

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC 1

Liberal Arts Core Implementation Proposal **Introduction**

This implementation strategy follows the recommendations the Curriculum Review Task Force (CRTF) submitted to the UNC Asheville Faculty Senate in March of 2013. Thus, the description that follows details that committee's original task, how the CRTF arrived at its conclusions, why a new Liberal Arts Core general education architecture is being introduced, and how the Liberal Arts Core is designed to replace the current Integrative Liberal Studies curriculum by the fall semester of 2014. While all current students will then be shifted to Liberal Arts Core curriculum, those students who declared majors under catalogs with ILS requirements may still elect to graduate under the ILS curriculum. While this APC document addresses the implementation of general education reforms, future APC documents will address the remaining areas that complete the full CRTF curriculum reform proposal, including adjustments in departmental and program-area requirements.

This document outlines the curricular reform actions recommended by roughly sixty dedicated colleagues of the Curriculum Review Task Force (CRTF), led by Volker Frank, and derived after extensive research, discussion, and collaborative decision-making. By offering a concrete plan and the operational procedures necessary for preparing the appropriate APC and Faculty Senate documents, this proposal aims to articulate the proposed changes to follow.

Through a collaborative process, current APC and CRTF members have worked together to understand the well-documented CRTF information-gathering process. We have listened to its members and their wide range of perspectives and followed closely the ultimate CRTF recommendations. In addition, key UNC Asheville leaders and administrators have been consulted about the implementation of the recommended changes.

Purpose of the Liberal Arts Core Implementation Proposal

The Liberal Arts Core Implementation Proposal aims to create a sustainable UNC Asheville general curricular framework based upon the CRTF recommendations. No one who served on the CRTF believes the CRTF work aspired to a kind of Platonic ideal or achieved an Aristotelian "Golden Mean." Instead, after working together, often for long hours with great passion and many times at odds with one another, the CRTF sought compromise and consensus. The final CRTF recommendations and their subsequent implementation in the Liberal Arts Core proposal are not radical. Instead, they reflect hours of negotiations and difficult concessions made under enormous pressure by a group dedicated to finding solutions to pressing concerns.

By bringing together the collective thinking and documents of the CRTF, the Academic Policies Committee has tried to be faithful to the CRTF's vision, its willingness to adapt, change, rethink, and compromise. It is our hope that the campus community will respect the collective wisdom this document represents. It did not emerge *ex nihilo*. Rather, it synthesizes agreed-upon CRTF documents, resolutions, the committee's final rationale and recommendations, and hours of conversations with CRTF members, deans, department chairs, and administrators. This report then proposes a concrete means of implementing curricular change quickly and efficiently.

Course Catalog Audience

One of the first issues to consider when the writing began was the audience. To whom were the ultimate curricular changes and catalog copy to speak when we articulated the scope, goals, and purpose of the shared curriculum? The CRTF addressed this concern many times and always kept the UNC Asheville community, the general public, the University of North Carolina, and the North Carolina leadership in mind. Thus, in drafting this document, the following audience members and their needs were considered:

- The UNC Asheville community, its faculty, staff, students, alumni, and administrative personnel;
- Members of the public at large;
- Members of the UNC Asheville Board of Trustees;
- Members of the UNC Board of Governors;
- Members of the legislature of the state of North Carolina;
- Other UNC post-secondary institutions;
- Other post-secondary institutions across the country and around the world;

- Secondary institutions in the U.S. and around the world;
- Prospective students;
- Prospective parents;
- Prospective donors;
- Prospective hires, visitors, guests, and speakers.

As this audience with divergent needs was considered, it seemed wise to include a common language that could speak to the world outside our campus and address the state and nation's current articulations and expectations about the learning experience. APC sought especially to convey *what* differentiates UNC Asheville from the rest of the sixteen campuses in the UNC system, *how* UNC Asheville accomplishes and assesses its unique mission and recently revised student learning outcomes, and *why* the skills and capabilities UNC Asheville values have real-world, graduate school, and professional equation, and the myriad ways that UNC Asheville helps create informed citizens and lifelong learners.

Language for this document was culled from a variety of sources, including but not limited to several of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences publications: The Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences' June 19, 2013 report, *The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences for a Vibrant, Competitive, and Secure Nation*; the same Commission's *Humanities Report Card*; and the AA's monograph *Science and the Educated American: A Core Component of Liberal Education*. Language from the UNC Asheville Mission Statement and the UNC Asheville Student Learning Outcomes has been employed throughout, along with language adopted from the UNC Board of Governors strategic directions document, *Our Time, Our Future: The UNC Compact with North Carolina (Strategic Directions for 2013-2018)*. Incorporating this language has meant reaching a broader audience but not sacrificing the content, intent, meaning, purpose, aims, or substance of the past two years of curricular revision work. It is our hope that by employing common language, this proposal will be one of the many partnerships and initiatives with which "we fulfill our public responsibility to address the needs of our community through a continuum of learning . . . [evinced by] a commitment to continuing service characterized by an informed, responsible, and creative engagement with the Asheville area, the southern Appalachian region, the state of North Carolina, and a diverse and increasingly connected world" (UNC Asheville Mission Statement).

Fall 2013 APC Proposal Review Process, Consensus, and Plan for Implementation

On Thursday, October 24, 2013, the Academic Policies Committee (APC) discussed, amended, and edited a curricular plan created by a joint group of APC and CRTF members. Reaching a consensus, APC feels confident in proceeding with the compilation of the larger documents needed for the implementation of the proposed curriculum revision. Over the weeks that follow, APC will compile all the remaining documents, catalog changes, and catalog copy needed to implement the curricular changes proposed and then submit these to the Faculty Senate for its reading, discussion, and consideration.

CRTF Review Process and the Urgent Need for Curricular Reform

When it first met, the CRTF was informed that the current climate of dwindling resources and increased UNC-sanctioned "incentives" tied to retention and matriculation rates meant that UNC Asheville could not sustain the current curriculum. A 15 October 2013 letter from Provost Jane Fernandes to the Faculty Senate explains the historical context and urgent need for curriculum reform in three key areas of "Affordability," "CRTF Considerations," and "Students and Graduation." APC feels it is important to quote the Provost's letter in full for this official record. Further, many of the statistics to which the Provost refers can be found in tables at the end of this document.¹

1 See the tables at the end of this document: General Education Oversight (Faculty Workload) Comparison; Maximum Current Liberal Studies Program Required Hours (Fall 2011); The Current Status of Clusters and Current Students (11 October 2013).

**15 October 2013 Letter from Provost Jane Fernandes
(Statistics Compiled by Academic Affairs)**

Affordability

In my view, UNC Asheville's curriculum is not sustainable in its current form. Even before the economic decline, our curriculum was already too much for our faculty to deliver. We relied quite heavily on adjuncts to teach required curriculum and even then departments struggled each semester to meet the student demand for courses needed to graduate.

In 2010, due to UNC system-wide budget cuts, we lost almost 9.5 faculty lines with their associated salary budget. With the additional loss of adjuncts upon whom we relied to deliver required curriculum, the total loss to the faculty salary budget was nearly \$1 million. These cuts are permanent. The positions and money associated with them will not be restored.

This fall, due to the enrollment growth process, we lost an additional 4.27 faculty lines with their associated budget of \$339,631, along with cuts to other academic areas. If we meet our enrollment growth targets in the coming years, we may be able to recover some of the 4.27 faculty lines we lost. On the other hand, not meeting the targets may result in even more loss.

Throughout these reductions, the curriculum has remained the same. The cuts that forced us to reduce faculty lines and adjuncts has led to an even greater struggle by departments to offer required courses, especially ILS, as frequently as needed. In 2012-13, adjuncts taught almost 20% of the Humanities or LS 479 classes. As of this writing, we are short of required Humanities sections for spring 2014.

Our budget for adjunct faculty is currently at the maximum level of affordability. In addition, all available faculty lines are currently filled. At this time, there is no possibility of new faculty positions.

Faculty Teaching Load

As the budget has declined, the faculty teaching load, as measured by the Delaware Study, has increased from the 2008 average of 3.67 courses per semester, to 2012 average of 4.38 courses per semester. Average teaching load is on an upward trend.

With our student headcount increasing gradually (about 200 more students between 2008 and 2013), faculty teaching load will continue to rise because the curriculum will have to be delivered with existing faculty resources. The proposed curricular changes, while only part of the solution to the problem we face, are an essential piece of a comprehensive approach to creating a humane overall faculty workload (used here comprehensively to cover teaching, scholarship, service, advising and administrative assignments). Work by FWDC to manage faculty service commitments is another important thread contributing to this cause.

The increase in faculty teaching load and enrolled students raises concerns about the quality of faculty-student engagement for which UNC Asheville is known. Retention relates to advising which suffers when faculty do not have quality time to prepare for and engage with their advisees. The quality and quantity of the undergraduate research experience is also challenged by these dynamics.

CRTF Considerations

The CRTF convened on March 18, 2011, as a continuation of the multi-year Delivering the Curriculum task force, a group who concluded that we could not adequately staff the curriculum and that, therefore, we needed to make changes. The CRTF task was to create a sustainable curriculum with a reasonable teaching load that affords faculty some flexibility. The group was asked to create a curriculum that would endure well into the future. They organized into six subcommittees: Big Picture, Research/Evaluation, Other University's Curricula, National Trends, Curricular Sustainability and Steering Committee. The completed CRTF proposal was presented to the Faculty Senate on March 21, 2013.

In relation to the curriculum review, CRTF members reviewed data and information about the ILS curriculum as well as the majors and concentrations. They were concerned about the number of required courses, both in ILS and the majors. They were struck by the difference in requirements between our curriculum and that of other liberal arts colleges. While committed to strengthening our distinctive commitment to interdisciplinary teaching and learning, they sought to

determine a balance between requirements and free electives.

The review of curricula offered by our peers in public liberal arts suggested we are somewhat unique in curriculum construction. Most of our peers offer majors focused more broadly on disciplines—Chemistry, Psychology, Literature. Our trend has been more toward deconstructing disciplines into subareas, creating concentrations and additional majors within the discipline. One consequence of this trend is the restricting of student ability to explore a range of subjects in the true liberal arts tradition. The phenomenon of credit creep is an understatement for many of our students who have so many requirements to complete that nothing is left to exploration.

Interdisciplinarity and Students

The CRTF considered interdisciplinary teaching and learning, a theme of our curriculum for decades. We enact it through such structures as the Humanities program, the topical cluster component of ILS and our interdisciplinary programs. The CRTF proposal includes an affirmation of the interdisciplinary Humanities requirements, continuation of our interdisciplinary programs, a discontinuation of the topical cluster requirement, and a proposal for interdisciplinary minors.

According to recent data, many students are not taking their interdisciplinary ILS courses here. As the chart, Courses Transferred In, shows, many students are given credit for Humanities 124 and 214; and a good number have completed the courses required for Cluster #2 (our largest with 25% of the students taking it) before they even set foot on campus. Many receive significant ILS course credit for other general education components.

Faculty uncertainty about how the ILS clusters are supposed to work is well documented. Students select courses that apply to their chosen cluster but with a few exceptions—the Food for Thought cluster, for example—there is little intentional effort to create interdisciplinary connections and an interdisciplinary experience among courses. And there are additional concerns:

Over 12% of our current students are admitted with the 44-hour core and thus do not have to take a cluster. Fifteen new freshmen have received credit for the 44-hour core, do not have to take HUM 124 and 214 or a cluster, and are classified as Juniors or Seniors.

Of the 118 seniors without a cluster or the 44-hour core, 104 are continuing seniors (meaning this is at least their second semester). Wouldn't we expect that all continuing seniors would have selected a cluster by now if they were making an intentional selection? This problem could be related to poor advising, the cluster requirement itself, or a combination of reasons. Regardless, students are not being well served.

Faculty report that some students complete clusters "post hoc," looking at how the courses they have already taken could be counted toward cluster completion. This is very far away from the notion with which the clusters were conceived of picking a theme of interest and exploring it from the perspective of multiple disciplines. Since 2011, students have petitioned to allow 81 previously taken courses to count toward a cluster requirement.

There is huge variability in the number of students who complete each of the clusters. The numbers range from 30 students (Cluster 13) to 306 students (Clusters 2).

With the number of requirements in the current curriculum, if students, whether they start their college careers here or transfer to us, do not begin their first semester with a clear declaration of major, they often have to stay in school more than four years. Length of time in school and hours taken without graduating currently have adverse repercussions on students including a steep tuition surcharge, loss of eligibility for financial aid, and loss of the privilege to live in our residence halls.

As mentioned above, the CRTF proposal includes interdisciplinary minors, premised on faculty and student creativity and flexibility, as a thoughtful alternative to the current cluster requirement. Currently, there is substantial variation in the manner and extent to which departments and programs engage with the ILS program. Department or program disengagement from ILS adversely impacts students by increasing coursework they are required to take for both ILS and their majors.

In the interest of providing more free and creative choice, interdisciplinary minors introduce the possibility that departments and programs would initiate curricular integration thereby reducing some of the current tension between

ILS and the majors for faculty resources. Interdisciplinary minors would not be required of all students, faculty, departments or programs, but would be available as choices and possible without additional course generation. The CRTF left the creation of this option to be determined once the overall curricular framework was approved.

Students and Graduation

A few important facts about our students, the curriculum and graduation may help with our deliberations:

- At least 26% of the 2012-2013 graduates, including both those who began as freshmen with us and those who transferred here, enrolled in more than 8 regular semesters.
- About 20% of the 2012-2013 graduating class had to pay the tuition surcharge.
- The average number of hours earned by graduates is 135; average hours attempted is 140.
- Of those who earned their degrees in 8 semesters, more than 50% also enrolled in at least one summer session.

As the UNC General Administration moves toward performance-based budgeting, consideration of graduation and retention rates, as well as other factors (such as degree efficiency and Pell grants), and their intersection with our curriculum delivery, will play a role in determining our budget. For this biennium, as Chancellor Ponder announced during the opening faculty meeting, UNC Asheville is one of two campuses “held harmless” from these cuts which have already been imposed on other campuses.

APC Document Now under Faculty Senate Discussion

I support the document being discussed by the APC and the Faculty Senate. The current proposal now has ILS at 47 hours, an increase over the 40 hours that the CRTF initially supported. We have realized that many majors, though not all, can still meet with 100-hour original target for ILS and majors combined due to course overlap between the two.

This proposal moves us significantly toward a sustainable curriculum, one which maintains many creative possibilities for strengthening our focus on interdisciplinary teaching and learning, and which responsibly serves our students. The proposal will require less faculty administration, which will also contribute to the creation a more humane overall workload. By my count, there are over 57 positions currently requiring faculty to provide administrative oversight of the ILS program.

As we wrestle with this decision, we all must understand that our current full-time faculty will need to teach all courses in whatever curriculum we ultimately embrace. With the CRTF proposal, for example, current full-time faculty will be required to teach ILS courses (including Humanities), in addition to delivering their major and minor programs of study without the benefit of an array of adjuncts upon whom we formerly relied.

This is much like an old barn in Asheville after this summer of relentless rain, when a funny smell leads the owner to check out the beams, which then reveals shaky structural support. With more and more weight hammering down from the rain above, the support for the old barn’s roof is starting to weaken. The structure upon which the roof is built must be shored up before the roof itself can be rebuilt to last. Our curriculum, though admirable, is like that old roof, which needs to be shored up and rebuilt. We’ve had too much rain hammering down on us from outside. We don’t need a new barn but we do need to attend to the one we have.

The first step, shoring up the structure, is reflected in the current APC document. I strongly encourage us to break through the current impasse. The sooner we align faculty teaching capacity with our curricular expectations, the sooner we will be on the way to better serving our students and their learning. The actual rebuilding will happen once the structure is in place. I respect the process we are undertaking to lead us to us to that and believe the time for action has come.

— Jane K. Fernandes, PhD, *Provost & Vice Chancellor*

Recommendations for Curriculum Reform

With the concerns given above in mind, the CRTF identified the following key areas of the general education architecture in need of reform. By addressing these aspects of the curriculum, the CRTF targeted key areas most likely to improve curriculum delivery, meet the needs of its students, and accomplish the University's mission. In the weeks to come, further department-related areas of reform will also be discussed.

Undue Faculty Oversight and Assessment as Work Overload

Without contingent hires and with faculty lines eliminated, the UNC Asheville faculty have taken on an increased teaching load, all the while doing an extraordinary amount of academic service in granting approval for courses, providing means of assessment, rubrics, analysis, evaluation, and action plans for bettering the existing general education curriculum and administering all aspects of the ILS superstructure. In fact, nearly everyone on the CRTF agreed the labor-intensive, largely committee-work-driven oversight of the ILS had become unmanageable and had begun to affect the quality of the student learning experience. While its praiseworthy and even award-winning design focused upon the integrative components of learning and encouraged faculty collaboration, the ILS's supervisory demands had begun to interfere with the faculty's ability to deliver the curriculum, the students' ability to matriculate in a timely manner, and the university's ability to accomplish its mission.

Rethinking Requirements

- **Topical Clusters**—As it was universally agreed upon that the ILS interdisciplinary aspirations were noble and should be encouraged even if significant changes had to be made in the general education curriculum, the CRTF strongly insisted that faculty be encouraged to collaborate in the creation of interdisciplinary learning experiences. From the first data examined, the majority of the Task Force members agreed that the ILS Topical Clusters were unsustainable and often problematic for many students and especially transfers students, which comprise approximately 50% of our student population (although it varies year to year, the graduating class consists of 60% to 40% of transfer students). Maintaining the current Topical Cluster requirements would require an extraordinary number of student petitions, as well as staff and faculty members and advisors and committee meetings to process these petitions. The CRTF found that many students who did not spend copious hours piecing together Topical Clusters from transfer articulations or culling seldom offered Cluster courses in order to best use their course credits ended up taking far more courses than required; often, in attempting to complete a cluster, these students had few or no credits available for courses they might want to take to explore other interests, as we would hope any well rounded Liberal Arts student would do. The CRTF concluded that the Topical Clusters could be replaced with equally beneficial choices students could manage more effectively and that the ideals followed in the design and collaboration of the clusters be followed in the creation of the new general education structure. Further, the CRTF expressed repeatedly that the new structure not exclude the possibility of future developments of interdisciplinary learning experiences or learning communities that could reflect the nature and intent of the current ILS Topical Clusters. The Academic Policy Committee believes that the new curriculum design (see Liberal Arts Core Table below) affords such future developmental opportunities and creates the possibility of continuing cluster-like interdisciplinary learning opportunities into which current cluster courses and cluster topics can be accommodated.
- **LSIC 379**—After extensive discussion of the needs, benefits, and sustainability of the LSIC 379: Colloquium for Transfers, the CRTF agreed that this course could be made optional, freeing up more faculty to teach LSIC 179: First-Year Colloquium, where it was determined resources could support student retention efforts more effectively and efficiently.
- **HWP**—The CRTF learned that the Health and Wellness Department was unable to support the demands of the current ILS HWP requirement without hiring more faculty members. The HWP department recommended that the CRTF help make a change in this requirement that was more sustainable. The HWP department conceded that in this climate of fiscal limitation that this very important aspect of our ILS might be delivered in another, perhaps more sustainable way. This concession was with the express understanding that there would be both formal (as potentially in LS479/HUM 414 or LS 179 and the inclusion of some HW classes to fulfill SS and NS requirements) and informal (perhaps through

interdisciplinary collaboration) inclusion of health and wellness content into other aspects of the new curriculum. While it will take additional time and collaborative conversations to determine the most appropriate strategies to continue emphasizing health in the curriculum, the proposed Liberal Arts Core provides a structure where HWP courses are within required categories (See Liberal Arts Core Table below) and affords great potential for growth of HWP course development within the Liberal Arts Core in the future as the Health and Wellness Department develops new courses and integrates HW components into the Freshman Colloquium, science course requirements, and interdisciplinary learning communities.

- **Intensives**—The CRTF concluded the Writing Intensive (WI) and Information Literacy Intensive (ILI) skills could be better viewed, delivered, and assessed as competencies within academic departments and majors. The CRTF, in close consultation with members of the Math department and the Natural Sciences program area, concluded the goals of the Quantitative Intensive (QI) could be met through a general education Math requirement and the fulfillment of science requirements.

Too Few Elective Options for Students

Given the size of the current Integrative Liberal Studies (ILS) Program and of majors with extensive requirements, the CRTF discovered that many students had few electives compared with other COPLAC institutions, where interdisciplinary study is often encouraged through electives and minors. While committed to strengthening our distinctive commitment to interdisciplinary teaching and learning, the CRTF sought to determine a balance between general education requirements, major requirements, and free electives. The CRTF proposed a framework including 40 required ILS hours, a maximum of 60 required hours in the major, and 20 free electives. The CRTF agreed that this framework would help the entire university reach a sustainable curriculum and was in the best interest of all.

All areas of the current ILS curriculum were examined and researched. After receiving input from individuals in key leadership positions for each of the ILS curricular areas, many curricular areas proved to be sustainable in their current structure and necessary components of the UNC Asheville general education framework. The CRTF concluded these requirements required no significant curricular changes: Language 120, Math/Statistics, Foreign Language, LSIC 179, Natural Science Lab, Social Science, Arts & Ideas, Humanities/LS Capstone, and the Humanities Cluster courses of 124, 214, and 324.

This APC document addresses the implementation of ILS Program reforms, while future documents will address the remaining areas that complete the full CRTF curriculum reform proposal, including adjustments in departmental and program-area requirements.

Liberal Arts Core

After discussing various names and after receiving feedback from the Faculty Senate, APC believes the title of “Liberal Arts Core” is a logical choice for general education architecture of “the state’s public liberal arts institution.” In preparing this final document, and with our current student learning outcomes and North Carolina’s Board of Governors emphasis on student learning outcomes, skills mastery, and competency assessment in mind, Liberal Arts Core captures the development of human capabilities, disciplinary knowledge, application of knowledge to new settings, and “seriously creative” solutions to increasingly complex problems we value. As an indication of our commitment to working together and to crossing disciplinary borders, the Liberal Arts Core conveys the sort of shared guidance possible when disciplines collaborate, as they did during the CRTF process, for the mutual benefit of students and faculty and the fulfillment of the university’s mission. Such collaboration lies at the heart of the matter for a public liberal arts institution that “emphasizes the centrality of learning and discovery through exemplary teaching, innovative scholarship, creative expression, co-curricular activities, undergraduate research, engaged service, and practical experience” (UNC Asheville Mission Statement). For, as students acquire critical thinking skills, inquire from a range of perspectives, hone effective communication and divergent forms of expression, and engage the local and global spheres, they become lifelong learners, ethical thinkers and practitioners of sustainability, invaluable society members whose transformative education enables them to flourish, responding to the world that lies before them and acting as responsible citizens and leaders of our twenty-first-century democracy.

The following table outlines the courses proposed for the Liberal Arts Core as well as those faculty, staff, and administrators responsible for its oversight. Additional articulation of course requirements and oversight can be found in the pages that follow the table, along with a tables illustrating how these curricular changes will affect faculty and students. Note that the first individual listed for each area of oversight is the first contact or the person most responsible for curricular issues or developments within this requirement. Names that follow indicate the second, or in some cases third, contact within a flow chart of leadership and oversight for this category.

<p style="text-align: center;">Liberal Arts Core</p> <p>Oversight: Liberal; Arts Core Oversight Committee oversees assessment and ensures the Liberal Arts Core addresses UNC Asheville student learning outcomes.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Course Hours</p>
<p>Academic Writing and Critical Inquiry (LANG 120) This course emphasizes writing as a tool of discovery and analysis; practice in active, critical reading; and attention to audience, purpose and structure. It also introduces students to writing conventions of various discourse communities. Oversight: The First-Year Writing Director in the LIT and LANG Department and the Writing Coordinator</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
<p>Quantitative Perspectives These courses, fulfilled by taking MATH or STAT classes, form a key role in the development of higher order skills and are by nature of content and application interdisciplinary. Such courses include statistical and mathematical skills, quantitative reasoning skills, and positive, confident attitudes and beliefs about mathematics and quantitative reasoning. Oversight: Chair of the Math Department and Dean of Natural Sciences</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
<p>Humanities (HUM 124, HUM 214, and HUM 324) A sequence of three courses devoted to the intellectual and cultural history of human civilization, including both Western and non-Western cultures. These courses consider subject matter from all of the liberal arts, especially history, literature, and philosophy, but also religion, natural science, social science and fine arts. Taught by faculty from various disciplines. Oversight: Course Coordinators, Director of Humanities Program, and Dean of University Programs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p>
<p>Second Language Students demonstrate competency of a second language, ancient or modern, by the successful completion of the second semester of a language. The North Carolina State Board of Education Requirements for all high school diplomas require, "Two credits in the same second language or demonstration of proficiency in a language other than English." With this in mind, students may also demonstrate competency by the successful completion of a placement exam. Students who opt to study a language not taken in high school may do so; however, any credits beyond the 4 required will be considered free electives. Oversight: Chair of the Department or Program in which the language is taught or tested and the Dean of the Humanities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">0-4</p>
<p>First-Year Colloquium (LA178 or Disciplinary Prefix 178) These courses introduce students to education in a liberal arts environment and assist them in making the transition to UNCA. This introduction to the liberal arts takes place in a topical context where instructors integrate information and intellectual approaches from different disciplines, directly addressing the nature of liberal studies. Additionally, First-Year-Experience topics are integrated and may include health and wellness, time management, proper use of college resources, academic advising, and an appreciation of the rhythms of the academic year. Students will have opportunities to learn about other life skills issues by attending events sponsored by the Counseling Center, the Career Center, Student Activities, Health and Wellness Promotion, and other university departments. Taken by incoming freshmen and first-year students with less than 25 hours of college credit. Oversight: First-Year Colloquium Coordinator and Dean of University Programs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>
<p>Laboratory Science Courses devoted to the investigation of scientific knowledge and its methodology through a lecture/laboratory course. Oversight: Chairs of the Natural Sciences and Dean of Natural Sciences will collaborate on determining the approved courses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>

<p>Scientific Perspectives Broadly defined, these courses are focused upon the application of science and scientific methods to understanding and solving real-world problems. Taught by faculty from various disciplines. Oversight: The Natural and Social Science Department Chairs and the Deans of Natural and Social Sciences will determine the list of courses collaboratively and approve of additional course adoptions.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Social Science Broadly defined courses that employ observational and experimental methods to examine and predict behavioral and organizational processes in understanding human beings and the connections of a global community. Oversight: Social Sciences Department Chairs and Dean of Social Sciences</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Arts and Ideas Broadly defined, these courses examine the significance of the arts in the human experience, the cultural context of creative composition and performance, the foundations of aesthetic values, and the communicative function of the arts. In addition to stand-alone ARTS courses, many courses across the campus fulfilling the Arts and Ideas SLOs satisfy this requirement. Oversight: The Arts and Ideas Director and the Dean of University Programs</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Senior Capstone Requirement (HUM 414 or LA 478) HUM 414: The Individual in the Contemporary World This course focuses on global issues and recent history, both Western and non-Western, building on information gathered and questions raised in the preceding Humanities courses toward a fuller understanding of the responsibilities of and opportunities for humanity today. Taught by faculty from various disciplines. — or — LA 478 (formerly LS 479): Cultivating Global Citizenship This course helps students cultivate an ethical sensibility that supports global citizenship. Responsible decision-making in a global world requires a sense of right and wrong, an ability to understand humanity’s differences and commonalities, and an appreciation of how institutional power works. Students study Western and Eastern ethical ideas, the meaning of citizenship, and the role of the individual in the community, use this broad skill and knowledge base to address pressing concerns and real-world problems, including globalization, governance, environmental sustainability. Taught by faculty from various disciplines. Oversight: Capstone Coordinators, Director of the Humanities Program, and Dean of University Programs</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Diversity Intensive Broadly defined, these courses focus on the process of knowledge, discernment, and awareness whereby human beings make reasoned decisions based on difference. These courses include but are not limited to the relationships between difference and inequality, exclusion and inclusion, representation, identity, and social, economic, and political power as it is manifested locally, statewide, countrywide, and across the globe. Many courses across campus qualify as Diversity Intensive courses and approved at the discretion of the Diversity Coordinator. Taught by faculty from various disciplines. Oversight: Diversity Coordinator and the Dean of University Programs</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Information Literacy Competency Each academic department establishes discipline-specific information literacy competencies and oversees their implementation and assessment, with guidance, coordination, and assistance from the Information Literacy Program Coordinator. Oversight: The Information Literacy Coordinator and the Dean of University Programs</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Writing Competency Each academic department establishes discipline-specific writing competencies within their department’s curriculum and oversees their implementation and assessment, with guidance, coordination, and assistance from the Writing Across the Curriculum Program Coordinator. Oversight: The Writing Coordinator and the Dean of University Programs</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Total Credit Hours (maximum)</p>	<p>47</p>

Oversight

Four Positions Proposed: Liberal Arts Core Coordinators

One appealing aspect of this system of oversight includes the elimination of unsustainable faculty committee work and the creation of additional Liberal Arts Core Coordinators. Similar to the model of the University Program Directors (Africana Studies, Arts, International Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, Key Center, and WGSS Directors), four new Liberal Arts Core designates coordinate writing, diversity, information literacy, and first-year colloquium.

Working within a program director capacity, these coordinators will replace the current Diversity, Information Literacy, and Writing Intensive committees. Each coordinator would be advised to form ad hoc committees as needed to complete larger issues like developing SLOs or making changes within course requirements. We propose that each coordinator would be awarded an appropriate amount of class release time to perform substantive administrative duties, help develop courses, serve as assessment liaisons, and foster connections among disciplines and faculty and students.

- 1. Diversity Coordinator:** Helps develop and assess Diversity Intensive SLOs and encourages best practices in Diversity courses across the disciplines.
- 2. Information Literacy Coordinator:** Helps departments develop and assess Information Literacy SLOs and works to implement CRTF recommendations by encouraging best practices in Information Literacy courses across disciplines.
- 3. Writing Coordinator:** Helps departments develop and assess Writing SLOs and works to implement CRTF recommendations by encouraging best practices in writing courses across disciplines.
- 4. First-Year Colloquium Coordinator:** Helps departments develop and assess SLOs, encourages best practices in First-Year Colloquium courses across disciplines, and works to implement CRTF recommendations for integration of HWP content and inclusion of staff and student initiatives through Residential and Student programs for academic success.

Liberal Arts Core Committee

The Liberal Arts Core Committee would be comprised of the Diversity, Information Literacy, Writing, and First-Year Colloquium Coordinators, as well as a representative faculty member responsible for the oversight of each aspect of the Liberal Arts Core (see oversight table in the document conclusion), to ensure the Liberal Arts Core serves its aims and aligns with UNC Asheville's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The UNC Asheville SLOs call for the development and use of capabilities wherein those earning degrees make "connections among disciplines and among peoples" and, during the acquisition of knowledge and potential, "students acquire and apply lifelong learning skills," with "inquiry from a range of perspectives." Within this context, everything that lies within the proposed Liberal Arts Core is both aligned with the University [SLOs](http://www.unca.edu/about/university-student-learning-outcomes) (<http://www.unca.edu/about/university-student-learning-outcomes>) and current UNC Board of Governors Compact: *Strategic Directions, Our Time, Our Future* ([http://www.northcarolina.edu/strategic direction/STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2013-2018.pdf](http://www.northcarolina.edu/strategic%20direction/STRATEGIC%20DIRECTIONS%202013-2018.pdf)).

CRTF and APC Request for FWDC to Reevaluate Faculty Leadership Reassigned Time

The Liberal Arts Core reduces faculty oversight significantly and also provides opportunities for faculty to have reassigned time for many core curricular aspects. Nevertheless, APC feels strongly that further workload and equity issues be considered for those who take on leadership positions in the Liberal Arts Core, such as the HUM coordinators and First-Year Writing Director. Further, in keeping with the CRTF's recommendations, APC encourages FWDC to reevaluate all current faculty leadership reassigned time.

Additional Articulation of Some Liberal Arts Core Requirements

Quantitative Perspectives

Although the Quantitative Perspectives requirement is initially fulfilled by taking MATH or STAT courses, quantitative perspectives continues in practice and application throughout the Liberal Arts Core in the sciences and social sciences and humanities in disciplines reliant upon general quantitative knowledge and the application of discipline-specific quantitative content and methods. Together, these form the quantitative competencies we expect of those studying in disciplines throughout the Liberal Arts Core, across the university curriculum, and of all graduates who must rely upon these skills in the world.

Second Language Perspective

UNC Asheville's Second Language Perspective requirement differs from many in the state of North Carolina in that it does not demand mastery in specific Romance, Germanic, or Latinate languages. Instead, we ask that students demonstrate competency in a second language. The minimal requirement in the Liberal Studies Core is for students to demonstrate competency of a second language, ancient or modern, by the successful completion of the second semester of a language, which would be a 4-credit course. This assumes that the student is following the same second language study started in high school. The North Carolina State Board of Education Requirements for all high school diplomas require, "Two credits in the same second language or demonstration of proficiency in a language other than English." With this in mind, students may also demonstrate competency by the successful completion of a placement exam, and may not require any Second Language courses at UNC Asheville. However, students are encouraged to study a language not taken in high school and any credits beyond the 4 required will be considered free electives.

First-Year Colloquium

As a course with shared learning outcomes taught by professors from disciplines across the campus, this course is indeed about the many possible perspectives on knowledge acquisition, skill development, cognitive growth, aesthetic appreciation, and existential differentiation so vital to becoming the "lifelong learners" our Liberal Studies Core seeks to form.

One idea discussed at length during the CRTF process was an interdisciplinary "team-taught" approach to these courses, with students in every section experiencing several instructors on a related theme, idea, cause, or pertinent question. Another suggestion was to form a common lab hour in the colloquium, where all freshmen could gather at a common time (perhaps on a Friday afternoon) and experience campus and cultural enrichment events or form into small group breakout sessions for lessons on topics by guest speakers or visit campus facilities such as the Writing Center, Multicultural Center, Key Center, various Sherrill Center facilities, etc. The Health and Wellness Department also suggested that HWP courses provide HWP components within the FYC courses, like the lab or members of the team-taught approach.

The CRTF highly recommended that the Freshman Colloquium structure be re-evaluated and for faculty to consider implementing some of these suggestions. Doing so would necessitate further discussion and support from the administration, which we have been assured we have, including the support for additional administrative support positions. The first-year colloquia are not intended as yet another way into a major. Rather, through careful collaboration and with time freed from the time-intensive oversight structure of the ILS, faculty are encouraged to set further learning goals and work together to achieve a rich, interdisciplinary experience that sets up a mode of inquiry they will follow throughout their course of study.

Scientific Perspectives

This requirement includes broadly defined courses focused upon the application of science and scientific methods to understanding and solving real-world problems. This requirement could include any class with a significant scientific basis. In opening the field of possibility for students, the Liberal Arts Core encourages departments to develop course offerings that will appeal to non-majors and to teach courses with broad applications. As a key aspect of scientific literacy that aligns with the school's mission, SLO's, and the Liberal Arts Core implementation strategy, the Scientific Perspectives courses afford opportunities for students to apply scientific knowledge and skills to a range of topics, issues, subjects, and disciplines.

Conclusion

The proposed Liberal Arts Core continues to support the UNC Asheville Mission and Student Learning Outcomes. This curriculum also provides a framework where new curricular developments can occur and are encouraged for all divisions with its inclusion of broadly defined categories that provide opportunities for faculty to develop new courses and interdisciplinary minors.

The Liberal Arts Core will significantly reduce faculty oversight as well as student credit hour requirements. The tables that follow display some quantifiable evidence of these reductions in oversight positions and student credit hours. APC also acknowledges that this curriculum proposal will significantly reduce the amount of faculty, staff and student hours spent in navigating, petitioning, and advising aspects of the current ILS curriculum, which is time spent that is not as easily measured, but APC feels the effects of these changes will make a remarkable difference in this area as well.

General Education Oversight (Faculty Workload) Comparison

Integrative Liberal Arts Oversight		Liberal Arts Core Oversight	
HUM Program Director & Course Coordinators	5	HUM Program Director & Course Coordinators	5
Arts and Ideas Director	1	Arts and Ideas Coordinator	1
Topical Cluster Coordinators 16 active clusters <i>(Two clusters list multiple faculty as coordinators)</i>	19	N/A	0
ILS Writing Intensive Committee*	6	Writing Coordinator	1
ILS Information Literacy Intensive Committee	4	Information Literacy Coordinator	1
ILS Diversity Intensive Committee	5	Diversity Coordinator	1
ILS Colloquium	4	First-Year Colloquium Coordinator	1
Cluster Oversight Committee	4	N/A	0
ILS Quantitative Committee	5	N/A	0
Science Lab Oversight (?)	1	A Natural Science Chair	1
Foreign Language Oversight (Chair)	1	A Second Language Chair	1
Math Requirement Oversight (Chair)	1	Math Chair	1
Language 120 Oversight (Chair)	1	First-Year Writing Director	1
Health and Wellness Oversight (Chair)	1	N/A	0
N/A	0	Social Science Chair	1
ILSOC <i>(Additional members beyond those listed in oversight positions above)</i>	2	Liberal Arts Core Oversight <i>(N/A – Committee Includes those listed in oversight positions above)</i>	0
LS 479	1	Senior Capstone LA 478	1
TOTALS	61		16

Faculty Oversight Reduction of 74%

Maximum Current Liberal Studies Program Required Hours (Fall 2011) Created in Fall 2011

ILS – Maximum Required Hours <i>No assumption of overlap with the major</i>	
Interdisciplinary Components	Cr Hr
LSIC	3
Hum/479	16
Cluster	9-11
Arts	3
<i>Subtotal</i>	31-33
Foundational	
Math	4
Lab Science	4
Foreign Language	6
Composition (Lang 120)	4
Health & Wellness	3
<i>Subtotal</i>	21
Intensives	
Writing (3)—LSIC is WI	6
Information Literacy (3)—LANG 120 is ILI	3
Diversity (1)	3
Quantitative (1)	3
<i>Subtotal</i>	15
Total	67-69

*32% Reduction in Maximum Course Credits
(ILS 69.0 vs. Liberal Arts Core/47.0)*

The Current Status of Clusters and Current Students (11 October 2013)

I. Status of Currently Enrolled UG Degree-Seeking Students – Fall 2013

Status	N	%
44 Hr Core	412	12.40%
Declared Cluster	1265	38.07%
No Cluster or 44 Hr	1646	49.53%
Total	3323	100%

The 12.4% of students with the 44-Hr Core (exempting them from Clusters) is consistent with the percent of graduates with the 44-Hr Core in 2012-13.

II. Status of Currently Enrolled UG Degree-Seeking Students by Class

Class	44HR	Cluster Declared	No CL or 44 Hr Core	Total
Freshman		20	758	778
Sophomore	11	172	480	663
Junior	157	399	290	846
Senior	244	674	118	1036
Total	412	1265	1646	3323

- 15 New Freshmen have the 44 HR Core and are classified as Juniors or Seniors.
- Of the 118 Seniors without a Cluster or 44 Hr Core, 104 of them are Continuing Seniors. (This is at least their 2nd Semester)
- We would expect that all Continuing Seniors would have a Cluster or 44-Hr Core if they were making an intentional selection.

III. What clusters are being declared?

Cluster	N	% of Cluster Declarers	Comment
CL01	165	13.0%	
CL02	306	24.2%	
CL03	58	4.6%	
CL04	11	0.9%	<i>Discontinued</i>
CL05	43	3.4%	<i>Study Abroad</i>
CL06	24	1.9%	
CL07	104	8.2%	
CL08	19	1.5%	
CL09	22	1.7%	
CL10	103	8.1%	
CL11	60	4.7%	
CL12	31	2.5%	
CL13	30	2.4%	
CL14	148	11.7%	
CL15	58	4.6%	
CL16	79	6.2%	
CL17	4	0.3%	<i>Study Abroad</i>
Total	1265	100%	

Why is Cluster 2 so popular?

- It has 100-level classes in all three cluster required areas: NS, SS, E/A
- Three of the 100-level classes (Biol 123, Psyc 100, and Stat 185) are popular AP and transfer courses.
- Its topic appeals to students interested in Health issues and those majoring in Biology and HWP. There is a high level of overlap with requirements for these popular majors.

M. Is there a pattern to Major and Cluster selection?

Major	N	CL1	CL2	CL3	CL 4	CL 5	CL 6	CL 7	CL 8	CL 9	CL 10	CL 11	CL 12	CL 13	CL 14	CL 15	CL 16	CL 17
ACCT	27	11%	37%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	4%	19%	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%	0%	0%
ANTH	10	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	10%	0%	20%	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%
ART	65	2%	2%	3%	6%	2%	6%	8%	0%	0%	15%	9%	0%	2%	46%	0%	0%	0%
ARTH	9	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	67%	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	0%	0%
ATMS	16	63%	0%	25%	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
BIOL	67	3%	85%	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
CHEM	30	7%	47%	20%	0%	10%	0%	3%	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%
CLAS	9	0%	11%	0%	0%	11%	11%	11%	44%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
CSCI	24	8%	8%	25%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	13%	38%	0%	0%
DRAM	24	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	67%	4%	4%	0%	21%	0%	0%	0%
ECON	21	52%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	38%	0%
ENGR	41	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	95%	0%	0%
ENVR	83	54%	18%	1%	1%	17%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
FREN	13	15%	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	31%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	15%	0%	15%	0%
GERM	6	33%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	17%	0%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
HIST	35	14%	17%	0%	0%	6%	0%	14%	3%	0%	0%	9%	3%	0%	6%	0%	29%	0%
HWP	75	3%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%	0%
IEMT	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
IST	69	51%	9%	3%	0%	3%	3%	9%	1%	3%	6%	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	4%	1%
LIT	68	1%	10%	0%	0%	9%	4%	19%	0%	3%	22%	7%	0%	7%	6%	0%	9%	1%
MATH	34	3%	12%	47%	0%	0%	0%	6%	9%	0%	9%	3%	3%	0%	3%	3%	3%	0%
MCOM	42	12%	12%	7%	2%	0%	0%	24%	0%	0%	2%	10%	12%	2%	14%	0%	0%	2%
MCTR	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
MGMT	68	21%	28%	6%	4%	1%	0%	4%	1%	0%	7%	3%	10%	1%	4%	3%	4%	0%
MMAS	8	0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%	63%	0%	0%	0%
MUSC	15	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	7%	0%	33%	27%	0%	0%	0%
MUST	22	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	73%	5%	0%	0%
NM	32	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	3%	3%	3%	0%	3%	66%	9%	0%	0%
PHIL	12	8%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	42%	0%	0%	17%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PHYS	5	20%	20%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	20%	0%	0%
POLS	25	20%	12%	0%	0%	8%	0%	4%	8%	0%	0%	0%	4%	4%	0%	0%	40%	0%
PSYC	111	2%	34%	4%	1%	1%	2%	6%	1%	1%	12%	15%	2%	0%	11%	0%	9%	0%
RELS	11	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	73%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%
SOC	32	0%	25%	0%	0%	9%	0%	13%	3%	0%	13%	0%	0%	3%	9%	0%	25%	0%
SPAN	15	0%	7%	0%	0%	13%	53%	0%	0%	0%	7%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%
UND	135	9%	28%	1%	0%	3%	1%	6%	2%	2%	12%	5%	2%	4%	17%	0%	7%	0%
WGSS	4	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total %		13 %	24 %	5%	1%	3%	2%	8%	2%	2%	8%	5%	2%	2%	12%	5%	6%	0%
Total N	1265	165	306	58	11	43	24	104	19	22	103	60	31	30	148	58	79	4

- Shaded Cells indicate at least 50% of declared majors selected the cluster.
- If half or more of students in a major are selecting the same cluster, has it become an extension of the major?