

A New University Studies Framework: Principles, Outcomes and Structure

Faculty Senate General Education Council
November 20, 2008

Agenda

Overview (Jean Levitan)

1. Mission, Purpose
 2. Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum
- Questions/discussion

Goals and Framework (John Peterman)

1. Four areas of focus
 2. Student learning outcomes
 3. Proposed Framework
- Questions/discussion

Going Forward (Jean Levitan and John Peterman)

Members of the General Education Council will take notes during the questions/discussion period.

University Studies: An Integrated Approach to General Education at William Paterson University



“The William Paterson University of New Jersey mission incorporates teaching, research and creative activity, and service. It promotes student success, academic excellence, and community outreach with opportunities for lifelong learning. “We seek to “actively challenge students to high levels of intellectual and professional accomplishment and personal growth in preparation for careers, advanced studies, and productive citizenship in an increasingly global economy and technological world.”
(Excerpted from the University Mission Statement)

University Studies

The concept of University Studies embraces a view of general education as an essential component of undergraduate studies fully integrated with a student's major. The University Studies Curriculum represents a holistic approach to undergraduate education establishing clear connections between the foundational skills, knowledge and perspectives of general education courses and the student's major/minor. University studies courses will incorporate both the development and the application of personal skills for a global world thereby encouraging a commitment to ongoing intellectual growth and participation.

(Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum, September 2008)

Purpose

The University Studies Program at William Paterson seeks to develop graduates who are informed, critical thinkers empowered by the knowledge, skills and dispositions essential to life-long learning. William Paterson graduates are global citizens, engaged with their communities and the world.

University Studies courses share common approaches to learning, using active learning whenever possible to enable students to make connections between theory and practice. Interdisciplinary approaches provide an opportunity for exploration of potential majors or to explore connections outside of an intended major. Frequent practices of key skills as outlined in the student learning outcomes provide the abilities needed for success both in the university and in students' careers and life-long learning.

Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum

1st
Area

Connectivity and integration over four years

- University Studies will underlie and connect the entire undergraduate curriculum
- Skills are developed across all four undergraduate years and explicitly continued in the major
- Skills and content of University Studies courses will be explicitly connected to large areas of development: Effective Communication, Critical Reasoning, Global Perceptions and Skills, and Personal and Social Responsibility
- Structure of the curriculum will promote connections of both skills and course content through clusters, linked courses, preparation for research, common experiences

Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum

2nd
Area

Special attention on the first year

- First year seminar will be a 3 credit academic course and a signature course using interdisciplinary approaches to a topic or issue of interest to the faculty
- Courses will clearly distinguish university versus high school approaches to learning
- 1st year courses will be predominately small in size and designed to promote meaningful academic relationships
- All freshman will have a significant academic experiences with fulltime faculty members
- Provide incentives for more full-time faculty to teach 1st year courses.

Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum

Types of Pedagogy and Courses

3rd
Area

- Transparent and intentional learning - purpose of and connections between courses must be clear to students
- Use of disciplinary skills and content to inform and support but less emphasis on introduction to a major courses
- Interdisciplinary approaches will be encouraged
- Experiential approaches will be considered
- Themes, approaches and desired outcomes of University Studies will be integrated with the co-curricular experiences when possible

Working Principles for a Revised Common Curriculum

Structure & Implementation

4th
Area

- Reduction in the number of general education courses
- University Studies courses will provide both choice and structured experiences
- There will be some flexibility for students and majors in terms of how they meet University Studies requirements
- No faculty or departments will be eliminated
- Assessment components will need to be developed based on the revised program

Goals

William Paterson University Studies Program prepares students for

1. Effective Communication
2. Critical Reasoning
3. Demonstrating Global Perceptions and Skills
4. Personal and Social Responsibility

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Effective Communication	Critical Reasoning	Global Perceptions and Skills	Personal and Social Responsibility
	1 st Year Fall				
	1 st year Spring				
	2 nd Year Fall				
	2 nd Year Spring				
University Studies Applications in Major or Selected by Major	Junior				
	Senior				

Learning Outcomes (Draft)

Effective communication

Acquire the intellectual and practical skills essential to effective communication

Students will be able to

- A. Communicate effectively suitable to topic, purpose, and audience
- B. Use writing effectively to discover and develop ideas and to articulate positions in contexts of increasing complexity
- C. Make rhetorical decisions appropriate to topic, purpose, and audience while correctly using the conventions of standard written English and professional organizations.
- D. Determine the scope of information needed in specific research contexts and successfully identify, locate, evaluate, use, and communicate information from appropriate media
- E. Maintain and make use of an electronic portfolio of papers and artifacts from the college career
- F. Demonstrate ability to work collaboratively in diverse settings

Learning Outcomes (Draft)

Critical reasoning

Use analytical, critical and creative thinking abilities necessary to engage in problem solving across disciplines and interdisciplinary perspectives

Students will be able to

- A. Construct persuasive arguments in increasingly complex contexts
- B. Successfully integrate disparate concepts and information when interpreting, solving problems, evaluating, creating, and making decisions
- C. Examine and evaluate how their own personal, historical, and cultural perspectives affect the discovery and generation of knowledge
- D. Recognize, differentiate, and effectively employ appropriate and increasingly sophisticated strategies to collect and interpret information
- E. Apply theories from a variety of disciplines and advance convincing reasons to connect as well as differentiate theories from different domains of knowledge.

Learning Outcomes (Draft)

Critical reasoning, continued

F. Be able to use scientific principles in making and critiquing arguments.

G. Be able to use methods of interpretation in making and critiquing arguments.

H. Be able to use college-level quantitative concepts and methods in arguments.

I. Be able to use social science principles in making and critiquing arguments.

J. Select and use hardware, software applications, databases, and other technologies effectively for both inquiry and communication

K. Read actively and analytically at the college level and synthesize and apply information and ideas from their reading across disciplines

Learning Outcomes (Draft)

Demonstrate global perceptions and skills

Value and demonstrate the skills and understandings essential for success in a global society

Students will be able to

- A. Employ a foreign language to communicate with others.
- B. Be literate about a variety of global concerns and be able to articulate a clear account of the issues involved.
- C. Understand some of the historical, political, economic and other cultural conditions behind some of today's global issues.
- D. Articulate comparative cultural structures, systems and artifacts. between the United States and at least one other region of the world.
- E. Apply intercultural knowledge and competencies in addressing issues in the major discipline or profession.
- F. Employ appropriate and increasingly sophisticated means for communicating with people of other cultures.

Learning Outcomes (Draft)

Demonstrate personal and social responsibility

Exhibit competencies, attitudes and behaviors indicative of self-knowledge, integrity and commitment to personal and professional development as a life-long process

Students will be able to

- A. Identify potential consequences that personal choices as well as political, economic, and other social forces may have on individual, societal, and environmental health
- B. Apply moral reasoning skills to an array of ethical issues confronted by individuals, groups, and communities
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues related to gender, ethnic and cultural diversity in the United States and other areas of the world
- D. Apply principles of responsible community membership within and beyond the campus community
- E. Better understand how the human body works; Recognize and practice healthy lifestyles
- F. Converse about aesthetic issues in art, literature or music

Proposed Sequences for University Studies and the Development of Skills and Knowledge across the Curriculum

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Effective Communication (5 courses plus portfolio)
	1 st Year Fall	University Writing
	1 st year Spring	Writing Intensive Course
	2 nd Year Fall	Writing or communication intensive
University Studies Applications in Major or Selected by Major	Junior	Writing or communication intensive
	Senior	Writing or communication intensive

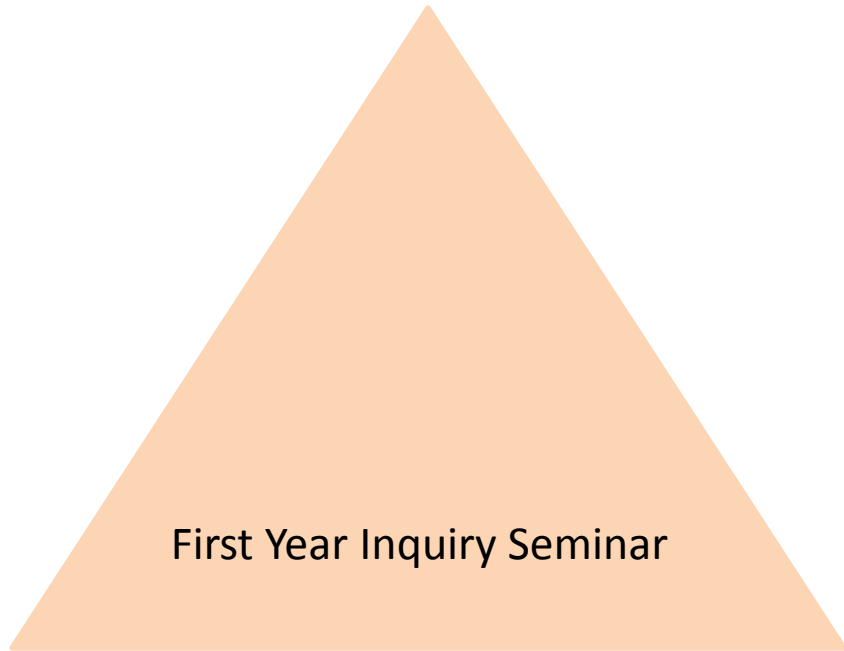
Effective Communication

Proposed Sequences for University Studies and the Development of Skills and Knowledge across the Curriculum

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Critical Reasoning (7 courses)
	1 st Year Fall	1 st year Inquiry Seminar Critical Reasoning 1
	1 st year Spring	Critical Reasoning 2
	2 nd Year Fall	Critical Reasoning 3
	2 nd Year Spring	Critical Reasoning 4
University Studies Applications in the Major or Selected by the Major	Junior	Applied Research in Major or directed by major
	Senior	Capstone in major or interdisciplinary

Critical Reasoning

First Year Inquiry Seminar: Foundation Course for Critical Reasoning



First Year Inquiry Seminar

- Based on faculty's academic interest
- Students select by their interests
- Foundation for critical reasoning
- Introduction to college level studies
- Intellectually challenging and exciting
- Encourage clustering and linking
- Opportunity to introduce students to a major

Examples from several institutions

The Right to Childhood: Global Efforts and Challenges (UNC)

Baseball and American Culture (Ramapo)

Exploring Race and Identity (Michigan-Dearborn)

Science and the 21st Century (TCNJ)

Sherlock Holmes to CSI: Forensic Science in Law and Media (Gettysburg)

Touchstone Texts: Patterns of Culture (William Paterson, 1979)

Proposed Sequences for University Studies and the Development of Skills and Knowledge across the Curriculum

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Global Abilities (4 courses Plus 0 to 6 language)
	1 st Year Fall	Foreign language and its culture
	1 st year Spring	Foreign language Foundations for understanding global issues
	2 nd Year Fall	
	2 nd Year Spring	Intercultural : US-Other comparisons
University Studies Applications In Major or Selected by Major	Junior	Non-western issues & perspectives
	Senior	Global Perspectives in major or directed by major

Global
Perceptions and
Skills

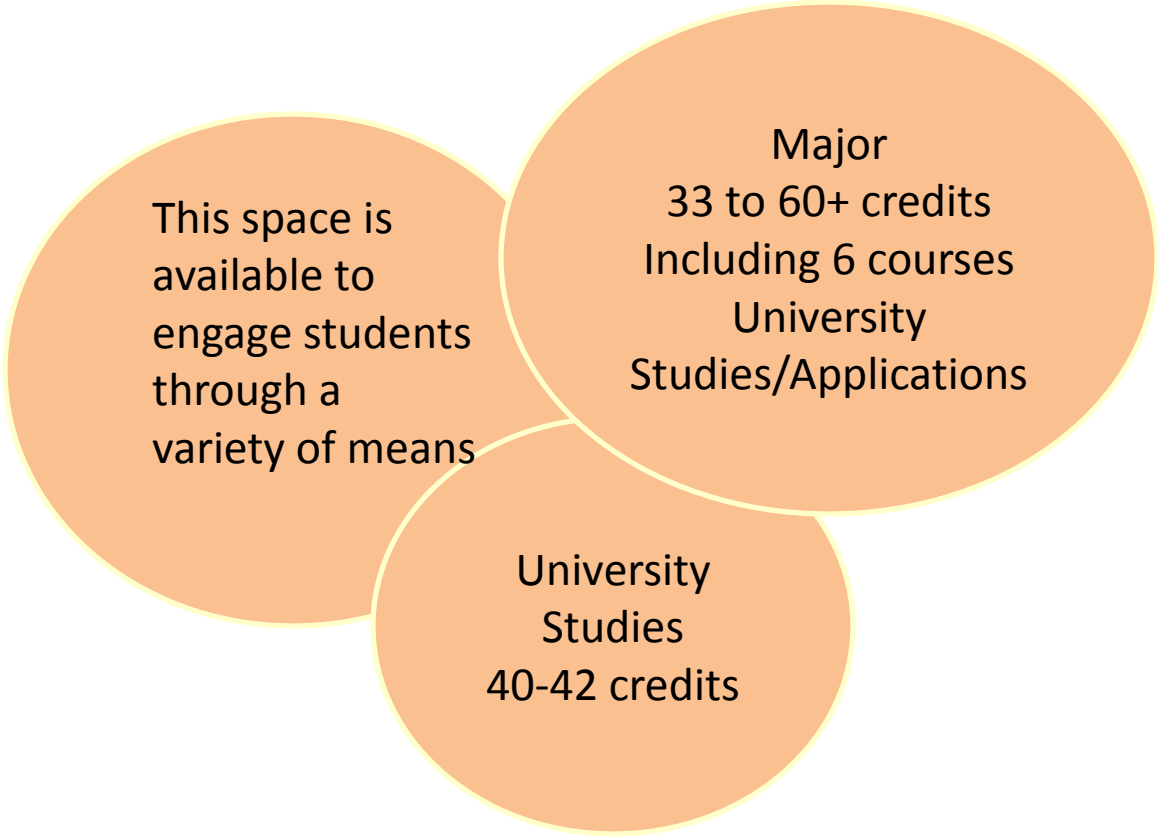
Proposed Sequences for University Studies and the Development of Skills and Knowledge across the Curriculum

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Personal and Social Responsibility (4 courses)
	1 st Year Fall	Healthy body
	1 st year Spring	Aesthetic Appreciation
	2 nd Year Fall	Diversity
University Studies Applications in Major or Selected by Major	Junior	Ethical Issues in major, choices as directed by major
	Senior	Experiential: Internship, service learning, study abroad, student teaching

Personal and Social Responsibility

Proposed Sequences for University Studies and the Development of Skills & Knowledge across the Curriculum

University Studies Foundations	Skill Area	Effective Communication	Critical Reasoning	Global Perceptions and Skills	Personal and Social Responsibility
	1 st Year Fall	University Writing	1 st year Inquiry Seminar Critical Reasoning 1 Clusters and links	Foreign language and its culture	Healthy body
	1 st year Spring	Writing Intensive Course	Critical Reasoning 2	Foreign language Foundations for understanding global issues	Aesthetic Appreciation (or 2 nd year)
	2 nd Year Fall	Writing or communication intensive (or Spring)	Critical Reasoning 3		Diversity (or Spring)
	2 nd Year Spring		Critical Reasoning 4 One each: Science, Quantitative, Humanities , Social Science	Intercultural US-Other comparison (or Fall)	
University Studies Applications in Major or Selected by Major	Junior	Writing or communication intensive	Applied Research in Major or directed by major	Non-western issues & perspectives	Ethical Issues in major, choices as directed by major
	Senior	Writing or communication intensive	Capstone in major or interdisciplinary	Global Perspectives in major or directed by major	Experiential , Internship, service learning, study abroad, student teaching



This space is
available to
engage students
through a
variety of means

Major
33 to 60+ credits
Including 6 courses
University
Studies/Applications

University
Studies
40-42 credits

Going Forward

- GE Council asks that the framework be discussed within departments
- GE Co-chairs and Council members are available to discuss any aspect of GE revision with colleges, departments, individuals, and groups
- GE Forum December 11, 2008 : Open discussion of Framework
Please email suggestions before Forum if possible
- January/February Discussions: Four Fridays: January 23 & 30, February 6 & 13
-How do I fit into the new curriculum? What can I contribute?
- GE Forum on implementation February 19, 2009 (tentative)
- Final Proposal due to Faculty Senate, March 15, 2009.