

PROPOSAL FOR A REVISED GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

I. Introduction and Background

Herein the Ad Hoc General Education Working Group of 2016-17 proposes the Revised Drake Curriculum (RDC). The Revised Drake Curriculum (RDC) is a revision of the Revised General Education Curriculum (RGEC) proposed to Faculty Senate in the spring of 2016. Like the RGEC, the RDC is a realignment of the current curriculum. Existing courses that now count for the current Drake Curriculum may count for the RDC with appropriate revisions necessary to fulfill the new general education outcomes approved by the Faculty Senate in November 2016. New courses also will need to be developed to fulfill the approved outcomes and new categories of the proposed curriculum. Still, the proposed RDC builds on the existing curriculum in ways that should help facilitate a smooth transition to a revised general education curriculum. Overall, a refocusing of already existing courses on a narrower range of broader goals and outcomes and the emphasis on collaborative, discussion-oriented, problem-based, and experiential pedagogies in small classes are all that are required for many courses currently offered as part of the Drake Curriculum (DC) to find a home in the new curriculum.

The RDC does not venture from the RGEC's reliance on structural and pedagogical principles developed throughout the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile. These principles include

- Integrative Learning, in which approaches, methods, ways of knowing, and objects of knowledge or analysis from more than one traditional discipline or knowledge area are integrated into learning experiences.
- Coherent, Intentional, and Sequenced Pathways that lead students from the development of foundational skills, knowledge, and habits of mind to more complex, independent, and higher-order engagement with and discovery of knowledge.
- Inclusion and Equity in the design and thematic foci of the curriculum, so that students from all backgrounds are included in the University's learning mission.
- Collaboration among students, faculty, and staff sustains the curriculum and engages teachers and learners alike in deep, critical, and reflective learning.
- Quality Assurance is guaranteed through ongoing assessment practices designed and conducted by the faculty teaching the courses and relying on their expertise and experience and responsive to their needs as teachers.

In preparing the RDC, the Working Group reviewed the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education Curricular Reform (2014-15), last year's discussions in Faculty Senate, and the Wabash Assessment Visit Memo (2013).

II. Outcomes

The principle criterion invoked by the Working Group in developing the RDC was whether the curriculum can meet the learning outcomes passed by Faculty Senate in the fall of 2016. A strength of the RDC is that it meets this criterion. For the sake of reference the learning outcomes are provided below without their bulleted rationales.

After completing the General Education curriculum Drake University students will -

- A. Communicate effectively in a manner appropriate for their audience.
- B. Access, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge within and across diverse fields of study.
- C. Develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for responsible global citizenship in local, national, and global contexts.
- D. Develop skills in qualitative, quantitative, and scientific reasoning through engagement in empirical inquiry, to understand the intersection of the natural sciences, technology, and society.
- E. Develop dispositions that are informed by self-reflection and engagement with ethical perspectives.
- F. Analyze and understand how diversity and systems of exclusion shape society, with emphasis on race, gender, and class in the context of the United States.
- G. Develop, refine, and analyze creative or artistic modes of expression.

In developing the proposed curriculum, the Working Group agreed that assessment is an important consideration. However, we also agreed that questions of assessment are beyond the purview of our charge and are more appropriately taken up by bodies formed for that purpose (e.g. DCAC).

III. Operational and Pedagogical Precepts

Being closely derived from the RGEC, the same operational and pedagogical precepts subtend the RDC. By virtue of approving the RDC, Senate will be endorsing the following precepts and thereby commit the faculty of the university to working toward full achievement of these aims.

- Active, collaborative, exchange-based pedagogy, regardless of class size
- Faculty-driven outcomes assessment

- Robust use of current courses revised as necessary to meet the learning outcomes
- Phased implementation
- Proactive advising
- Discipline- or field-specific professional competencies remain primarily the responsibility of major programs; academic units and programs that do not inherently emphasize the development of professional skills provide experiences that integrate professional preparation with liberal arts training appropriate for particular areas of study.
- Reduction of total number of credits required for graduation to 120 (15 per semester over four years)

To account for the need for more intensive learning experiences than are sometimes the case in the current curriculum and to recognize the relative high importance students place on learning that takes place across two majors (often with minors and concentrations as well) this model for a general education curriculum requires 33 or 34 credit hours (including the capstone in the primary major) in comparison with the current requirement of 43 credit hours. Learning experiences are loosely sequenced across four phases—Foundations; Cornerstone; Keystone; and Capstone (see descriptions in Part IV).

With the exception of the Foundations courses, the RDC does not mandate a minimum number of credit hours outside of student majors across the academic units at Drake University. Thus, at the discretion of the respective programs, courses that are approved to fulfill Cornerstone and Keystone requirements may count towards the major. A strength of this arrangement is that students may find room in their schedules to pursue disparate interests. Even in programs with a large number of credit hours required for the completion of the major, the number of general education credits necessarily taken outside the major program or department (because of the likely distribution of offerings across the University) will remain within or near current levels under the RDC.

IV. THE REVISED DRAKE CURRICULUM – Organization and Outcomes Map

First Year Foundations: (6 credit hours; lower division; no prerequisites; Foundations I will be completed in the first semester of the first year; Foundations II will be completed in the second semester of the first year). The purpose of the Foundations courses is to provide students with knowledge, skills, and dispositions that prepare them for success in an integrated curriculum. Current FYS courses can be revised to fit the required outcomes of either Foundations I or II. Although named in sequence, Foundations II is not a continuation of Foundations I, and nearly every student will have different instructors and topics for the two courses. Approved courses may not contribute to the major.

Foundations I: (3 credits; first semester of the first year). Approved courses require students to develop writing and speaking skills while being cognizant of their own and other's values and how those values inform civic engagement in local, national, and global contexts. *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are A (communicate effectively), E (ethical perspectives), and C (global citizenship).*

Foundations II: (3 credits; second semester of the first year). Approved courses build upon the communication skills developed in Foundations I by requiring students to practice communicating information and ideas to a variety of audiences in any of a variety of modes—visual, verbal, and written—by researching, analyzing, and articulating responses to a focused question or issue. An important distinction of approved courses is the emphasis on accessing, synthesizing, and evaluating credible information in diverse fields of study. *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are A (communicate effectively) and B (synthesize).*

Cornerstone (15 credits, upper or lower division) The purpose of the Cornerstone courses is to provide the necessary literacies for professional accomplishment and engaged global citizenship. The development of new courses without pre-requisites is encouraged, but faculty may revise courses in the major so that they achieve the outcomes assigned to the respective Cornerstone courses.

Topics in Civic Literacy: (3 credits) Approved courses require students to develop skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary for effective civic engagement. Students learn about an unsettled issue or topic of historical or contemporary social, political, or economic significance from two or more points of view (e.g. sociology and philosophy) or across two or more fields of experience or endeavor (e.g. art-making/doing and

entrepreneurship). Students develop skills associated with civic dialogue and engagement through participatory activities organized in the classroom and/or in the community, including outreach, service-learning, programming, exhibition, and performance. *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are C (global citizenship) and E (ethical perspectives).*

Topics in Symbolic Literacy: (3 credits) Approved courses require students to engage in approaches to knowledge that rely on the methods of abstract symbolic manipulation drawn from such fields as computer science, mathematics, linguistics, statistics, data analysis, logic, aesthetics, and musical analysis. The course includes using these approaches to learn about and formulate responses to a focused issue or question of contemporary or historical importance. *Learning outcome that must be achieved is D (empirical inquiry).*

Topics in Scientific Literacy: (3 or 4 credits) Approved courses require students to engage in approaches to knowledge that rely on scientific inquiry, scientific findings, scientific methodologies, or the professional application of science. The course includes using these approaches to articulate responses to a socioscientific issue. These courses must have a laboratory component. *Learning outcome that must be achieved is D (empirical inquiry).*

Topics in Global Literacy: (3 credits) Students engage deeply with and articulate responses to a focused question or issue of contemporary or historical international or global importance, including diplomacy, foreign policy, global commerce, global social justice, and comparative studies. Coursework in world languages and cultures or learning experiences abroad that include immersion in a foreign language or culture may be considered as cornerstone courses in this category. *Learning outcome that must be achieved is C (global citizenship).*

Topics in Creative Literacy: (3 credits) Students engage deeply with and articulate responses to a focused question of historical or contemporary significance as it is addressed, expressed, or represented in creative, enactive, expressive, or artistic modes (including, but not limited to, film, music, theatre, dance, art-making, and creative writing). Students build both practical and analytical skills in these areas as a means to carry out the exploration of the topic under consideration. Learning experiences that include participation in ensembles or creative performance may be considered as cornerstone courses in this category. *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are A (communicate effectively) and G (creative).*

Keystone - The Integrative Core: (9 credits) The purpose of the Keystone courses is to engage students in interdisciplinary learning in any number of contexts such as the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, fine and performing arts, education, and professional practice. *Team teaching across disciplines is encouraged.* Approved courses will be concerned with understanding diversity in any of its several forms including but not limited to race/ethnicity, socio-economic class, gender, sexual orientation, ability and disability, neurodiversity, faith-affiliation, and ideology. Keystone courses will include emphasis on race, gender, and class in the context of the United States. In order to ensure a wide range of courses accessible to all students, the Keystone courses will be without prerequisites. Keystone courses may count towards the major at the discretion of the respective programs.

Courses will be designated as Keystone I, Keystone II, or Keystone III. *All course must achieve learning outcomes B (Synthesis) and F (Diversity).*

Keystone I – Humanistic Inquiry: (3 credits) Approved courses require students to engage in interdisciplinary learning regarding a focused issue of diversity and inclusion (with emphasis on race, gender, and class in the context of the United States) by integrating perspectives across the humanities or between the humanities and arts (e.g. music and philosophy, literature and anthropology, history and theatre/studio arts, or religion and world languages/ culture). *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are B (Synthesis), F (Diversity), and G (Creative).*

Keystone II – Empirical Inquiry: (3 credits) Approved courses require students to engage in interdisciplinary learning regarding a focused issue of diversity and inclusion (with emphasis on race, gender, and class in the context of the United States) by integrating perspectives between a natural or social science and another discipline (e.g. molecular biology and sociology, environmental science and politics, pharmacology and women’s & gender studies, psychology and economics, or chemistry and journalism). *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are B (Synthesis), F (Diversity), and D (Empirical).*

Keystone III – Ethical Inquiry: (3 credits) Students engage in interdisciplinary learning regarding a focused issue of diversity and inclusion (with emphasis on race, gender, and class in the context of the United States) by integrating perspectives between one the professions and the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences (e.g. pharmacy practice and political science, international business and intercultural communication, education and sociology, journalism and history). *Learning outcomes that must be achieved are B (Synthesis), F (Diversity), and E (Ethics).*

Table Mapping Courses with Outcomes

	A (Comm)	B (Synthesis)	C (Global)	D (Empirical)	E (Ethics)	F (Diversity)	G (Creative)
Foundations I	X		X		X		
Foundations II	X	X					
Civic Literacy			X		X		
Symbolic Literacy				X			
Scientific Literacy				X			
Global Literacy			X				
Creative Literacy	X						X
Keystone I		X				X	X
Keystone II		X		X		X	
Keystone III		X			X	X	

Capstone: As currently configured. (3 credits)

V. Suggested Process of Implementation of the RDC

This proposal envisions a phased implementation plan that involves collaboration between University administration and Faculty Senate to align resources and build a budget plan to support the RDC prior to its implementation. The proposal also calls for the creation of an ad hoc RDC working group that comprises members of Faculty Senate representing all academic units/colleges to ensure that the RDC aligns with diverse accreditation requirements and programmatic needs while also allowing students sufficient flexibility to complete second majors, concentrations, and minors. This phased implementation will provide sufficient time for faculty, staff, students, and the pertinent administrative offices to prepare for a smooth transition.

Moving forward with this proposal for the RDC will require two ballots: one in favor of the RDC itself, outlined in sections I-IV above, at the September 2017 Faculty Senate meeting and a second in favor of a comprehensive resource and implementation plan at the May 2018 Faculty Senate meeting.

Upon a favorable first-ballot vote in support of the RDC, the Office of the Provost, in consultation with appropriate staff and administrators, will investigate budgetary and operational implications of a transition from the current Drake Curriculum to the RDC. The Office of the Provost will develop an implementation plan that identifies and aligns resources, including faculty development funds, in support of a phased transition to the new curriculum.

In consultation with the 2017-2018 Senate Executive Committee and the Immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate President will appoint an ad hoc RDC

working group that comprises members of the Faculty Senate representing the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, the professional schools, and Cowles Library. This working group will collaborate to ensure that the implementation plan for the RDC reflects the unique programmatic needs of diverse academic units and may recommend revisions to the content and structure of the RDC as evidence from the Office of the Provost's work on implementation warrants. Recommendations for revisions made by the working group must be made within the framework of the RDC and must be approved by the full Faculty Senate.

Although it will be essential for the Office of the Provost to work with the appropriate faculty bodies in the development of specific implementation plans, we offer the following timeline for a phased implementation plan for illustrative purposes.

Implementation Planning: AY 2017-2018

- During the 2017-2018 AY (assuming a favorable vote for the RDC at the September 2017 Faculty Senate meeting), the Office of the Provost will investigate the budgetary and operational implications of a transition from the current Drake Curriculum to the proposed RDC, including a comparative analysis of pathways for completion available to students across majors. The Office of the Provost also will consult with appropriate administrative offices, including the Office of Admissions, University Communications, Student Records, and Athletics to identify other administrative issues that will need to be addressed during the implementation of the RDC.
- After a favorable vote for the RDC at the September 2017 Faculty Senate meeting, the Immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate President, in consultation with the Senate Executive Committee, will appoint an ad hoc RDC working group that comprises members of the Faculty Senate representing the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, the professional schools, and Cowles Library.
- During the 2017-2018 AY, the Provost will provide routine updates to the Faculty Senate on the preliminary findings regarding the budgetary and operational implications of a transition from the current Drake Curriculum to the RDC.
- Shortly after a favorable vote on the RDC at the September 2017 Faculty Senate meeting, the ad hoc RDC working group will begin its work on implementation planning. The members of the working group will have responsibility for engaging in regular consultation with their constituencies and with Senators not serving on the working group to ensure that campus input informs their review and recommendations. Throughout the 2017-2018 AY, the working group will provide routine updates on its work at the regular meetings of the Faculty Senate.
- The ad hoc Working Group will collaborate to ensure that the implementation plan for the RDC reflects the unique programmatic needs of diverse academic units and may recommend

revisions to the content and structure of the RDC as evidence from implementation planning in the Office of the Provost warrants. The ad hoc RDC working group also will collaborate to identify solutions to issues that have arisen during Faculty Senate discussions of general education curricular reform. These issues include:

- maintaining liberal arts breadth in our general education curriculum while also allowing for sufficient flexibility so that professional programs can meet the accreditation standards of their disciplines
 - ensuring that the RDC will allow students to complete multiple majors, concentrations, and minors
 - considering whether or not the RDC should require a minimum number of credit hours outside of the major
 - investigating opportunities for integrating professionalization into the general education curriculum
 - planning for the needs of transfer students
 - planning for AP credits and Honors courses
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- The ad hoc RDC working group will complete its review by the end of the 2017-2018 AY and will present its report and recommendations at the May 2018 Faculty Senate meeting or earlier. Recommendations for revisions made by the working group must be made within the framework of the proposed RDC and must be approved by the full Faculty Senate.
 - During the 2017-2018, the Office of the Provost will develop an implementation plan that identifies and aligns resources, including faculty development funds, in support of a phased transition to the new curriculum. The Office of the Provost will develop a comprehensive resource plan by the end of the 2017-2018 AY. In developing this plan, the Office of the Provost will work in collaboration with the Faculty Senate. This plan will reflect any revisions to the RDC that have been recommended by the ad hoc RDC working group and approved by the full Faculty Senate. The Office of the Provost will provide this report to the Faculty Senate no later than the May 2018 Faculty Senate meeting.
 - The Faculty Senate would need to vote in favor of this comprehensive resource and implementation plan prior to moving forward with implementation. This approach will ensure that the RDC is fully sensitive to budgetary realities. If the resource and implementation plan put forward by the Office of the Provost demonstrates that the costs of a transition to the RDC are too high, the 2017-2018 Faculty Senate will have an opportunity to vote against the implementation.
 - Upon approval of the resource and implementation plan by the 2017-2018 Faculty Senate, the Office of the Provost, including the Associate Provost for Curriculum and the Director of

Institutional Research and Assessment, will finalize the implementation plan and earmark resources—for instance, the Provost’s and College’s faculty-development budgets already in place—for supporting course development, professional development, and related activities. The Office of the Provost will coordinate with the deans and with CAAD to ensure that college-specific concerns are addressed in the implementation plan.

- The Faculty Senate will work in collaboration with the Office of the Provost to name the new curriculum and to brand it and the implementation process.
- Faculty begin course-development process for Implementation Phase 1.

Implementation Phase 1: Foundations and Cornerstone: AYs 2019-2021

- The FYS program and courses are converted to Foundations I and II.
- Deployment of enough Cornerstone courses, similarly drawn from current AOI courses, revised to meet Cornerstone outcomes, to serve 50% of total need.
- Begin funding development and revision of courses to serve as Keystone courses.

Implementation Phase 2: Cornerstone and Keystone Courses: AY 2021-2022

- Complete deployment of Cornerstone courses.
- Begin deployment of Keystone Courses to serve 50% of total need.
- Continue funding the development and revision of Keystone courses.

Implementation Phase 3: Complete Implementation: AY 2022-2023

- Continue development of Keystone courses.
- Engage faculty in assessment of Foundations and Cornerstone courses.
- AOI designations are removed from all courses.