Interpretation may be cultivated through studio-, performance-, or workshop-based courses; or through studies relating to the current state, history, criticism, or theory of the fine arts. Direct engagement with individual works of art is common to all types of courses. This engagement may be by creating original works, creating performances or interpretations of works, or through the examination of art works from the critical perspectives used by professional arts historians, arts critics, and arts theorists, who examine historical or contemporary art forms primarily as art works.

### *The Human Experience*

The purpose of this Way of Thinking is to recognize and understand how humans have represented and constructed the human experience, and to thereby empower students as critical and creative agents in their own lives and communities. This Way of Thinking is the study of how human beings use texts, in different times and places, to understand, represent, and shape their world, and their experience of that world. Students will investigate, interpret, and analyze texts such as written works, spoken language, visual images, film, song, performance, or other cultural artifacts, in order to explore how human engagement with the world constructs meaning and shapes particular social and historical contexts. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which elements of expression are influenced by their place and period of production.

Students will explore human efforts to make sense of the world around them and the ways in which those efforts shape the human experience. This Way of Thinking recognizes that human experience may involve textual engagement with community, internal life, the natural world, and/or the past and future. Key to engaging this process is the act of writing, in which students learn to reflect, refine, focus, and clarify their own analysis as active participants in making meaning of the world around them.

### *Scientific Inquiry about the Natural World*

This Way of Thinking examines the natural world: how it is structured, how it works, and how it got to be this way. The natural world comprises the physical universe, both living and non-living, as well as the forces that act on it. This empirical mode of inquiry relies on constructing hypotheses and testing them with data collected through observation and experimentation to learn about the natural world. Students will make observations, collect data, appropriately analyze their results, and communicate their findings. Students will distinguish between inquiry that aims at empirical knowledge and other forms of human inquiry and knowing. These courses will enable students to have a deeper understanding of the natural world and prepare students to evaluate scientific claims critically through an appeal to factual evidence.

### *Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups, and Individuals*

This Way of Thinking uses systematic methods to examine and understand social phenomena, as well as human behavior and cognition, by carefully describing these phenomena and developing theoretically grounded hypotheses. Qualitative and quantitative data are gathered and described. In addition, or alternatively, data and scientifically accepted approaches are followed to test hypotheses. The ultimate goal of such work is to draw generalizable conclusions about societies, groups, and individuals that are valid beyond the context of the research. Students will consider theories, learn basic methods, and engage with data to describe the world and test ideas about societies, groups, and individuals.



## *Themes*

We have developed five proposed themes that will help students make connections and integrate their learning across coursework. Themes were developed in a committee composed of RISE members, students, and faculty from across the divisions. These themes were designed to be broad enough that all five Ways of Thinking are represented, yet narrow enough that the students can make meaningful connections across their coursework. We chose to develop themes that were broad, not just to maximize departmental contributions, but also to allow for as much creative space as possible within which students could make connections on their own. They were also designed to allow, but not require, reflection on broader issues of ethical consequence and Benedictine values. While no individual class on a theme is expected to incorporate these value perspectives, the themes themselves create a space where such discussions are possible and students will be able to reflect on these perspectives in their Integrated Portfolio.

Students will be required to take three same-themed courses from three different Ways of Thinking. By having three different Ways of Thinking on the same topic, students can see the distinctive value different disciplines bring to bear on an issue. We have heard over and over again from faculty and students of their desire for cross-disciplinary conversation; teaching in a theme will provide opportunities for faculty to collaborate outside of their department and will provide opportunities for enriched conversations among students inside and outside of the classroom.

There are two kinds of themed courses: 200 level courses that are wholly dedicated to a theme, called Thematic Focus, and 100, 200, and 300 level courses that are partially dedicated to a theme, called Thematic Encounter.

### *Thematic Focus*

While these 4-credit, 200-level courses can count toward the major, they have several obligations to the general education program. These courses are dedicated to a single theme, are associated with a Way of Thinking (or two Ways of Thinking if they are team-taught by two faculty members with different methodological approaches), include a common reading on that theme, use the Integrated Portfolio, and introduce students to the liberal arts and sciences goal of studying a diverse array of disciplinary approaches. They can be on any topic within one of the themes. Faculty who teach a Thematic Focus class on the same theme will be meeting to select a common reading for their themed classes and to discuss possible ways to maximize integration across sections. Faculty who teach Thematic Encounter courses will be encouraged to attend these discussions. In cases where these courses are team taught by two faculty members with different methodological approaches, they can count as two distinct Ways of Thinking.

### *Thematic Encounter*

In these courses, the theme should be a primary lens used to frame or supplement course content, not necessarily replace course content. While instructors are encouraged to use the theme to interpret existing content, they are welcome to add course content that directly contributes to a greater understanding and/or appreciation of the theme.

For a 4-credit course, approximately 25% of the course should be dedicated to the theme. One way to define the 25% threshold is to think about the hours involved both in and out of a 4-credit class (if an instructor wants to offer a 2-credit class, the threshold increases to 50%). If we begin with the assumption for every hour in the class students should spend two to three outside the class, then 25% of course content in a 4-credit class amounts to a total of 30-40 hours. While presumably the course would spend time addressing the theme both during class and/or lab time and through outside readings and assignments, the division of those hours is up to the individual instructor's discretion. The time spent on the theme could be achieved in a single unit and/or woven throughout the class.

By committing to theming a class, faculty agree to require an assignment that incorporates the theme and can be submitted to the student's Integrated Portfolio. The theme is used to help the student make connections across their themed coursework and is not an assessment artifact. The assignment can be any artifact authentic to the individual course. A paper, a recording of a performance, an image of a work of art, a musical composition, a recording of a presentation, a model or computer program, or a lab notebook are all examples of acceptable artifacts.

Faculty who teach a Thematic Encounter course can satisfactorily address the theme by some combination of the following:

- Using readings that address the theme;
- Requiring assignments (some of which will be graded) that demonstrate students have used the Way of Thinking to engage with the theme;
- Dedicating class or lab time to addressing the theme, either in lecture, discussion, or in-class activities; and,
- Solving problems related to the theme.

#### Example 1

- Have three weeks of the syllabus (spread out or in a unit) dedicated to reading material on the theme, which is discussed in class or the focus of in class activities. (23 hours)
- Have a big project that integrates the theme. (10-15 hours)

#### Example 2

- Have four weeks on of the syllabus (spread out or in a unit) dedicated to reading material on the theme, which is discussed in class or the focus of in class activities. (30 hours)
- Have a number of small assignments outside of class that integrated the theme (5-10 hours).

### *Proposed Themes*

The Themes committee developed five themes, with the expectation that the final proposal would include the four themes that worked best across the five Ways of Thinking. To determine which theme should be eliminated, department chairs were asked to indicate which themes and specific courses their faculty members planned to offer. The data revealed that there was broad support across the different Ways of Thinking for all five themes, with most departments planning to offer multiple classes in two or three different themes (and in some cases, all of the

themes). Additionally, RISE received multiple requests from faculty members to maintain all five themes. Based on the data we received, RISE determined that it would be premature to reduce the number of themes in the proposal from five to four. RISE recommends that during the implementation phase efforts be made to see if offering five themes is possible, and if not, then work with departments to narrow the list.

If the Integrations Curriculum is approved, then the only five themes that will be potential themes at the start of the new curriculum will be Environment, Justice, Movement, Technology and Society, and Truth. However, RISE acknowledges that more work will need to be done to refine the descriptions of the themes and titles to ensure the themes are inclusive of all Ways of Thinking and also to determine the correct number of themes. Thus, we are presenting descriptions of the themes and their titles with the understanding that *these are likely not the final descriptions or titles*. During implementation, RISE recommends that ad hoc committees be created to revise and refine the descriptions and titles of each theme in consultation with both the faculty interested in teaching within those themes as well as departments and programs.

The sketches below include bulleted lists of courses that would address the theme from each Way of Thinking, which might make it easier for faculty members to imagine themselves offering a themed course. **The descriptions of possible courses are illustrative only. They are not intended to exhaustively cover all potential courses, nor are they intended to identify every department that could contribute.** The sample classes are grouped by the Way of Thinking in the following order: Abstract Reasoning, Artistic Creation and Interpretation, Human Experience, Scientific Inquiry about the Natural World, and Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups, and Individuals.

These themes are excellent choices because they address issues of significance for our students and our world, allow students to explore these issues from a local and global perspective, allow students to reflect on how Benedictine practices might apply to questions in individual or social lives, and allow for broader reflection on questions of meaning, value and purpose.

## **Environment**

This theme examines the impact of humans on our natural world and the impact of the natural world on humans. Courses in this theme may address a wide variety of approaches to studying the natural environment, but will be united by an emphasis on understanding the impact that humans have on the natural world, or the impact that the natural world has on human culture and society. This theme may also include classes that consider questions of sustainability such as the ability to meet society's present needs without compromising the needs of the future, or an analysis of the causes of climate change.

Courses in this theme might explore:

- Statistical or computational methods to model the impact that human activity has on the natural world or develop or evaluate models of populations affected by sustainability efforts.
- Artistic representations of human relationships to the natural world, or sustainable production methods.

- Literary efforts to understand humans' relationships to the natural world, or different historical or philosophical understandings of that relationship.
- The impact of human activity on the natural world, or strategies to preserve natural resources.
- How climate change has in turn impacted social, economic, or political systems and policies.

## **Justice**

This theme focuses on historical and contemporary social change, whether forms of oppression or advocacy for human dignity and inclusion. Courses might explore historical or contemporary calls for fair and equitable conditions, institutions and laws, or the fight for human rights and equality, or various policies and movements that have restricted the same.

Courses in this theme might:

- Model or use data and statistical models to examine the impact of different policies on social change/social justice concerns such as income inequality.
- Explore the use of visual art, literature, and performance to advocate for or against social justice or to document or to critique social change.
- Study histories of enslavement or efforts to overthrow or recover from colonial oppression, or philosophical perspectives on justice.
- Study the use of science or technology, past or present, to maintain inequitable conditions or alleviate human suffering.
- Examine political activism, or income and wealth inequality

## **Movement**

This theme examines the interactions of ideas, people, energy, information, or matter as they flow from one location, literal or metaphorical, to another. This theme recognizes that movement can occur across conceptual, historical and stylistic boundaries, and that humans, other animals, and even the most basic components of our world move in one form or another, and often, from one form to another.

Courses in this theme could include:

- Modeling natural resource or information transfers, immigration patterns, or effects of ecological invasions or examining how linguistic structure crosses borders.
- How theater, music, or art, transmit ideas across borders or how ideas and approaches come in contact with one another.
- The ways in which literature is used to understand migration, or histories of immigration for different countries and communities.
- Concepts in epidemiology, transfer of natural resources and technology, food and agricultural practices, or the ecological interactions in food chains.
- Past or present political, economic, or cultural causes of immigration or barriers to migration.

## **Technology & Society**

This theme examines the ways in which individuals and societies shape, use, and respond to technology or science in the past, present or imagined future. Courses might explore past, present and anticipated technological or scientific innovations or the implications these have for our sense of self, culture, interactions, and social structures.

Courses in this theme might study:

- Algorithmic analysis and boundaries of computational complexity, models and limitations of machine intelligence, or how to codify intuition into a logical system.
- Artistic representations of science, science fiction, or technology and/or its consequences, real or imagined, or the impact that technological changes have had on literature or the visual and performing arts, in terms of content or the means of creation.
- The history of science and technology and its impact on society and the individual or how technology is blurring the boundaries between humans and machines, or the impact of artificial intelligence on selfhood.
- The interrelationship between technological advancement and the practice of science or the ways in which scientific advancements have impacted humans.
- The economic, political or social impacts of science and technology on societies and selfhood.

## **Truth**

This theme examines what truth is, why it is valuable, how it shapes choices and our perceptions of ourselves and our world. This theme might explore efforts to discover and promote truth, or the ways in which lies, errors, biases, or faulty science subvert, obscure, and misidentify truth.

Courses in this theme might study:

- Examine and analyze the logical structure of arguments and their fallacies or use statistical analysis to identify the truths hidden in large data sets or complex systems
- The roles of artifice and authenticity in artistic expression or ways of illuminating truth or telling lies through representation in the arts.
- Human efforts to discover eternal and universal truths or the risks and consequences of telling the truth.
- Ways of illuminating truth through scientific research or developing scientific literacy.
- Ways in which our beliefs can obscure truths about ourselves or our world, how our biases can distort truth, or the processes and consequences of deceiving ourselves and others.

## Culture & Social Difference

Students take two sequential Culture & Social Difference courses. These courses examine the ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity structure and impact our lives and how these differences are made to matter in society. In the *Culture and Social Difference: Identity* class students will learn why none of these categories, in isolation, is sufficient to conceptualize either individual or social identity.<sup>17</sup> In their *Culture and Social Difference: Systems* class, students will demonstrate an understanding of how constructions of race, gender, and ethnicity shape cultural rules and biases and how these constructions vary across time, cultures, and societies. In addition, the ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity intersect must be given prominent attention in both classes. Faculty are also encouraged to include discussion of other kinds of social identity, such as age, citizenship, class, disability, sexual orientation, and/or religion.

### *Culture and Social Difference: Identity*

This is the first of two courses focused on gender, race, and ethnicity. Faculty can choose their own topic, as long as it meets the learning outcomes. This course can be taught in any department and can count toward majors. This course must be completed in the first year and may not be used to satisfy a Way of Thinking.

In this course, students will learn why gender, race, or ethnicity, in isolation, is insufficient to conceptualize either individual or social identity. Students will learn to think critically about their own gendered, racial, and ethnic identities as well as identify the social and cultural factors that shape and contribute to each. *Culture and Social Difference: Identity* must address gender, race, and ethnicity in the contemporary United States, though it can do this through the study of texts or data that are not primarily about the contemporary United States.

The ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity intersect must be given prominent attention in this class. An understanding of intersectionality requires recognizing that gender, racial, and ethnic identities are dynamic and that each is experienced differently, depending on how they combine in any one person. An exploration of intersectionality will also involve study of how these and other identities dynamically connect to systems of power. In other words, efforts to achieve justice in any one of these areas must take the others into account.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### Collaboration 1

Students identify the different roles in the group, engage group members by acknowledging their contributions, articulate the importance of multiple and diverse perspectives in a group, and complete all individual tasks on time.

---

<sup>17</sup> See Stephens, N. M., Brannon, T. N., Markus, H. R., & Nelson, J. E. (2015). Feeling at home in college: Fortifying school-relevant selves to reduce social class disparities in higher education. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 9(1), 1-24 for evidence that “educating students about the significance of social contexts that shape the self—such as social class, race, or gender—can increase students’ understandings of themselves and others.”

### Gender 1

Students identify a diversity of gender identities. Students identify social and cultural factors that shape their own gender identities and how these factors influence their self- conception and worldview.

### Race and Ethnicity 1

Students identify factors that shape their racial and ethnic identities and explain how these factors influence their self- conception and relationships to their communities.

### Speak 1

Students organize a presentation with a central message that is partially supported by relevant material(s). Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable, although students may appear tentative or uncomfortable.

### Co-curricular

Requirement: one event related to gender and one event related to race and/or ethnicity must be incorporated into the syllabus. These could be Fine Arts events, but do not have to be.

*Culture and Social Difference: Systems*  
(*Culture and Social Difference: Identity* is a prerequisite)

This is the second of the two-course series. This course can be on any topic that meets the learning outcomes. It can be taught in any department and can count toward majors. This course may not be used to satisfy a Way of Thinking.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how constructions of race, gender, and ethnicity shape cultural rules and biases and how these constructions vary across time, cultures, and societies. In addition, students will critically analyze the ways in which these forms of identity raise questions of justice with regard to access and participation in communal life. This class may address gender, race, and ethnicity in any context, including the contemporary United States, other nations or cultures, and/or various points in history.

The ways in which gender, race, and ethnicity intersect must be given prominent attention in this class. An understanding of intersectionality requires recognizing that gender, racial, and ethnic identities are dynamic and that each is experienced differently, depending on how they combine in any one person. An exploration of intersectionality will also involve study of how these and other identities dynamically connect to systems of power. In other words, efforts to achieve justice in any one of these areas must take the others into account.

### Learning Outcomes

#### Common Good 2

Students evaluate different historical or contemporary situations, perspectives, or actions, giving reasons why some more effectively contribute to the common good. Their analyses demonstrate their understanding of the complexities of moral life and moral responsibilities on an individual and civic level.

## Gender 2

Students analyze historical and/or contemporary constructions of gender. Students analyze how factors such as race, ethnicity, age, class, sexuality, disability, religion, or nationality intersect with gender.

## Race and Ethnicity 2

Students demonstrate how historical and/or contemporary constructions of race and/or ethnicity shape cultural rules and biases. Students analyze how factors such as gender, age, class, sexuality, disability, religion, or nationality intersect with race and/or ethnicity.

## Theology

Reflecting the Catholic and Benedictine mission of our schools in multiple ways, the new curriculum includes two sequential courses in Theology and an engagement component with Benedictine community and practice. First, within the two theology courses, students engage in theological reasoning and analyze religious engagement in society. In addition to Theological Reasoning and Religious Engagement, the two Theology classes in the new curriculum carry other general education learning outcomes: the first of the two theology courses carries a Common Good outcome and the second carries a Write outcome. In this way, the theological courses are well integrated with other outcomes of the students' general education. Further integration of the schools' mission is ensured through the Benedictine Engagement requirement—one of four Engagement requirements which can be met through a class or outside of a class as explained later in this proposal.

The first of the theology courses will likely be offered under a single course heading (as with the current THEO 111). The second of the theology courses will likely be met through a variety of courses designated as the second theology course (as with the current TU). The second theology course can be on a range of topics, include religions other than Christianity, as long as the course is designed to meet the learning outcomes in Theological Reasoning, Religious Engagement, and Write. Given the Catholic and Benedictine character of our schools, the theological reasoning outcome requires students to “think critically about sources, doctrines, or themes of the Christian tradition,” and thus theology courses in all topics will need to bring Christian sources into the dialogue of the course in order for students to meet the outcome.

As in the current curriculum, we anticipate that most sections of the second theology course will be offered by members of the Theology department, but that colleagues in other departments will also continue to offer sections. Faculty will apply for their courses to be designated as a second theology course through the standing curriculum committee (as in the current curriculum). For the Benedictine Engagement designation, faculty from any department can seek the designation for their courses in order to serve students choosing to meet the requirement through a designated class. We anticipate, based on conversations with CBTAI and the Theology Department, that BEN designated courses will primarily be taught outside the Theology Department.



Because all students already take two classes in theology in the Integrations Curriculum, theology classes cannot count as Ways of Thinking courses. While theological thinking is admittedly a method of thinking, and while theological classes could address the themes, keeping these two theology courses out of the Ways of Thinking ensures that theology adds to the breadth of disciplines for students rather than potentially competing for space with other disciplines. RISE hopes that some theology classes will address the themes simply because professors seek to include intentional resonance.

### *Theology 1*

This is the first of two courses focused on theology. Students think critically about sources and themes of the Christian tradition and begin to explore religious engagement with society. It is likely that this course will be developed under one course number to provide a degree of common grounding for the second theology course, though courses will vary by instructor.

This class also includes a grounding in Benedictine Hallmarks such that students are prepared to meet their Benedictine Engagement (BEN) requirement later (The first theology class helps prepare students for the requirement but does not itself carry a BEN designation.)

#### **Learning Outcomes**

##### Analyzing Texts 1

Students read or interpret a variety of texts for comprehension, adjusting strategies based on the genre, nature of the text and context of the assignment.

##### Common Good 1

Students explain the moral dimensions of situations, perspectives, and actions in their lives and recognize that there are competing, yet legitimate, conceptions of what defines the common good.

##### Religious Engagement 1

Students identify and explain one or more forms of religious engagement with the world.

##### Theological Reasoning 1

Students identify elements of Christian theological sources, which may include scripture, practices, texts, or art forms. They explain a theological teaching, doctrine, or theme.

### *Theology 2*

This is the second of two courses focused on theology; Theology 1 is a prerequisite. This 300-level course can be on any topic that meets the learning outcomes, moving students into interpretation of theological sources and analysis of religious engagement with society. The second theology courses can be on a variety of topics. As in the current curriculum, these topics can continue to include religions other than Christianity.

## Learning Outcomes

### Religious Engagement 2

Students analyze forms of religious engagement by drawing on sources that may come from a range of academic disciplines.

### Theological Reasoning 2

Students interpret theological sources and their contexts. They compare perspectives on a teaching, theme, or doctrine.

### Write 2

Students demonstrate consideration of the context, audience, and purpose of their writing and use compelling content to clearly support ideas. They consistently organize their arguments using relevant evidence. The language is clear and straightforward, with few errors.

## Engagement Requirements

As a part of its charge to develop a curriculum that highlights the history and mission of CSB/SJU, RISE has developed four Engagement Requirements. Although we believe the entire proposed curriculum reflects our history and mission, we have designed the Engagement Requirements around four aspects of CSB/SJU that we think are especially distinctive. The tradition at CSB/SJU has been to prepare students to think about their life holistically – that we prepare our students to live a full and purposeful life across many dimensions, to bring their full selves to their career, their communities, their personal and spiritual lives. We have done this in part by making experiential-based learning an integral part of the curriculum. In the current proposal, our goal is build on these strengths, while improving on what we have been doing in the past. We include four requirements that have experiential activities at their center: Experiential Engagement (EXP), Global Engagement (GLO), Artistic Engagement (ARTE), and a new one, Benedictine Engagement (BEN).

### *Reflecting our History and Mission*

Experiential Engagement has long been a feature of how we approach student learning at CSB/SJU. We have done this in a variety of ways. We have the EL designation, we have a robust Summer Undergraduate Research program, we have the student-driven Extending the Link, Bonner Leaders, Jackson Fellows, a dynamic DC Summer Internship program, etc. Experiential learning is one of our strengths across the curriculum. However, because these different activities take place through various programs and departments, we have not crafted a good narrative for our students or ourselves about the importance of this to a CSB/SJU education. RISE believes that by pulling these various strands together under the Experiential Engagement requirement, we will be better able to highlight the importance of experiential-based learning in all its forms to a CSB/SJU education.

CSB/SJU has a long and proud tradition of being a nationally recognized leader in global education. Our leadership in this area is due to the strength of our Study Abroad programs.

Around 60% of our students go abroad for either a semester or a short-term program. We have 18 semester-long and 10-15 short-term programs. To perhaps state the obvious, the core of CSB/SJU thinking about global education has been built around recognizing the transformative experience of spending time abroad in another culture. In this proposal, we aim to extend this experiential component to those who cannot study abroad (often, but not always, for financial reasons). One of the guiding principles of RISE is ensuring the most equitable education we can to ALL our students. Thus we are proposing to bring global experiences to students who stay on campus. In this, we are attempting to build on the recognition we received when we won the Senator Paul Simon Award for comprehensive internationalization of our campuses.

We also have an illustrious history of bringing the fine arts to central Minnesota. The Sisters were greeted with skepticism when they first proposed building an ambitiously large performance space at CSB. However, their vision has paid off – we now boast multidimensional programming that is the envy of other liberal arts schools. Saint John’s Monastery “built” a Bible by hand for the first time since the invention of the printing press. It has toured the country and gained an international reputation. These unique events, venues, collections, projects, resources, and artists in residence—including the Literary Arts Institute, which draws poet laureates and major prize-winners—all present opportunities for experiences that our students cannot have anywhere else, and that tie directly to the Benedictine community and liberal arts and sciences mission of our institutions.

We are also proposing a new Benedictine Engagement requirement that highlights the distinctive Benedictine aspects of our schools. CSB/SJU is shaped by the Benedictine communities that founded the colleges in the 19th century and continue to foster the academic, spiritual and social life of these schools. The monastic communities remain a vital part of the life of these institutions and their continued presence allows for us to develop programming that is unique to these particular institutions. During the implementation and professional development phase we will work to ensure that we remain a welcoming community for individuals of all faiths and those with no religious tradition.

### *Experience-Centered Approach*

RISE has concluded that these requirements are fundamentally about getting students to have certain kinds of “real-life” experiences together with a structured reflection that helps them derive meaningful lessons from these experiences. These requirements are held together by having several common elements. Each of them must include an experiential activity inside or outside the classroom, each of them must include a formal reflection that is included in the Integrated Portfolio, and they can be completed either as part of a designated class or outside the classroom.

These requirements are bound together by their experience-centered approach. They are all forms of experiential engagement that connect action with reflection to promote deeper learning by using the pedagogical approaches developed by experiential learning literature. (Experiential Learning Best Practices are summarized later in this section.) The criteria we have developed for each of the requirements are based in best practices of experiential-based learning, which are outlined below.

A word about what we mean by bringing “experience” into the classroom. Of course, every class is an experience, which can be broken down into finer grained experiences, like listening to a lecture or working in small groups. But we intend for the engagement component of these courses to go beyond these kinds of typical classroom experiences. The Engagement Requirements ask for faculty, staff, or students who apply to meet the requirement to include events or activities that put the content into a “real world” experience. This could involve asking students to attend events outside the classroom. But it could also involve bringing people into the classroom that students engage with directly. For example, a GLO experience might involve having international students on short-term programs be part of the class for three weeks. In the case of BEN, it might be bringing in members of the monastic community to discuss topics of the instructor’s choosing. Meeting the Engagement Requirements does not commit one to a semester long experiential activity; rather it requires only that one find ways to engage experientially with people and practices that are normally outside of the classroom. This could be a semester long service-learning project, or a set of activities outside the classroom, or it could be bringing outside people into the classroom.

While the current FAE requirement recognizes the value of the both CSB/SJU-specific fine arts programming and this liberal arts tradition, RISE has worked with Fine Arts Programming and the Fine Arts departments to create a new kind of requirement, which we are calling Artistic Engagement (ARTE). RISE included creative writing in the Artistic Creation and Interpretation Way of Thinking and we are expanding our notion of what was formerly the FAE to include writers brought in by the Literary Arts Institute and similar programming. We plan to find ways to include some of the special collections we have on our campuses like the Saint John’s Bible. Students will be required to attend four ARTE events. We are broadening their ability to choose how to fulfill this requirement by not specifying which types of ARTE events they need to attend. (We currently require 2 visual events and 6 performing events.) We have also designed a requirement that is more intentional in its approach to reaching students. As is true for all the designations, faculty and programs wanting to have their event approved will need to demonstrate its benefits to students.

Student choice is a critical piece of the Artistic Engagement Requirement. Serving as a transition between the embedded ARTE events in the first-year coursework and the events they will choose to attend after graduation, these experiences allow students to explore and discover the arts on an individual level. The arts have a long history of being religious and social commentary, reflecting community ethical discussions, connecting the individual to a community, and celebrating what it means to be human. By engaging with the arts on a personal level while at CSB/SJU, students are more likely to connect with their communities, through the arts, in the future. CSB/SJU has an opportunity to be a leader in the field of arts engagement, empowering students with a variety of tools to understand the world they live in through artistic lenses, including non-verbal means of communication.

All four of these requirements could be met by taking a designated class; after going through the appropriate faculty governance committees, the course could be designated as Experiential

Engagement, Global Engagement, Artistic Engagement, or Benedictine Engagement.<sup>18</sup> Crucially to our vision, however, these engagement requirements could also be filled through structured activities outside of a credited class. In these cases, a student would need to apply to have their experience classified as Experiential Engagement, Global Engagement, or Benedictine Engagement. Opening these requirements beyond course designation further enhances the integrative character of this curriculum. It also rights an inequity that has long been noticed by students: certain activities that are not tied to course credit cannot currently count toward the EL designation. For example, students who do the Summer Undergraduate Research program on campus, who participate in the China Summer Research program, or are Bonner Leaders do not get EL credit for these activities because they are not tied to class credit.

We also would allow for the possibility that students could develop their own individual proposals to get approval for activities that are outside our standard programs. For example, a student doing summer research at another school could apply for EXP, students who travel abroad for Extending the Link could apply for GLO, and a student who travelled to another Benedictine monastery for a weeklong retreat could apply for BEN. The students would have to apply for approval before they begin their activity. For ARTE, students will be able to attend four ARTE-designated events of their choice which they would write about in a single reflection in the Integrated Portfolio.

A special note on Study Abroad, since it is done by so many of our students. Study Abroad fulfills the Experiential Engagement and Global Engagement requirements for both short-term and semester-long programs. Additionally, students who study a semester abroad can take courses through the educational programming that counts toward the Ways of Thinking requirements. They may also have the opportunity to take *Culture and Social Difference: Systems* if the director decides to teach that course abroad. Students are required to write an essay for their Integrated Portfolio that meets the requirements for Experiential Engagement and Global Engagement. This assignment will be part of the class taught by the CSB/SJU faculty director.

### *Experiential Learning Best Practices*

The criteria developed for the Engagement designations is based on the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), which is the leading organization of educators, business leaders, and community leaders devoted to the improvement of experiential education.

The following are 4 of the 8 Principles of Best Practice according to [NSEE](#). (Bolding added)

**Intention: All parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from it.** Intention represents the purposefulness that enables experience to become knowledge and, as such, is deeper than the goals, objectives, and activities that define the experience.

---

<sup>18</sup> We anticipate based on conversations with CBTAI and the Theology Department that BEN designated courses will primarily be taught outside the Theology Department.

Preparedness and Planning: **Participants must ensure that they enter the experience with sufficient foundation to support a successful experience.** They must also focus from the earliest stages of the experience/program on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals, objectives and activities are defined. The resulting plan should include those intentions and be referred to on a regular basis by all parties. At the same time, it should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as the experience unfolds.

Authenticity: **The experience must have a real-world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation.** This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation.

Reflection: **Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience.** For knowledge to be discovered and internalized the learner must test assumptions and hypotheses about the outcomes of decisions and actions taken, then weigh the outcomes against past learning and future implications. This reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential-based learning, from identifying intention and choosing the experience, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experience unfolds. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.

## **Engagement Learning Goals**

### Artistic

Students develop an awareness of the rich and distinctive ways that artistic expression can provoke thought and emotion, practice appropriate audience behavior and appreciation, and develop the tools to understand the world they live in through artistic lenses.

### Experiential

Students apply their knowledge and skills outside the classroom and document their learning through reflection.

### Global

Students develop their awareness of their own and other cultures from outside the US through experiences and develop strategies for adapting effectively and appropriately to intercultural situations.

### Benedictine

Students develop an awareness of Benedictine practices, values, and heritage through texts and experiences and reflect on how these might apply to questions in individual or social lives.

## **Process for Receiving an Engagement Designation**

As mentioned, the Engagement requirements can be met in two ways: by proposing an individual project or by taking a designated course or program. In both cases, students will be required to

submit work to the Integrated Portfolio. We expect that both the course and program applications and the individual student applications would have to meet similar criteria.

Individual students can meet this designation by filling out an online individual proposal for EXP, GLO, or BEN and, once approved, submitting the required work to their Integrated Portfolio. Faculty can get their course designated as Experiential Engagement, Global Engagement, Artistic Engagement, or Benedictine Engagement by filling out an online course proposal. Programs and arts programming can also get the designation by filling out the online proposal. In some cases, one engagement activity or course may meet multiple Engagement Requirements.

We currently have many programs that fulfill engagement requirements but do not fulfill students' Experiential Learning requirement. For example, Bonner Leaders Program, Jackson Fellows, and the CSB/SJU Summer Research Fellow program are significant experiential-based learning opportunities that do not receive general education credit and therefore cannot count as Experiential Learning. Similarly, the China: Summer Science Research at Southwest University does not receive the IC or EL designations because the students do not receive course credit. The RISE committee thinks the policy of requiring experiences to be credit-bearing in order to count as Experiential Learning is unfair to the students who participate in these school-sponsored programs. We are trying to rectify this inequity by allowing programs to apply for designations.

RISE has been in conversation with the Center for Global Engagement about how to create on campus opportunities for Global Engagement. CGE would like to build on the process of the globalization of our campuses that was begun several years ago.

They are using the approach created by ELCE (now XPD) to create partnerships with several community partners, like Community Bridges, Global Minnesota, Minnesota International NGO network, International Institute of Minnesota and the Minnesota Trade Office, to develop opportunities for students in the form of internships and service-learning. An example of what GLO might look like at our campuses is the peer mentor program run by the CGE. This program takes current students and partners them with international students. The peer mentors serve as a cultural guide, host homestays, and attend numerous events and programming sponsored by the CGE.

RISE has also been in contact with Languages and Cultures who are already doing the kind of work that could be easily adapted to fit the Global Engagement Requirement. For example, the Fulbright TA from Austria works with the students of German on a number of activities that could fit the Global Engagement criteria, including regular attendance at the German Table for meals and conversation, attendance at cultural events related to German-language heritage on or off campus (e.g. theater, opera), and film series on culturally relevant topics; the TalkAbroad program has been used in French to provide several half-hour Skype conversations in French between a CSB/SJU student and a person in the French-speaking world (France, Quebec, Senegal, etc.); short-term visiting students from Japan and other countries usually join several classes for the weeks they are on campus and participate in activities with CSB/SJU students both in and out of classrooms; ESL classes are paired with students taking COMM 350 (Intercultural Communication) for the following activity: each pair of students (from different

national/cultural/linguistic backgrounds) meets outside of class three times during the semester, has a one-hour (minimum) conversation on an assigned topic each time, and writes a reflection essay about what they learned from each other.

RISE recommends an approval process that will require programs to receive approval from appropriate Advisory Boards made up of faculty and staff that will then go to the ACC for final approval. We expect that there would be one Advisory Board per requirement. Individual student proposals would also first be vetted by these Advisory Boards.

### *Criteria*

The criteria that we developed for each of the four Engagement designations are derived from the four best practices described above. We worked with the Experience and Professional Development office, the Center for Global Education, members of the Fine Arts faculty, the CBTAI Committee, and other relevant groups and individuals as we developed these criteria for the four different requirements.

What follows is a draft of the kinds of questions that will be on the course proposal forms. We expect that they will be refined during the implementation phase.

### *Experiential*

There is an extensive literature demonstrating the benefits of experiential pedagogy in student learning.<sup>19</sup> And, as mentioned above, this pedagogy is currently used successfully in a variety of ways across the institutions: in undergraduate research, internships, service-learning, study abroad, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

### **Experiential Engagement Learning Goal**

Students apply their knowledge and skills outside the classroom and document their learning through reflection.

### **Sample Questions for Proposal Form**

#### *1. Intention*

- a. Explain where and how the learning will take place, and why this experience is well-placed to facilitate the learning you expect to happen.
- b. Describe the intended learning.
- c. How does the experiential learning encourage students to exercise initiative, responsibility, and judgment so that they actively shape the learning for themselves?

#### *2. Preparation and Planning*

- a. What knowledge and skills will students be asked to apply, and will they have a sufficient foundation for having a successful experience?

---

<sup>19</sup> See Shulman, L. S. (2002). Making differences: A table of learning. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 34(6), 36-44 for an accessible overview of the value of experiential learning.



3. *Authenticity*

- a. Describe the real-world context (inside or outside the classroom) for this engagement experience.
- b. How is this engagement component useful and meaningful in reference to applied settings or situations?

4. *Reflection*

Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. Reflection is important not only for summative assessment, but also formative assessment as the student goes through various aspects of the experience.

- a. How do you plan to embed student reflection into the engagement experience?
- b. What will go into the Integrated Portfolio?

*Global*

Global learning is recognized as a high-impact practice.<sup>20</sup> And our long experience of global education at CSB/SJU reinforced the notion that it can be transformative. Here we try to expand this type of transformation to experiences on campuses.

**Global Engagement Learning Goal**

Students develop their awareness of their own and other cultures from outside the US through experiences inside or outside the classroom and develop strategies for adapting effectively and appropriately to intercultural situations.

**Sample Questions for Proposal Form**

1. *Intention*

- a. Explain where and how the learning will take place, and why this experience is well-placed to facilitate the learning you expect to happen.
- b. How, and to what degree, will this experience incorporate encounters among people, cultures, or institutions from different national, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds?

2. *Preparation and Planning*

- a. What knowledge and skills will students be asked to apply, and will they have a sufficient foundation for having a successful experience?

---

<sup>20</sup> Kuh (2008) defines this High Impact Practice as: “courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.”

### 3. *Authenticity*

- a. How will this experience help students develop a greater understanding about how cultures are similar, different, and interconnected locally and/or globally?
- b. How will this experience help students develop a deepened awareness of their own culture, levels of power and privilege, and the way in which these influences shape their lives and their interactions with others? How will they demonstrate this?
- c. How will this experience help students develop an openness to adapting effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations? How will they demonstrate this?

### 4. *Reflection*

Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. Reflection is important not only for summative assessment, but also formative assessment as the student goes through various aspects of the experience.

- a. How do you plan to embed student reflection into the engagement experience?
- b. What will go into the Integrated Portfolio?

## *Artistic*

RISE believes that including an Artistic Engagement requirement will help some students find a passion for the fine arts that they did not realize they had. We also believe that the intentional programming will provide more meaningful experiences for the students, which will affect their emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth. One of the many things the fine arts do particularly well is push students into the uncomfortable – most students are unfamiliar with the kinds of fine arts events we ask them to attend. This is a goal of a liberal arts education; to get students more comfortable with being uncomfortable and accepting of the unfamiliar.<sup>21</sup>

Like the other designations, faculty or programs could apply for a designation. To achieve this designation, faculty or programs would need to include attendance at four ARTE-approved events. To get ARTE-approval, the event will need to be on one of the campuses. We expect, more than for the other designations, that there will be many students who complete this requirement on their own, since that has been our current practice. Students will be able to choose the types of ARTE-events they participate in.

### **Artistic Engagement Learning Goal**

Students develop an awareness of the rich and distinctive ways that artistic expression can provoke thought and emotion, practice appropriate audience behavior and appreciation, and develop the tools to understand the world they live in through artistic lenses.

---

<sup>21</sup> See Oxtoby, David W. 2012. "The Place of the Arts in a Liberal Education." *Liberal Education* 98, no. 2: 36-41.

## Sample Questions for Proposal Form

### 1. *Intention*

- a. Explain where and how the learning will take place, and why this experience is well-placed to facilitate the learning you expect to happen.
- b. Describe the purposefulness of choosing this form of the engagement component to facilitate students' reflection and learning.

### 2. *Preparation and Planning*

- a. What knowledge and skills will students be asked to apply, and will they have a sufficient foundation for having a successful experience?
- b. Describe the procedure for this engagement component. In addition to attendance at the event/exhibition, what interactive material will be available on site to guide the student in processing the experience – for example, an artist's talk, talkback after a performance, a docent-guided series of questions, a worksheet that you provide. If a specific assignment has been developed, please attach it here.

### 3. *Authenticity*

- a. In what ways does this engagement component develop an appreciation and curiosity about art in the real world?

### 4. *Reflection*

Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. Reflection is important not only for summative assessment, but also formative assessment as the student goes through various aspects of the experience.

- a. How do you plan to embed student reflection into the engagement experience?
- b. What will go into the Integrated Portfolio?

## *Benedictine*

RISE believes that the deliberate integration of the Catholic Benedictine tradition into the Engagement Requirements will provide opportunities for students to reflect on aspects of CSB/SJU that are specific to their founding as Catholic Benedictine institutions. This requirement involves experiences that develop an awareness of Benedictine practices, values, and heritage and their application in individual or social lives.

## **Benedictine Engagement Learning Goal**

Students develop an awareness of Benedictine practices, values, and heritage through texts and experiences inside or outside the classroom and reflect on how these might apply to questions in individual or social lives.

## Sample Questions for Proposal Form

### 1. *Intention*

- a. Explain where and how the learning will take place, and why this experience is well-placed to facilitate the learning you expect to happen.
- b. Explain why this experiential component is well-placed to facilitate learning about the Benedictine practices, values, and heritage at CSB/SJU.

### 2. *Preparation and Planning*

- a. What knowledge of the Benedictine practices, values, and heritage will students be asked to apply, and how will you ensure that they have a sufficient foundation for having a successful experience?

### 3. *Authenticity*

- a. Describe the real-world context (inside or outside the classroom) for this engagement experience.
- b. In what ways does this engagement component develop an appreciation of Benedictine practices, values, and heritage and their application in individual or social lives?

### 4. *Reflection*

Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. Reflection is important not only for summative assessment, but also formative assessment as the student goes through various aspects of the experience.

- a. How do you plan to embed student reflection into the engagement experience?
- b. What will go into the Integrated Portfolio?

## Quantitative Reasoning

Quantitative Reasoning is the construction, communication, and evaluation of arguments involving numerical information.<sup>22</sup> Quantitative Reasoning involves applying numerical information to real or authentic contexts. Specifically, students can:

1. Interpret graphs, tables, and/or schematics and draw conclusions from them.
2. Represent data visually, numerically, and verbally.
3. Analyze/estimate numerical information in order to determine reasonableness, identify alternatives, and/or select optimal results.
4. Draw conclusions, in context, based on analysis of numerical information.
5. Use and understand quantitative arguments.

---

<sup>22</sup> The “construction, communication, and evaluation of arguments” comes from Carleton College. The language used in the bullet points is an amalgamation of the Mathematical Association of America and the QR criteria language developed by one of the ad hoc Way of Thinking groups.

## **Importance of Quantitative Reasoning**

The ability to make sense of numerical information is essential in our data-driven world. Due to our increasing reliance on data, poor quantitative reasoning skills can lead to serious consequences when numerical information is misunderstood or deliberately made misleading. Also due to the ubiquitous nature of data, this skill is one that is increasingly necessary for all adults. Quantitative Reasoning is one of the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) developed through AACU's Liberal Education for America's Promise (LEAP) initiative. Furthermore, mathematics communities have advocated for Quantitative Literacy Reform and many liberal arts colleges, such as Carleton College, have emphasized the role of Quantitative Reasoning in general education models.

Because Quantitative Reasoning skills are required in a wide variety of disciplines, the Integrations Curriculum includes a Quantitative Reasoning designation, which allows any course that meets the learning goals to offer this designation. However, many students will experience a second or third general education course that involves quantitative reasoning as many of the Abstract Reasoning, Scientific Inquiry about the Natural World, and Scientific Thinking about Societies, Groups and Individuals Ways of Thinking courses will offer the Quantitative Reasoning designation. Additionally, courses in a major or program that are not part of the Ways of Thinking courses could also offer the Quantitative Reasoning designation.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

If approved, the Integrations Curriculum will go into effect for students beginning in the Fall of 2020. This will allow for a two-year implementation period before the first students begin the curriculum. Following approval of the Integrations Curriculum, an implementation plan and process will need to be developed to ensure a functioning and effective general education program. Based on a review of practices at other institutions, developing an implementation plan typically begins after a faculty vote on a final curriculum proposal, but an outline of some of the operational components of the implementation phase can be sketched out in advance of a vote to reassure stakeholders that resources will be available to support a new curriculum and that an assessment plan is in place to evaluate its effectiveness in supporting student learning outcomes. *It should be stressed that this is a draft outline* of an implementation plan to be developed fully in the spring/summer 2018.

### Implementation Plan Development

One of the key first steps in this process is for a team from CSB/SJU to return to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Institute on General Education and Assessment, held annually in June. CSB/SJU first sent a team to the AAC&U Institute in 2015 to develop a process document to guide the work of general education reform on our campuses. After the team returned from the institute, it drafted an extensive report, *Making Connections*, which it submitted to the Joint Faculty Senate in the fall semester 2015. The JFS adopted unanimously the recommendations of the *Making Connections* report, which allowed the Common Curriculum Visioning Committee (CCVC) to move forward with developing a vision statement and learning outcomes in 2015-2016.

Should the JFA approve the Integrations Curriculum in the spring semester 2018, a team will return to the AAC&U Summer Institute on General Education and Assessment in June 2018. The AAC&U Institute is framed around a set of principles and guidelines for redesigning, supporting, and evaluating general education programs, curricula, and pedagogy. According to the AAC&U materials, teams will work to “identify strategies and practices for successful implementation” that include the development of “meaningful assessment strategies that target learning outcomes (including those critical personal and social responsibility outcomes often demonstrated through high-impact practices), produce useful data that can be widely communicated, and lead to improvement in teaching and learning practices.” By the end of the summer institute, teams create a formal draft of the implementation plan, including a timeline for the work, the types of development needed to train faculty to teach new courses in the revised curriculum, the process of submitting and approving course proposals, the staffing requirements of the new curriculum, and the assessment activities that will need to be in place to determine the outcomes of these changes.

Participants at the AAC&U Summer Institute will also have extensive opportunities to work with other teams and with experienced faculty consultants. Dr. Terry Rhodes, the Vice President for the Office of Quality, Curriculum and Assessment at AAC&U, will be on the staff at the

institute. Dr. Rhodes visited CSB/SJU as a consultant in the fall and is familiar with our institutions and with our work on general education reform. In addition, there will be two consultants on the AAC&U staff from Virginia Tech. This is significant because Virginia Tech recently approved a new general education curriculum (the “Pathways Curriculum Plan”) and has just finished its own implementation plan.

## Staffing

Academic Affairs conducted a preliminary analysis of an earlier, more restrictive version of this model, and concluded it was FTE neutral. APBC is working with Academic Affairs to develop a staffing analysis of the Integrations Curriculum. A supplemental document on staffing will be released as soon as the analysis is complete, and prior to the beginning of the JFA electronic vote.

## Faculty Development

The implementation phase of a new general education curriculum will require substantial resources. As Tim Riordan and Stephen Sharkley explain in their article, “Hand in Hand: The Role of Culture, Faculty, Identity, and Mission in Sustaining General Education Reform,” “*If student learning is to be at the heart of an institution’s mission, we have learned, recognition of that work and allocation of resources in support of it must be of the highest priority*” (2010, p. 214, emphasis in original).<sup>23</sup> Faculty development to support general education pedagogy will be necessary. Faculty will likely need to retool existing courses and design new courses to ensure that their students are meeting the revised learning outcomes of a new general education curriculum. Fortunately, the colleges have committed attention and resources to faculty development, as promised in SD 2020, which states: “Develop and implement a Professional Development program that strengthens the faculty and staff’s ability to meet the needs of the student body.” **The presidents have committed \$300,000 to these faculty development efforts, with \$100,000 for each of the first three years of the implementation phase.**

The experiences at other colleges prove this is a wise investment, even as institutions face budgetary pressures.<sup>24</sup> There is evidence that such investments pay off. Citing the research of Jerry G. Gaff, the *Journal of General Education* reports “at universities across the country, faculty have responded to development programs with a good deal of enthusiasm. Increased collaboration across disciplines, enhanced pedagogical effectiveness, and improved student satisfaction with their learning experiences in general education courses have been among the reported results (White 1994, p. 200).<sup>25</sup> Recent evidence confirms the importance of faculty development initiatives. In a multi-year study conducted by Carleton College and Washington

---

<sup>23</sup> Riordan, Tim and Stephen Sharkley. “Hand in Hand: The Role of Culture, Faculty, Identity, and Mission in Sustaining General Education Reform.” *A Process Approach to General Education Reform: Transforming Institutional Culture in Higher Education*. Eds. Susan Gano-Phillips and Robert W. Barnett. Madison WI: Atwood Publishing, 2010. 199-220.

State University, professional development activities were shown to positively affect student learning and classroom pedagogy (Condon, et. al., 2016).<sup>26</sup>

Academic Affairs has recently begun conversations about creating a new Teaching and Learning Center to replace the Learning Enhancement Service. Many institutions committed to a vibrant general education program have a teaching center to support and promote effective pedagogy. For example, the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA) at St. Olaf College provides support for faculty conversation and collaboration about learning, teaching and scholarship. In addition, these centers can assist with the transition and implementation of general education reform. At the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning serves as a resource for teaching, provides workshops and web resources on research-based teaching and learning practices, and funds projects for faculty research. “Thus, the center became an important foundation for the general education reform effort.” Lori J. Carrell, the director, noted, “The center helped with the cultural transformation on campus and readied the campus for change” (Kuh and O’Donnell 2013, p. 42).<sup>27</sup>

The specific details involving faculty development initiatives during the implementation phase would be addressed by the CSB/SJU team to attend the AAC&U Summer Institute in the summer of 2018. Items that would need to be developed include:

- Selecting a new general education director to replace the Common Curriculum director. This would be a faculty position.
- Working with the Dean of the Faculty to create a proposal for a Teaching & Learning Center.
- Drafting a position announcement for a director for the Teaching & Learning Center in fall 2018. This would also be a faculty position.
- Creating a general education implementation steering team responsible for planning, directing and monitoring implementation of the revised general education curriculum. All academic units whose function relate to the delivery of general education will be included.
- Planning for collaboration among curriculum designers, general education implementation steering team, and the Common Curriculum Committee to ensure community understanding of the new general education program.
- Developing the requisite courses, focusing at first on those needed for incoming students.
- Identifying needed faculty development training to assist with course revision, the creation of new courses, and the development of theme cohorts.
- Creating training programs and workshops to facilitate pedagogy and course development during the transition.
- Developing a course approval process to assist the Common Curriculum Committee.

---

<sup>26</sup> Condon, William, Ellen R. Iverson, Cathryn A. Manduca, Carol Rutz, and Gudrun Willett. *Faculty Development and Student Learning: Assessing the Connections*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Kuh, George D., and Ken O’Donnell. *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2013.



- Working with the Dean of the Faculty to develop a new mentoring process that could include course visits and evaluations, similar to course visits in departments.
- Developing proposal writing workshops to guide faculty in new course development.
- Training for committees responsible for proposal reviews.
- Training for faculty to provide advising support to students.
- Integrating assessment plans into the planning process.
- Working with APBC to determine transition costs.
- Working with appropriate offices, such as Communications & Marketing, on public relations related to the new curriculum.

## Assessment

RISE recognizes that CSB/SJU has not been as systematic in its assessment of the Common Curriculum as it should have been. As a result, we have intentionally built in assessment practices and a schedule into the Integrations Curriculum. We are also relying on the newly established Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness (OAAE) to help provide oversight and guidance of this process. The OAAE’s mission “is to advance student learning and teaching excellence through an impact-oriented philosophy and collaborative campus partnerships. OAAE uses institutional and programmatic assessments with evaluation techniques to drive evidence-based improvements in alignment with the institutions' mission, vision, and Strategic Directions 2020.” RISE anticipates that the OAAE, the Director of the Curriculum, and the relevant faculty governance committees will work closely together throughout the implementation phase to ensure that the proper assessment procedures are in place before the first cohort begins the new curriculum.

Assessment and evaluation of the *Integrations Curriculum* will drive refinements in pedagogy, teaching effectiveness, curriculum design, resource allocation, learning outcome articulation and assessment/evaluation techniques with an ultimate goal of *improving student learning*.

Four methods will be used to assess each of the learning goals and the subsequent outcomes. Course-embedded assignments, of the sort we have been using in the Common Curriculum will provide a direct method of assessment of student learning. As in the current system, faculty will volunteer to help out with assessment of the general education learning outcomes.

- a. Faculty assign a short assignment where students demonstrate the learning outcome.
- b. Assignments are evaluated using a normed rubric; we will use the AAC&U Value Rubrics whenever possible. Newly created rubrics will follow the AAC&U template. See the sample rubric below.
- c. Results are aggregated and reported to those teaching to this outcome.
- d. Results are discussed and an action plan for improvement is devised and shared with appropriate faculty governance committees.

Another direct method of assessment will be the Integrated Portfolio. The details of this assessment will be worked out in the implementation phase. However, we know that there will

be standardized assignments, most importantly the Integrated Knowledge Essay completed in the junior or senior year, which will allow for direct assessment of the Integrations Curriculum.

We will also continue to use the following indirect methods: the Senior Exit survey, which is administered annually by the Office of Institutional Research, provides an internal comparison, which RISE believes has been underutilized in our assessment of the Common Curriculum. Additionally, we will use a nationally-normed student profile for an indirect measure, which allows for an external comparison.

CSB/SJU has recently purchased software to help us manage assessment. Taskstream is the new Assessment Management System that is used to coordinate our assessment and evaluation processes. We anticipate that Taskstream will help us streamline the assessment process, by providing a central location for all assessment-related activities.

1. A workspace will be created in Taskstream by the Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness for each curricular component.
2. Faculty evaluating a component are given access to the workspace. A faculty team leader will be designated.
3. In this workspace, faculty will find the student signature works and rubric. These will have been uploaded into Taskstream through a Canvas/Taskstream interface mechanism.
4. The faculty team will evaluate the assignments and results will be aggregated in the workspace.
5. The faculty team will discuss results and create an action plan for improvement.
6. This entire process will be supported by the Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness.

For courses conducted in fall semester, faculty teams commence in spring to complete their review, discussion, and recommendations. For courses conducted in spring semester, faculty teams commence in fall semester to complete their review, discussion, and recommendations.

### **Procedures to Monitor and Adjust the Integrations Curriculum**

The JFS will appoint an ad hoc committee for the two-year implementation phase that can recommend adjustments to the model (including themes) if issues arise during implementation. Those recommendations would go to the JFS for a vote. Then once the Integrations Curriculum is in place, a new ad hoc committee will be charged with gathering feedback from departments and evaluating at the four-year mark (so one cohort through), recommending changes at that point if necessary.

### **Integrations Curriculum Program Review**

RISE recognizes that one of the problems with our current assessment structure for the Common Curriculum is that it does not include systematic program review. RISE and the JFS are committed to developing a process that allows the new curriculum to be revised on an ongoing

basis. We do not want to find ourselves needing to start over with a new curriculum every 10 years. To avoid this, the Integrations Curriculum will undergo a full program review every five years in order to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum in student learning and outcome achievement. This timeline allows for an entire cohort to get through the new curriculum. Faculty are understandably worried about the effect a new general education curriculum will have on their departments. Thus, the effect of the new curriculum on individual departments will be part of this program review. Revisions to the curriculum will undergo the review and approval processes outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

### **Sample Rubric**

There are 12 Core Learning Goals, which are listed in Section 4. Each of these has three tiers, so students will see each of the learning goals multiple times (at least two, sometimes three). We are placing each of the three scaffolded learning outcomes into a single rubric for the learning goal. All faculty teaching a general education course that includes the learning goal will use the same rubric. In this example, everyone teaching Theology 1 and Thematic Focus courses, where the Analyzing Texts learning goal is placed, will be using this rubric for the general education assessment. We expect that the majority of the students in Theology 1 will meet level 1 in all dimensions by the end of the course and that the majority of students in Thematic Focus will meet level 2 in all dimensions by the end of the course. It is likely that some students might progress faster – meeting level 2 in Theology and level 3 in Thematic Focus. Below is an example of what a rubric for the Analyzing Texts learning outcome might look like (see Table 2).

**ANALYZING TEXTS:** Elicit and construct meaning from texts.

**Beginner:** Students read or interpret a variety of texts for comprehension, adjusting strategies based on the genre, nature of the text and context of the assignment.

**Intermediate:** Students evaluate texts for significance, relevance to the students' goals, and make connections among texts and/or disciplines.

**Advanced:** Students integrate knowledge among different texts, including independently finding supplemental texts to help understand the main text(s).

Table 2. Sample Analyzing Texts rubric.

	3	2	1	0
Comprehension	Recognizes possible implications of the text for contexts, perspectives, or issues beyond the assigned task within the classroom or beyond the author's explicit message (e.g., might recognize broader issues at play, or might pose challenges to the author's message and presentation).	Uses the text, general background knowledge, and/or specific knowledge of the author's context to draw more complex inferences about the author's message and attitude.	Evaluates how textual features (e.g., sentence and paragraph structure or tone) contribute to the author's message; draws basic inferences about context and purpose of text.	Apprehends vocabulary appropriately to paraphrase or summarize the information the text communicates.
Relationship to text	Evaluates texts for scholarly significance and relevance within and across the various disciplines, evaluating them according to their contributions and consequences.	Uses texts in the context of scholarship to develop a foundation of disciplinary knowledge and to raise and explore important questions.	Engages texts with the intention and expectation of building topical and world knowledge.	Approaches texts in the context of assignments with the intention and expectation of finding right answers and learning facts and concepts to display for credit.
Analysis and integration of texts	Evaluates strategies for relating ideas, text structure, or other textual features in order to build knowledge or insight within and across texts and disciplines.	Identifies relations among ideas, text structure, or other textual features, to evaluate how they support an advanced understanding of the text as a whole.	Recognizes relations among parts or aspects of a text, such as effective or ineffective arguments or literary features, in considering how these contribute to a basic understanding of the text as a whole.	Identifies aspects of a text (e.g., content, structure, or relations among ideas) as needed to respond to questions posed in assigned tasks.