

Three Draft Plans for Revising General Education (October 2017)

Introduction

This document presents three draft plans for updating IU South Bend's General Education program. These are intended for discussion, with the full expectation that they will be revised after input from various campus constituencies.

Each of the three draft plans follows a distinctive idea:

1. The "Conservative" plan keeps the current structure, but with some additions/deletions.
2. The "Direct LEAP" plan is generated directly from the LEAP essential learning outcomes, but keeps the interdisciplinary nature of the basic knowledge courses.
3. The "Flexible Choice" plan also uses the LEAP structure, but has a larger number of choices; in the basic knowledge courses, it returns to the standard introductory courses in the disciplines.

Furthermore, all three plans were designed to follow a set of general principles:

1. To reduce overall General Education credit hours required of students, keeping it below 34 credits if possible
2. To use the faculty/student priorities and LEAP essential learning outcomes, as well as best practices nationwide, as the basis for deciding what to include/not include in all draft plans
3. To provide a public rationale for all inclusions/exclusions based on (2)
4. To integrate desirable high-impact practices into the General Education curriculum (e.g., first-year seminars, community engagement)
5. To include reinforcement & integrative learning (e.g., upper-level integrative courses in each unit), with progressively more challenging application and standards
6. To ensure that full-time, tenure-track faculty who currently contribute to General Education will continue to have such opportunities (although perhaps in a different form)

A number of considerations and concerns were found during the General Education Task Force's deliberations and investigations that are addressed by the draft plans.

1. Some units with high credit hour programs have felt pressure in having their students meet General Education requirements and also the requirements of their programs.
2. Some units have expressed hope that General Education be more attuned to their specific needs.
3. Many students have had difficulties transferring courses to fulfill General Education requirements.
4. Our current General Education program does not keep students moving toward higher skills in a progressive manner, and there is no requirement that they take basic skills and knowledge courses early, when they are most relevant.
5. A number of high-impact practices have been explored on the campus, with expected positive impact on our students' experiences (and retention), but these are not integrated into the current program.
6. There is currently no integrative learning, one of the LEAP essential learning outcomes, except for the interdisciplinarity of the core courses.
7. Some LEAP essential learning outcomes are not represented in our current model at all, or in minimal form.
8. Some elements of the current model have become obsolete, or have not been viewed as making a useful enough contribution to our students' educational experiences.

These are but a few of the concerns reported by faculty and students in various public forums, focus groups, and surveys.

Why are there three plans, rather than one? The reason is that there are many ways to address the various concerns and areas in need of improvement or updating, each with its own distinctive pros and cons. Moreover, faculty and students each differ among themselves about which priorities are most in need of addressing. There is no unanimity. Hence, there is need for public discussion and dialogue. These three plans present clear alternatives, and can be usefully considered as wholes, but also contain some individual elements that can be transferred from one to another, should that be deemed desirable.

A few differences from the current General Education curriculum are present in all three draft plans. These include eliminating the computer literacy requirement and visual literacy (though this remains in modified form in the 3rd draft plan as an option), modifying information literacy as it is currently offered, and exploring various options for health and wellness. The rationales for these is as follows:

- Computer literacy was intended to ensure our students have the necessary computer skills to succeed in college. However, our students are now "digital natives," and learn most of what they need before coming to college. Thus, this requirement seems no longer needed. Faculty and student surveys and unit discussions reinforce this judgment. Also, computer literacy is not one of the LEAP essential learning outcomes. (However, there also should be opportunity for the few students who lack such skills to acquire them.)
- Visual literacy is consistently low on the list of faculty priorities, and students' priorities as well. In addition, it is not being used in assessment by faculty, unlike the other fundamental literacies. It also is not a LEAP essential learning outcome. (However, visual communication is clearly relevant to student needs, and so this is included as an option in the 3rd draft plan.)
- Although Q110 was the most frequent target of student complaints, information literacy is a LEAP essential learning outcome, and so it should be retained in some form. The three plans below differ on how they do this, but all of them include it somehow.
- The other current fundamental literacies received strong support from both faculty and students, and are all also LEAP essential learning outcomes. They are still present in all three plans, though modified in some.
- Health & Wellness also received a number of different assessments from students and faculty; the three draft plans deal with this requirement in very different ways, to reflect this. It is expanded in the 1st plan, reduced and refocused in the 2nd, and not present at all in the 3rd. Health & Wellness is also not explicitly a LEAP essential learning outcome; however, it offers advantages to fostering students' personal responsibility.

One addition that is common to all three plans is the **upper-level integrative course**. This fulfills two needs: (1) to ensure students have their fundamental skills reinforced and applied at higher levels, and (2) to insure that this is done in the manner that each major or program will find most useful.

NOTES:

- An asterisk (*) designates a course that we do not currently offer, i.e., that will have to be developed anew or added as a "matching" course from other IU campuses.
- The General Education Task Force has formulated a complete set of specific learning outcomes for every requirement suggested in these three drafts. These are not included here but will be made available for public discussion and comment as well.
- The AAC&U's VALUE rubrics referred to below are available upon request.
- The LEAP essential learning outcomes are appended to the end of this document, for reference.

Draft Plan 1 – The "Conservative" Plan

Rationale:

This sample plan is a revision of our current General Education curriculum that keeps its basic structure while addressing the most pressing concerns and priorities expressed by faculty and students. It also reflects our commitment to the LEAP framework, and takes into account best practices nationwide in General Education. This plan has the following features:

- It keeps the terminology of our current General Education curriculum.
- It retains the fundamental literacies ranked as most essential by both faculty and students, and those that are LEAP essential learning outcomes.
- Information literacy is not separate course, but is integrated into other courses.
- It keeps the structure of the core courses, which many faculty (and students too) regard as positive and valuable.
- It refocuses some items in the Cultural and Social Values category, but keeps the present structure.
- It integrates two high-impact practices, first-year seminars and community engagement, into the curriculum.
- It includes higher-level integrative learning and reinforcement of the fundamental literacies.

The main reason for changing "Non-Western" to "Global Cultures" under "Cultural and Social Values" is that several units expressed concern that the present requirement does not adequately address the need for "global learning," which is a present trend in General Education and also an emphasis of the AAC&U.

One exception to the inclusion of LEAP essential learning outcomes is Ethical Reasoning, which is not added here (though it is in the other two draft plans).

This is the shortest plan to present, since the current plan is retained in many key respects.

With that introduction, here is the "conservative" draft plan.

The General Education Curriculum (33 credit hours total)

This campuswide general-education curriculum is composed of three elements and requires a total of 33 credit hours of coursework for most students. (The exception is for students who have special needs or status.) The basic distribution requirements are as follows:

- Fundamental literacies courses (12 cr.)
- Common core courses (12 cr.)
- Cultural and social values courses (9 cr.)

1. The Fundamental Literacies (12 cr.)

Students are required to take the following courses related to the fundamental literacies. These courses must all be completed before the junior year. No student with more than 60 credit hours will be allowed to enroll in any other class until these requirements are all met. (Students who transfer in with more than 60 credit hours however will be understood to have fulfilled all their fundamental literacies.)

Writing (3 cr.) – one course

(primarily Eng-W 131)

Critical Thinking (3 cr.) – one course

(list omitted; similar to what we have currently)

Oral Communication (3 cr.) – one course

(primarily Spch-S 121)

Quantitative Reasoning (3 cr.) – one course

(list omitted; similar to what we have currently)

Additional Requirements for Students with Special Needs or Status

(a) All students must pass a basic computer literacy test upon admission. Students who do not pass the computer literacy test upon admission must take **Csci-A 101 Basic Computer Literacy** (a new 1-credit-hour course), in addition to those listed above. This 1-credit course will cover the following basic skills:

Computer hardware

- Basic hardware: Mouse, keyboard, CPU, hard drive, monitor, touchscreens
- Removable storage (CDs, DVDs, jump drives, etc.)

Computer software

- Using word-processing programs (cut-and-paste, copying text, formatting text, dealing with lists for varying types, saving documents, using spelling, grammar check, and word count, adjusting font size, margins, indentation, switching between different views (normal, outline, etc.), inserting pictures, tables, footnotes)
- Using presentation software (creating slides, adding text to slides and formatting it, moving slides around/reorganizing, adding pictures, charts, tables, etc.)
- Using basic spreadsheets (creating a table of numbers, doing sums and averages, creating a calendar, budget, how to find formulas)

Other basic computer skills

- Getting email attachments, creating attachments
- Finding a web page from an address
- Using a search engine (Google, etc.)
- Using cloud storage (e.g., IU Box)

Csci-A 101 is intended as a refresher course, providing skills for students who do not have the basic capability to use computers at a level of proficiency that is expected of current high school graduates. The basic skills listed above are deemed necessary for students to complete their work successfully at IU South Bend.

(b) Students who are not qualified for Eng-W 131 must take **Eng-W 130 Principles of Composition** before taking Eng-W 131 or any other writing course.

(c) Students who are admitted conditionally as new students must take **Educ-U 100 Threshold Seminar: The Craft and Culture of Higher Education** in their freshman year.

2. The Common Core (12 cr.)

This is the same structure as at present, with at least one course at the 300-level:

Literary and Intellectual Traditions (3 cr.) – one course

(same as now)

Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity (3 cr.) – one course

(same as now)

The Natural World (3 cr.) – one course

(same as now)

Human Behavior and Social Institutions (3 cr.) – one course

(same as now)

3. Contemporary Social Values (9 cr.)

Contemporary Global Cultures (3 cr.) – one course

(This replaces "non-Western cultures" with "contemporary global cultures." The focus should be on contemporary cultures other than the United States. This could include courses in recent non-US history, courses on recent and current world political or social movements or events, macroeconomics (of a global nature), and other categories. International or study abroad courses could be included, depending on their focus.)

Diversity in US Society (3 cr.) – one course

(This is essentially the same as at present, focusing on non-dominant, minority cultures in the US.)

Health and Wellness (3 cr.) – one 3-credit course or two courses, one 2-credit + one 1-credit

(Students will take either a comprehensive 3-credit class providing information about managing their physical and mental health, or a 2-credit class focused on information about managing one's health, plus a 1-credit activity course.)

Additional Requirements for All Students:

First-Year Seminar: All students admitted with <30 credit hours, whether new students or transfer students, must take at least one core course with the designation "First-Year Seminar" (FYS). Students transferring in with >30 credit hours are exempt from this requirement.

Information Literacy: All students must take at least one course tagged as an "Information Literacy" course. This will preferably be a lower-level General Education course, but may also be an approved course within the student's major program. In either case, the course will be assessed when scheduled using the AAC&U's Information Literacy VALUE rubric.

Community Engagement: Students must take at least one course tagged as having a "Community Engagement" component. This may occur as a common core course or as a contemporary social values course.

Upper-level integrative Course: All students will take in their junior or senior year a 300- or 400-level course designated as an "upper-level integrative course." The purpose of this course is to integrate and reinforce skills learned in fundamental literacy classes taken earlier. This course may be a 300-level common core course that counts for the student's major. Alternatively, a unit may designate another upper-level course for this purpose, preferably in the student's major, but possibly in another, related unit. In either case, the key elements of the upper-level integrative course are as follows:

- The course must explicitly include learning outcomes from at least two of the fundamental literacies; thus, the course will be subject to General Education assessment based on the specified literacies chosen.
- Since they are not fundamental literacy courses per se, the general VALUE rubrics, intended for cross-disciplinary use, will be used to evaluate them. (So, e.g., the AAC&U's writing rubric will be used, if writing is a reinforced literacy, even if this VALUE rubric is not used for assessing Eng-W 131.)
- Instructors should strive to inculcate higher-level performance on these fundamental literacies, as specified in the rubrics, and should explicitly build on what students have learned earlier in their fundamental literacy courses.
- Given the above, the course will have as prerequisites that students have completed the relevant fundamental literacy courses before taking the upper-level integrative course.
- The course must involve teamwork and group projects.
- The course should focus on problem-solving at key points, where students have to generate their own solutions and strategies, rather than following a pre-set procedure learned by rote.

Draft Plan 2 – The "Direct LEAP" Plan

Rationale:

This sample plan directly uses the LEAP essential learning outcomes as its basic structure. This is reflected in the organization and statement of the plan's goals, as well as the language used throughout. Some things included are not explicitly listed in the LEAP essential outcomes. These include the following:

- The knowledge courses (I) include a requirement that the courses be interdisciplinary. It is therefore expected that many of our current core courses will be adapted into this structure if it is adopted.
- Interpersonal communication is included as an option to public speaking.
- Both first-year experiences and community engagement are included as high-impact practices (the reason: first-year seminars are listed as such in the broader LEAP framework, and "civic knowledge and engagement—local and global" is one of the LEAP essential learning outcomes).
- The Personal and Social Responsibility section is perhaps most different from the current curriculum. This LEAP-generated section includes Intercultural Knowledge and Ethical Reasoning as part of "social responsibility." Under "personal responsibility," it includes 1-credit courses in Nutrition & Health, and Financial Literacy. The latter two are not explicitly listed as LEAP essential learning outcomes, but fit well into the "personal responsibility" category. In addition, many students expressed interest in financial literacy, and the School of Business & Economics is presently teaching the course for its students. Financial literacy thus should be considered for inclusion in General Education.

The General Education Curriculum (33 credit hours total):

This sample plan addresses the most pressing concerns and priorities expressed by faculty and students, and is generated directly by our commitment to the LEAP framework, particularly its essential learning outcomes and recommended high-impact practices. The entire plan thus has the same organization as the LEAP essential outcomes published by the AAC&U. This includes:

- I. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world**
 - Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts
- II. Intellectual and practical skills**
 - Inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving
- III. Personal and social responsibility**
 - Civic knowledge and engagement (local and global), intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundational skills for life
- IV. Integrative learning**
 - Synthesis and advanced accomplishment in advancing knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Goals of the General Education Curriculum

This campuswide general-education curriculum is composed of eight goals, based on the LEAP framework outlined in the previous section, and organized in much the same way. The goals are as follows:

- I. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world**
 - **Knowledge of Human Cultures** – Students will obtain broad knowledge of human nature, societies, and history, through study in the (a) social sciences, (b) arts, and (c) humanities.
 - **Knowledge of the Physical and Natural World** – Students will obtain broad knowledge of the physical and natural world, through study in the natural sciences.
- II. Intellectual and practical skills**
 - **Critical Thinking** – Students will gain the general skills needed to think and reason logically, to reflect on and articulate their own reasoning, to understand the nature of evidence and properly assess evidential support, and to analyze and solve real-world problems.
 - **Communication** – Students will be able to communicate effectively both in writing and orally, in public and interpersonally, using appropriate visual materials, and to work effectively in teams and groups.

- **Quantitative Literacy** – Students will have basic mathematical skills and appreciation for statistical concepts and methods, and be able to apply these not only to pre-given calculations, but generally, to real-world situations and problems described in prose.
- **Information Literacy** – Students will be aware of how information is gathered, assessed, and disseminated, and will be able to find, judge, select, and use information effectively, using the technologies of the 21st century.

III. Personal and social responsibility

- **Personal Responsibility** – Students will be able (a) to manage effectively their own well-being (e.g., their health and finances), (b) to make well-reasoned ethical judgments and decisions, and (c) to be active and engaged citizens.
- **Intercultural knowledge and competence** – Students will have knowledge of and sensitivity to diverse global cultures and to racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity in the United States.

IV. Integrative learning

- The knowledge, skills, and responsibilities outlined above will be applied in increasingly advanced settings and involve synthesis of multiple approaches and disciplines.

Given this framework, here are the particular details of the "Direct LEAP" draft plan:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World (12 cr.)

This will be fulfilled by the student taking one course in each of the following areas. These courses will not be solely within one discipline, but will be **interdisciplinary** in nature. In particular, each course should involve at least two disciplines within the same category.

The Social Sciences (3 cr.) – one course

These will be introductory-level classes with no prerequisites. Each class should address a topic in the social sciences that showcases how at least two disciplines in these areas interact and contribute to understanding of some key issue. The social sciences in this case are understood to include sociology, psychology, archeology, anthropology, political science, economics, and other more specialized disciplines that utilize several of these, e.g., women's and gender studies courses based in the social sciences, criminology, linguistics, or international relations. These courses must pay explicit attention to the general rules governing the scientific method and the evaluation of evidence.

The Arts (3 cr.) – one course

These will be introductory-level classes with no prerequisites. Each class should address a topic in the arts that showcases how at least two disciplines in these areas interact and contribute to understanding of some key issue. The arts in this case are understood to include music, painting and sculpture, photography, theatre, film, architecture, and other more specialized disciplines that utilize several of these, e.g., art history or film studies. These courses must pay explicit attention to aesthetic judgment, interpretation and analysis of art, and the process of creating works of art.

The Humanities (3 cr.) – one course

These will be introductory-level classes with no prerequisites. Each class should address a topic in the humanities that showcases how at least two disciplines in these areas interact and contribute to understanding of some key issue. The humanities in this case are understood to include literature, philosophy, religious studies, history, and ancient or modern languages, and other more specialized disciplines that utilize several of these, e.g., religious history, or courses in women's and gender studies housed in the humanities (e.g., feminist theory or feminist philosophy). These courses must pay explicit attention to the interpretation of primary texts, historical interpretation and analysis, or the development and critique of important ideas that contribute to human culture and self-understanding.

The Natural Sciences and Mathematics (3 cr.) – one course

The natural sciences courses will be introductory-level classes with no prerequisites other than the appropriate, necessary basic mathematical skills. Each class should address a topic in the natural sciences and mathematics that showcases how at least two disciplines in these areas interact and contribute to understanding of some key issue. The natural sciences in this case are understood to include physics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, and other more specialized disciplines that utilize and integrate several of these, e.g., ecology, oceanography, geology, cosmology, meteorology, climatology, or biochemistry. Natural science courses must pay explicit attention to the general rules

governing the scientific method and the evaluation of evidence. In addition, a natural sciences course must make substantive use of mathematics and its application to scientific reasoning.

Alternatively, to fulfill this requirement, a student can take an advanced course in one of the formal sciences, which includes mathematics, statistics, decision theory, formal logic, systems theory, or advanced theoretical computer science. In this case, attention will be paid to the reasoning in these disciplines (e.g., formal proofs). Also, this alternative path must involve a level of analysis involving a high level of mathematical and theoretical rigor (e.g., 300- or 400-level statistics courses in mathematics would count, but applied statistics courses in the social sciences will not count).

2. Intellectual and Practical Skills (13 cr.)

These courses are intended to be **foundational**. Accordingly, students are required to take the following courses before the junior year. No student with more than 60 credit hours will be allowed to enroll in any other class until these requirements are all met. (Students who transfer in with more than 60 credit hours however will be understood to have fulfilled all their fundamental literacies.) In addition, since they are foundational, all courses in this group must be at the introductory-level, and have no prerequisites, except when students are admitted with insufficient background requiring remediation (such as poor writing skills). (See the "Special Needs" section below.)

Because of the general importance of these skills, specific foundational classes are needed in which explicit instruction is given on the appropriate principles and techniques, and students are required to consciously and purposely apply them, and reflect on how they are doing so.

The learning outcomes associated with fundamental courses in these skills will address the basic level; but these skills, being complex, general, and nuanced, cannot be learned in one course. Thus, upper-level integrative courses, within specific units, will build on these basic skills and move students toward increasingly advanced levels, in ways that address particularly how these skills relate to their disciplines.

Critical Thinking (3 cr.) – one course

This will be an introductory-level course in which students explicitly reflect on and analyze how they reason, study and apply general rules for good reasoning, and apply these to general problems and issues from everyday life. These courses can also adopt a theme or issue around which to focus and organize the course (e.g., contemporary political controversies).

Written Communication (3 cr.) – one course

Students will take Eng-W 131 to fulfill this requirement. This course will address the basics of grammar, style, sentence construction, organization, the process of writing after inquiry and reflection, rewriting multiple drafts, and working with others.

Oral and Interpersonal Communication (3 cr.) – one course

Students will normally take Spch-S 121 to fulfill this requirement, though students who take Spch-S 122 Interpersonal Communication will also count as fulfilling this requirement. Both courses will require students to study effective means of communication, to reflect on how they communicate with others, prepare oral presentations in which they communicate effectively, and learn confidence, poise, and clarity in speaking.

Quantitative Literacy (3 cr.) – one course

This will be an introductory-level course in which students learn to apply mathematical methods to real-life cases; it should include basic algebra, statistics, and show how these relate to and help solve common problems. Students will learn that math is not just calculation but a means of understanding and solving problems. These courses can adopt a theme or issue around which to focus and organize the course.

Information Literacy (1 cr.) – one course;

This course must be taken in freshman year (<30 credit hours); transfer students coming in with >30 credit hours are exempt. It should be linked with other courses in this category, e.g., courses in critical thinking or written or oral communication. This course will concentrate on how information can be found, assessed, organized, and used for practical purposes, using present-day technologies, e.g., computers and the Internet. Students should learn to distinguish reliable and unreliable sources, and make ethical use of sources.

Additional Requirements for Students with Special Needs or Status

(a) All students must pass a basic computer literacy test upon admission. Students who do not pass the computer literacy test upon admission must take **Csci-A 101 Basic Computer Literacy** (a new 1-credit-hour course), in addition to those listed above. This 1-credit course will cover the following basic skills:

Computer hardware

- Basic hardware: Mouse, keyboard, CPU, hard drive, monitor, touchscreens
- Removable storage (CDs, DVDs, jump drives, etc.)

Computer software

- Using word-processing programs (cut-and-paste, copying text, formatting text, dealing with lists for varying types, saving documents, using spelling, grammar check, and word count, adjusting font size, margins, indentation, switching between different views (normal, outline, etc.), inserting pictures, tables, footnotes)
- Using presentation software (creating slides, adding text to slides and formatting it, moving slides around/reorganizing, adding pictures, charts, tables, etc.)
- Using basic spreadsheets (creating a table of numbers, doing sums and averages, creating a calendar, budget, how to find formulas)

Other basic computer skills

- Getting email attachments, creating attachments
- Finding a web page from an address
- Using a search engine (Google, etc.)
- Using cloud storage (e.g., IU Box)

Csci-A 101 is intended as a refresher course, providing skills for students who do not have the basic capability to use computers at a level of proficiency that is expected of current high school graduates. The basic skills listed above are deemed necessary for students to complete their work successfully at IU South Bend.

(b) Students who are not qualified for Eng-W 131 must take **Eng-W 130 Principles of Composition** before taking Eng-W 131 or any other writing course.

(c) Students who are admitted conditionally as new students must take **Educ-U 100 Threshold Seminar: The Craft and Culture of Higher Education** in their freshman year.

Additional Requirements for All Students:

First-Year Seminar: All students admitted with <30 credit hours, whether new students or transfer students, must take at least one core course with the designation "First-Year Seminar" (FYS). Students transferring in with >30 credit hours are exempt from this requirement.

Community Engagement: Students must take at least one course tagged as having a "Community Engagement" component.

3. Personal and Social Responsibility (8 cr.)

Intercultural Knowledge (3 cr.) – one course

This course will concentrate on some substantive aspect of human or cultural diversity, either of global cultures or cultural diversity in the US. Students will learn how cultures differ, relate to each other, influence each other, and gain insight into the diversity of human culture in general, and struggles for equality and against oppression, subjugation, or discrimination. Emphasis will be given to minorities in the US or non-US cultures when courses have a global focus. Courses in this area can focus on a variety of aspects of culture, e.g., politics, religion, art, etc. (Note: Since this is a LEAP essential learning outcome, there is a VALUE rubric for assessing it.)

Ethical Reasoning (3 cr.) – one course

This course will focus on how to reason about ethical issues, to understand the nuances of ethical issues and debates, to articulate an ethical point of view and to defend it, to understand general approaches to ethical questions and controversies, and to reflect on the ethical implications of one's decisions and actions.

This requirement can be satisfied by general courses in ethics, as long as they contain an applied ethical component, or by courses focusing on ethical issues in particular fields, so long as these deal with general ethical approaches in

addition to particular questions about right or wrong in that field. (The suggestions here are similar to those listed in the 3rd plan, which also includes this LEAP essential learning outcome.) This LEAP requirement also has a VALUE rubric for assessment purposes.

Nutrition and Health (1 cr.) – one course

This course will focus on basic information about nutrition and managing both physical and mental health. Students will learn to take responsibility for their own health and learn how to manage it intentionally and effectively.

Financial Literacy (1 cr.) – one course

This course will focus on effectively managing savings, debt, planning and budgeting, getting and paying off loans, and investing for the future, in a manner that is applicable to students' current and future needs.

Additional Requirements:

Community Engagement: As stated above, students must at least one course tagged as having a "Community Engagement" component. In addition to the courses listed above (e.g., the social sciences, arts, or humanities), this may occur as part of a course in Intercultural Knowledge.

Normally this will involve local engagement. However, it is also possible to have community engagement at a global or national level, e.g., with international programs that involve not just observation and interaction with another culture, but also service and commitment to action (e.g., by working for the International Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, etc.), or by volunteering time with a national civil rights organization. Students should be given opportunities to engage with communities at as many levels (local, state, national, international) as possible.

4. Integrative Learning

There are two levels of integrative learning in this draft General Education curriculum. First, the introductory courses that focus on knowledge in the natural and social sciences, arts, and humanities all are interdisciplinary in nature. Second, students will all take an upper-level integrative course, which integrates and reinforces knowledge and skills learned earlier, in a manner applicable to their chosen major.

Since these courses are all already part of the General Education curriculum, or count toward the student's major, they represent no additional credit hours.

Basic Knowledge Courses: All courses in category 1, whether they deal with the natural or social science, or the arts and humanities, are interdisciplinary in nature and hence integrate knowledge and insight from different disciplines.

Upper-level integrative Course: All students will take in their junior or senior year a 300- or 400-level course designated as an "upper-level integrative course." The purpose of this course is to integrate and reinforce skills learned in fundamental literacy classes taken earlier. This course may be a 300- or 400-level course that counts for the student's major. Alternatively, a unit may designate a course in another, related unit for this purpose. In either case, the key elements of the upper-level integrative course are as follows:

- The course must explicitly include learning outcomes from at least two of the fundamental literacies; thus, the course will be subject to General Education assessment based on the specified literacies chosen.
- Since they are not fundamental literacy courses per se, the general VALUE rubrics, intended for cross-disciplinary use, will be used to evaluate them. (So, e.g., the AAC&U's writing rubric will be used, if writing is a reinforced literacy, even if this VALUE rubric is not used for assessing Eng-W 131.)
- Instructors should strive to inculcate higher-level performance on these fundamental literacies, as specified in the rubrics, and should explicitly build on what students have learned earlier in their fundamental literacy courses.
- Given the above, the course will have as prerequisites that students have completed the relevant fundamental literacy courses before taking the upper-level integrative course.
- The course must involve teamwork and group projects.
- The course should focus on problem-solving at key points, where students have to generate their own solutions and strategies, rather than following a pre-set procedure learned by rote.

Draft Plan 3 – The "Flexible Choice" Plan

Rationale:

This plan is generated from the LEAP framework, like Draft Plan 2; however, it focuses on a traditional distribution requirements model at the lower level with respect to areas of knowledge, and also builds in broader student choice for a number of other categories. This makes this model disjunctive in nature. Integrative and interdisciplinary work remains in the elements of the curriculum described under "IV. Integrative Learning" at the end, via the upper-level integrative course.

The overall emphasis of this model is to give students a very wide set of choices for many of the requirements (hence, the "flexible choice" name). This has the added benefit of giving faculty a wide latitude for creating courses that fulfill General Education requirements.

Of all the draft plans, this one provides students with the easiest route for transferring classes from other institutions for General Education purposes. This is a plus for students; however, since it uses traditional introductory courses in the disciplines to accomplish this, it presents its own challenges as well (e.g., competition from online courses offered by other IU regional campuses).

Note that this draft plan is the only one that includes neither community engagement nor any sort of health requirement. Also, it is the only plan lacking interdisciplinarity at the lower level—although this is included as part of the upper-level integrative course this time. (Whether this is feasible for a class also counting for a major is a matter to discuss.)

That said, here are the particular details of the "Flexible Choice" draft plan:

The General Education Curriculum (34 credit hours total):

This sample plan addresses the most pressing concerns and priorities expressed by faculty and students, and is generated directly by our commitment to the LEAP framework, particularly its essential learning outcomes and recommended high-impact practices. The entire plan thus (like Draft 2) has the same organization as the LEAP essential outcomes published by the AAC&U. This includes:

- I. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world**
 - Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts
- II. Intellectual and practical skills**
 - Inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving
- III. Personal and social responsibility**
 - Civic knowledge and engagement (local and global), intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundational skills for life
- IV. Integrative learning**
 - Synthesis and advanced accomplishment in advancing knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Goals of the General Education Curriculum

This campuswide general-education curriculum is composed of eight goals, based on the LEAP framework outlined in the previous section, and organized in much the same way (though there is a difference in category III). The goals are as follows:

- I. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world**
 - **Knowledge of Human Cultures** – Students will obtain broad knowledge of human nature, societies, and history, through study in the (a) social sciences, (b) arts, and (c) humanities.
 - **Knowledge of the Physical and Natural World** – Students will obtain broad knowledge of the physical and natural world, through study in the natural sciences.
- II. Intellectual and practical skills**
 - **Critical Thinking** – Students will gain the general skills needed to think and reason logically, to reflect on and articulate their own reasoning, to understand the nature of evidence and properly assess evidential support, and to analyze and solve real-world problems.

- **Communication** – Students will be able to communicate effectively both in writing and orally, in public and interpersonally, using appropriate visual materials, and to work effectively in teams and groups.
- **Quantitative Literacy** – Students will have basic mathematical skills and appreciation for statistical concepts and methods, and be able to apply these not only to pre-given calculations, but generally, to real-world situations and problems described in prose.
- **Information Literacy** – Students will be aware of how information is gathered, assessed, and disseminated, and will be able to find, judge, select, and use information effectively, using the technologies of the 21st century.

III. Social responsibility

- **Intercultural knowledge and competence** – Students will have knowledge of and sensitivity to diverse global cultures and to racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity in the United States.
- **Ethical reasoning** – Students will be able to make well-reasoned ethical judgments and decisions.

IV. Integrative learning

- The knowledge, skills, and responsibilities outlined above will be applied in increasingly advanced settings and involve synthesis of multiple approaches and disciplines.

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World (12 cr.)

This will be fulfilled by the student taking one course in each of the following areas. These courses are chosen from among the standard introductory courses in the disciplines. Students should be free to take any such course on an approved list, as they wish, as long as the overall distribution is fulfilled. The General Education Committee will approve courses for this list.

It will be assumed that a student who majors in a discipline in one of these areas automatically fulfills the distribution requirements for that area, even if they do not take an introductory-level course on this list, but do take other, more advanced courses in that area, that meet requirements for their major.

The Social Sciences (3 cr.) – one course

Students should take a standard introductory-level course in one of the social sciences. The social sciences in this case are understood to include sociology, psychology, archeology, anthropology, political science, economics, and criminal justice. These courses must pay explicit attention to the general rules governing the scientific method and the evaluation of evidence. Examples would include (but are not limited to):

Anth-A 105 Human Origins and Prehistory or Anth-E 105 Culture and Society
Pols-Y 103 Introduction to American Politics or Pols-Y 107 Introduction to Comparative Politics
Psy-P 103 General Psychology
Soc-S 161 Principles of Sociology
Wgs-W 100 Gender Studies

The Arts (3 cr.) – one course

Students should take a standard introductory-level course in one of the arts. The arts in this case are understood to include music, the visual arts, theatre, and film. These courses must pay explicit attention to aesthetic judgment, interpretation and analysis of art, and the process of creating works of art. Examples would include (but are not limited to):

Cmlt-C 190 Introduction to Film
Fina-A 101 Ancient and Medieval Art or Fina-A 102 Renaissance through Modern Art
Mus-M 111 Music Literature or Mus-M 174 Music for the Listener
Thtr-T 100 Introduction to Theatre (*)

The Humanities (3 cr.) – one course

Students should take a standard introductory-level course in one of the humanities. The humanities in this case are understood to include literature, philosophy, religious studies, and history. These courses must pay explicit attention to the interpretation of primary texts, historical interpretation and analysis, or the development and critique of important ideas that contribute to human culture and self-understanding. Examples would include (but are not limited to):

Eng-L 111 Discovering Literature (*)
Hist-H 105 American History I or Hist-H 105 American History II or Hist-H 113 History of Western Civilization 1 or Hist-H 114 History of Western Civilization 2

Phil-P 100 Introduction to Philosophy

Rel-R 152 Jews, Christians, Muslims or Rel-R 153 Religions of Asia or Rel-R 160 Introduction to Religion in America

The Natural Sciences and Mathematics (3 cr.) – one course

Students should take a standard introductory-level course in one of the natural sciences. The natural sciences in this case are understood to include physics, astronomy, geology, chemistry, and biology. Natural science courses must pay explicit attention to the general rules governing the scientific method and the evaluation of evidence. In addition, a natural sciences course must make substantive use of mathematics and its application to scientific reasoning.

Examples would include (but are not limited to):

Ast-A 105 Stars and Galaxies (*)

Biol-L 100 Humans and the Biological World or Biol-L 101 Introduction to Biological Sciences 1

Chem-C 101 Elementary Chemistry 1 or Chem-C 105 Principles of Chemistry I

Geol-G 111 Physical Geology or Geol-G 112 Historical Geology or Geol-T 106 Earth and Space Science for Elementary Teachers

Phsl-P 130 Human Biology

Phys-P 101 Physics in the Modern World (*) or Phys-P Basic Physics of Sound (*) or Phys-P 199 Physical Science through Inquiry (*)

2. Intellectual and Practical Skills (13 cr.)

These courses are intended to be **foundational**. Accordingly, students are required to take the following courses before the junior year. No student with more than 60 credit hours will be allowed to enroll in any other class until these requirements are all met. (Students who transfer in with more than 60 credit hours however will be understood to have fulfilled all their fundamental literacies.) In addition, since they are foundational, all courses in this group must be introductory level, and have no prerequisites, except when students are admitted with insufficient background (such as poor writing skills).

Because of the general importance of these skills, specific foundational classes are needed in which explicit instruction is given on the appropriate principles and techniques, and students are required to consciously and purposely apply them, and reflect on how they are doing so.

The learning outcomes associated with fundamental courses in these skills will address the basic level; but these skills, being complex, general, and nuanced, cannot be learned in one course. Thus, upper-level integrative courses, within specific units, will build on these basic skills and move students toward increasingly advanced levels, in ways that address particularly how these skills relate to their disciplines.

Critical Thinking (3 cr.) – one course

This will be a course in which students explicitly reflect on and analyze how they reason, study and apply general rules for good reasoning, and apply these to general problems and issues from everyday life. These courses can also adopt a theme or issue around which to focus and organize the course (e.g., contemporary political controversies). In addition, courses at the 200-level in specific majors that fulfill the learning outcomes for critical thinking can count.

Courses that fulfill this requirement would include:

Phil-P 105 Critical Thinking or Psy-P 1xx Psychology of Human Reasoning (*) or Spch-S 1xx Argument and Persuasion (*) or Pols-Y 1xx Controversies in American Politics (*) or ...

(In addition to these 100-level courses, there would here be a list of 200-level major courses that focus on critical thinking, analysis, problem-solving, etc., in a manner generally applicable outside the major, as well as to the major itself. To count as such, these upper-level courses must explicitly include critical thinking learning outcomes in their syllabus and will be assessed using the AAC&U's Critical Thinking VALUE rubric.)

Communication (6 cr.) – two courses

Students must take Eng-W 131 as part of fulfilling this requirement. This course will address the basics of grammar, style, sentence construction, organization, the process of writing after inquiry and reflection, rewriting multiple drafts, and working with others.

In addition to Eng-W 131, students will take one communications course from the following list:

Spch-S 121 Public Speaking

Spch-S 122 Interpersonal Communication

Comm-V 100 Communicating through Visual Media (*)

Quantitative Literacy (3 cr.) – one course

This will be an introductory-level course in which students learn to apply mathematical methods to real-life cases; it should include basic algebra, statistics, and show how these relate to and help solve common problems. Students will learn that math is not just calculation but a means of understanding and solving problems. These courses can adopt a theme or issue around which to focus and organize the course.

Information Literacy (1 cr.) – one course;

This course must be taken in freshman year (<30 credit hours); transfer students coming in with >30 credit hours are exempt. It should be linked with other courses in this category, e.g., courses in critical thinking or written or oral communication. This course will concentrate on how information can be found, assessed, organized, and used for practical purposes, using present-day technologies, e.g., computers and the Internet. Students should learn to distinguish reliable and unreliable sources, and make ethical use of sources.

Additional Requirements for Students with Special Needs or Status

(a) All students must pass a basic computer literacy test upon admission. Students who do not pass the computer literacy test upon admission must take **Csci-A 101 Basic Computer Literacy** (a new 1-credit-hour course), in addition to those listed above. This 1-credit course will cover the following basic skills:

Computer hardware

- Basic hardware: Mouse, keyboard, CPU, hard drive, monitor, touchscreens
- Removable storage (CDs, DVDs, jump drives, etc.)

Computer software

- Using word-processing programs (cut-and-paste, copying text, formatting text, dealing with lists for varying types, saving documents, using spelling, grammar check, and word count, adjusting font size, margins, indentation, switching between different views (normal, outline, etc.), inserting pictures, tables, footnotes)
- Using presentation software (creating slides, adding text to slides and formatting it, moving slides around/reorganizing, adding pictures, charts, tables, etc.)
- Using basic spreadsheets (creating a table of numbers, doing sums and averages, creating a calendar, budget, how to find formulas)

Other basic computer skills

- Getting email attachments, creating attachments
- Finding a web page from an address
- Using a search engine (Google, etc.)
- Using cloud storage (e.g., IU Box)

Csci-A 101 is intended as a refresher course, providing skills for students who do not have the basic capability to use computers at a level of proficiency that is expected of current high school graduates. The basic skills listed above are deemed necessary for students to complete their work successfully at IU South Bend.

(b) Students who are not qualified for Eng-W 131 must take **Eng-W 130 Principles of Composition** before taking Eng-W 131 or any other writing course.

(c) Students who are admitted conditionally as new students must take **Educ-U 100 Threshold Seminar: The Craft and Culture of Higher Education** in their freshman year.

Additional Requirement for All Students:

First-Year Seminar: All students admitted with <30 credit hours, whether new students or transfer students, must take at least one course dealing with essential knowledge or skills with the designation "First-Year Seminar" (FYS). Students transferring in with >30 credit hours are exempt from this requirement.

3. Social Responsibility (9 cr.)

Intercultural Knowledge (6 cr.) – two courses, one in each of the following: Contemporary Global Cultures (3 cr.)

(This replaces "non-Western cultures" with "contemporary global cultures." The focus should be on contemporary cultures other than the United States. This could include courses in recent non-US history, courses on recent and current global political or social movements or events, macroeconomics (of a global nature), and other categories. International or study abroad courses could be included, depending on their focus.)

Diversity in US Society (3 cr.)

(This is essentially the same as at present, focusing on non-dominant, minority cultures in the US.)

(Each of these would include a list of many courses that currently count toward either non-Western cultures or Diversity in US Society. In general, students should have a wide range of choices in this area, consistent with the "flexible choice" focus.)

Ethical Reasoning (3 cr.) – one course

This course will focus on how to reason about ethical issues, to understand the nuances of ethical issues and debates, to articulate an ethical point of view and to defend it, to understand general approaches to ethical questions and controversies, and to reflect on the ethical implications of one's decisions and actions.

This requirement can be satisfied by general courses in ethics (e.g., Phil-P 140 Introduction to Ethics), as long as they contain an applied ethical component, or by courses focusing on ethical issues in particular fields or programs, so long as these deal with general ethical approaches in addition to particular questions about right or wrong in that field.

For example: "Ethical reasoning classes" at Harvard University include courses on Human Rights, Political Justice and Political Trials, Race and Social Justice, a course called "Ethics, Biotechnology, and the Future of Human Nature," Equality and Liberty, and many others. Other courses that could count would include Medical Ethics or Bioethics courses, courses in Business Ethics, and many other such classes.

Since these courses will be quite diverse, the AAC&U's VALUE rubric for Ethical Reasoning will be useful for assessment purposes, since the VALUE rubrics are designed to be general, and not specific to disciplines.

As for Intercultural Knowledge, students should have a wide range of choices in this area.

4. Integrative Learning

Upper-level integrative Course: All students will take in their junior or senior year a 300- or 400-level course designated as an "upper-level integrative course." The purpose of this course is to integrate and reinforce skills learned in fundamental literacy classes taken earlier. This course may be a 300- or 400-level course that counts for the student's major. Alternatively, a unit may designate another course for this purpose. In either case, the key elements of the upper-level integrative course are as follows:

- The course must explicitly include learning outcomes from at least two of the fundamental literacies; thus, the course will be subject to General Education assessment based on the specified literacies chosen.
- Since they are not fundamental literacy courses per se, the general VALUE rubrics, intended for cross-disciplinary use, will be used to evaluate them. (So, e.g., the AAC&U's writing rubric will be used, if writing is a reinforced literacy, even if this VALUE rubric is not used for assessing Eng-W 131.)
- Instructors should strive to inculcate higher-level performance on these fundamental literacies, as specified in the rubrics, and should explicitly build on what students have learned earlier in their fundamental literacy courses.
- Given the above, the course will have as prerequisites that students have completed the relevant fundamental literacy courses before taking the upper-level integrative course.
- The course must involve teamwork and group projects.
- The course should focus on problem-solving at key points, where students have to generate their own solutions and strategies, rather than following a pre-set procedure learned by rote.
- The course should be interdisciplinary in nature, and explicitly combine and integrate different disciplines into the group and team activities, demonstrating how different approaches are needed to solve problems.

The Essential Learning Outcomes



Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

★ Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

★ Personal and Social Responsibility, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

★ Integrative Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (2002), *Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree* (2004), and *Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Achievement in College* (2005). *Liberal Education Outcomes* is available online at www.aacu.org/leap.