

Core Review Charge 1/30/04

To: Frank Cunningham, Chair
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From: Randy Jones
Dave Haddad

Subject: *Ad Hoc* Committee for Core Review

On behalf of the Academic Senate and Fr. Ridley, we thank you for your willingness to serve on an *Ad Hoc* Committee for Core Review. The Strategic Plan has as one of its goals (III.B) to “Reaffirm the Core as the center of Loyola’s undergraduate curriculum by emphasizing its goals, objectives and learning outcomes.” One of the strategies under that goal is to complete a review of the Core every ten years. The last core review was completed in 1994, so it is time to begin. This is a very important and challenging task. We estimate that work on this committee will take a minimum of three years, but the results will be vitally important in the evolution of the core intellectual enterprise of the undergraduate experience at Loyola.

The core curriculum is based on Loyola’s Jesuit Catholic mission, vision, and values, particularly the key value of academic excellence. The overarching purpose of a core review is to review and continually improve student learning in the undergraduate core curriculum. The Charge to the Core Review Committee is to

- Articulate or re-articulate the overall purposes of the core;
- Develop learning aims for the core curriculum that are related to the Undergraduate Educational Aims passed by the Academic Senate;
- Cultivate a campus-wide conversation about the core curriculum;
- Determine whether there are any common aims that should be included in every course in the core;

- Develop learning aims for each major component of the core (such as learning aims for a natural science component), which are derived from the learning aims for the core;
- Develop some means of integration and interdependence among courses in the core, so that at least some courses in the core build on themes in other courses in the core;
- Analyze the various ways we judge whether we are attaining those aims and propose ways and procedures for making these judgments in the future;
- Propose ways and procedures to continuously improve upon the core's achievements and remedy any weaknesses in (a) the core as a whole, (b) the core in specific areas (e.g., humanities, natural sciences, social sciences) and (c) specific core disciplines or courses;
- Recommend a workable strategy on how study abroad and the core interact with one another;
- Develop a procedure and plan for both ongoing and periodic reviews of the core;
 - Periodic Review should include (as does this Charge) a review of the overall purpose and learning aims of the core, evaluation of whether the core is achieving those overall purposes and learning aims, and proposals for improving the achievement of those purposes and learning aims.
 - Ongoing review (recommended by Loyola's 1999 Self-Study and the Middle States Review Team) should include review of specific courses in the core, including their coherence with the core learning aims they were intended to achieve and the overall purpose and learning aims of the core, evaluation of whether the courses are achieving those learning aims and plans for improving the achievement of those learning aims.

In performing the above tasks we ask the Committee to first review the specific strategies relevant to the core in the current Strategic Plan, to consult the College's 1999 Self-Study, and to review the response of the Middle States Review Team. For this year, we recommend that the Committee attend national or regional conferences on core or liberal education review; refine this committee charge; meet and work collaboratively with the Chair of the Senate, the President, the Academic Vice President, and Deans to talk about this charge and work; and develop an action plan with a time table for accomplishing the work of the Committee.

The Committee is responsible to the Academic Senate and the President, and should report its progress regularly to them. It should also communicate regularly with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. The President and we will, in turn, regularly report progress to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. Ultimately your work will undergo consideration and approval by the Academic Senate, the President, and the Board of Trustees.

We thank you in advance for your willingness to engage in this important work. You are taking on the opportunity (and the obligation!) to play an important role in one of the principle components of the defining nature of Loyola College.