

Ad Hoc Committee on General Education Curricular Reform Executive Summary of the Final Report to Faculty Senate– March 11, 2015

Brief Background:

The Ad Hoc Committee on General Education Curricular Reform was created by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2014. The Committee reviewed, modified, and discussed 3 models for potential General Education Curricular Reform at Drake: The *Integrated Core*, the *Majors/Minors* and what we called *Revitalized AOIs*; an option brought forward after our charge was modified to allow alternative approaches. The Committee's charge centered on the viability of the models at Drake University.

Findings:

The differing points of view of the committee members led to rich discussion and a deep understanding of all of the approaches to general education presented in this report. This understanding is, in fact, so complete that *this committee was able to envision ways to overcome any shortcomings or incompatibilities with any of these models*; with the proper structure and flexibility, any of these models can meet the needs of Drake University in the 21st century and beyond.

The Committee finds all three options (depending on proper implementation and modification) to be viable. There are strengths and weaknesses of each model; however, with the proper structure, support, and flexibility, any of these models could meet the needs of Drake University students in the future.

While a specific recommendation was not a part of the charge, this committee could not reach a consensus which of the three models was "best." Per an informal vote, the committee is split, with no model achieving a majority.

Several items of discussion achieved broad support and should be the focus of future efforts:

1. The viability of the models is predicated on the Understandings and Operational Precepts for a new general education curriculum (included in the full report)
2. Without dedicated administration, oversight and assessment, reform will not be successful; permanent modification of the roles of UCC and DCAC to focus more intentionally on reform and improvement should be explored.
3. A new approach to the FYS / First Year Experience as a basis for further reform (which should be appropriate to all three models) is needed.
4. Widespread support by faculty, administrators, and students is critical for ongoing reform; focused efforts to communicate about and promote understanding of the new model prior to development of the new curriculum are vital to this support.
5. While the current AOI system has both strengths and weaknesses, the requirement that all students take what the Committee referred to as "MASH" (Math, Art, Science, and History) is a strength.
6. Implementation of any new model must be planned as thoroughly as the particulars of the curriculum itself; an incremental approach to implementation of any systematic change (to the extent practical) could be beneficial.