

(A) First Year introduction to the liberal arts

- **would be a stand alone class and would not fulfill any general studies or major requirements**
- **the topics would be determined by the interest of the instructor (similar to how May Term classes are now taught)**

Faculty Responses

An LAS course could be “topical” (non-101 course) and be treated as an elective in some major or fulfill a breadth requirement.. WHY NOT? ...As long as the academic objectives of the LAS (writing intensive, presentations,etc.) are clear...

I think we should get rid of 1st year course – Adds work to faculty & does not seem to show benefit for students

I like stand alone model for 1st year

Good idea, poorly worded. It is a requirement, with goals/outcomes particular to First-Year Experience

Essential

LAS should be more like old “Vital Center” program where all students took the same classes (multiple sessions) generated much discussion among all students

Fac might be more engaged by LAS if they could pick the topic. Could share the load w/folks who don’t usually teach 101 classes

This would add to faculty load. 20+ new extra classes.

Ok as long as faculty loads are reduced in other areas. _____ Needs to tie into the General Education model chosen.

Seems more coherent in terms of integrating LAS objectives into the course that the way it’s done now.

If we replace SRC w/a topical LAS, there is no added load for the faculty – then we could have a capstone experience w/in the major.

Staff/Admin Responses

I like the idea, but faculty teaching load considerations could make this difficult.

Student Responses

This is just an extra class that students would have to take.

Falls under the same context of Experiential Learning! To have it be required and have no paper benefits seems unnecessary.

I like topical, but I think it needs to fill some sort of requirement.

Not fulfill req.? For students that want to achieve 2 majors, and more, that seems like a poor use of time.

Sounds like a good idea, but it sounds like it should be geared as the LAS part of freshman year.

Not needed – it's provided with other requirements & the LAS class!

May Term classes are irrelevant in some cases – they have nothing to do with my major or cornerstones! Perhaps add hands on experience in a business (ex: have Simpson set up “job shadows” for students as a group.)

I always felt that LAS exposed students to a new way of thinking or even to spark an interest in something other than a predetermined major – LAS does not need to fill any requirements

Stupid, whats the point of paying a lot of money for a class that doesn't fulfill anything

If it doesn't fulfill any requirements, students may not take it seriously. It could be viewed as a waste of time and be a distraction from other classes.

Part 1 = No Part 2 = Yes If we're considering limiting the courses students can take in their major placing greater stress on those outside their major ... why would we want to increase this strain even further by adding a class that may not fit well into their schedule and does nothing to fulfill grad requirements??

Let's keep 4 May Terms and take something relevant our 1st semester

It's a waste of time and money to have a class that meets no requirement – that's whats wrong with requiring all the May Terms now – The LAS system is a good mix of a class and introduction to college life and these changes wouldn't be improvements

This seems silly. Why take a class that fulfills no requirement – make it an option, but not a requirement.

(B) Senior Year Course

- **An interdisciplinary senior colloquium (as we have now) OR**
- **A capstone course or experience in the major OR**
- **No senior course requirement**

Faculty Responses

I like the department capstone for it's both reflective and practical – engagement potential. It's also good for assessment... ..But I also like the interdisciplinary senior course idea if it's centered on community (civic) engagement/impact/research.

So many of our majors have capstone experiences for students already (senior art shows, recitals, field experiences, student teaching, research, etc., etc.) Let's celebrate and build on that experience. (see Symposium) If we did have a Sr. course in the GE, I would like to see a course where students would demonstrate critical thinking skills through problem – based exercises.

Current SRC is not an effective Sr course – variation in student background makes addressing a topic at a Sr level difficult.

I like the SRC concept not nec always taught

SRC takes faculty resources that could be better used elsewhere

Prefer Capstone majors course. Most majors have one now.

Capstone in the Major – could include Performance/Art Show/Port. in Fine Arts

I like SRC b/c it gives students opportunity to bring various skills together around current topic.

Current Senior Colloquium does not have enough “ ~ ” or rigor for seniors. A more focused interdisciplinary experience is necessary.

Are among the most dynamic & enjoyable classes at Simpson

SRC is one of the more distinctive parts of our curric. & should be kept

How about requiring a SRC or a capstone in the major?

I like SRC because it forces students to interact w/people from outside their majors. Major capstones are fine but they don't REPLACE SRC

SRC when done right is a very valuable course!

The “bookends” of Freshman and Senior Seminar courses – independent of major – makes a lot of sense w/in a Liberal Arts tradition

Staff/Admin Responses

I think having a “capstone” experience at the end of a student’s college career is a good thing –

Student Responses

I don’t like SRC as it is now. I think something in the major would be better. At the same time I question the necessity of a senior course req.

I like the idea of experience in the major. Some majors already have this, but for those that don’t, I think it would be helpful. I think that the function of Senior Colloq. as we have it now is sort of fulfilled through the May Term program.

I do not believe that there should be a SRC unless it is separated into specific majors & a class that pertains to what options are after you graduate.

I’ve had both a capstone & a snr colloq and I like the liberal arts perspective to round out my college career. BOTH I say is the way to go.

Capstone or none

I just don’t understand the purpose behind any of this....

Capstones may be a problem for those of us who have taken many classes in our division already. The other two seem like a waste of time

Make it within one’s major! Otherwise, it is useless!

1. Interdisciplinary colloquium is useless – it serves no purpose except to have an additional “something to do as a senior”
2. Capstone w/in the major serves a purpose and is most useful. This is common sense!
3. Possible, but w/in a major makes more sense to wrap up edu. @ Simp/ w/in your department

A course dealing with the major/minors is good or maybe no course at all. Can still have good discussions with it being a major/minor class

(C) Electronic Portfolios

- **Portfolios as an assessment tool**
- **Selected general education requirements fulfilled through portfolios (e.g. writing requirements)**

Faculty Responses

I am against portfolios – don't seem to give useful feedback or raise student skill

TOO WORK INTENSIVE; RECIPE FOR B.S. – WILL NOT WORK

Not too much work --- look at how much student post at Facebook --- online social assessment

Portfolio if it is good but requires a great deal of faculty time to administer. This problem remains to be solved.

Portfolios ok for WCII but in general I am not a fan of portfolios. Extensive time required for eval.

We tried electronic journals in the 1st year course and all seemed to agree in did not work and was dropped.

Too much work!!

This might overwhelm us

Could be electronically managed. GE requirement would have to be limited

I think that E-portfolios do fit well with the way students communicate now, and I would want to talk to other schools about this possibility. If students recognized the value of having an E-portfolio in helping to prepare resumes, applications for grad school, etc. they might come to value the E-portfolio.

Who will grade the portfolios? I wonder. I think portfolios have potential in some areas, but it's not a "cure-all". I don't generally think portfolios should replace gen ed courses...

Staff/Admin Responses

None

Student Responses

What a waste of time

Will students understand what needs to be done? Doesn't judge the success of the student.

- 1) I am not a huge fan of everything being electronic.
- 2) Who would assess these and what would the standards be?

Great... spend more time writing portfolios, & less time learning the subject matter of the portfolios

WCII = disaster This = major disaster

Already required for education – more work for the same outcome

It's somewhat nostalgic to see your progress in portfolio form, but this really just seems like more of an educational hoop to jump through than a constructive assessment tool

There should NOT be a portfolio. Creates probs for transfers/Adult learning/etc. irrelevant to when we graduate. If you want to do electronic, you have to keep in mind technology changes.

Bad idea

Being an education major - *I'm not a big fan of electronic portfolios - *too much is going to the technology/internet - *what happened to the teachers providing handouts instead of making student print everything out themselves?

Some majors don't require a lot of writing (ex. Accounting). Why make those people turn in portfolios that don't have a lot to them? Maybe write a paper on major exc ?

Only the Ed. majors should use portfolios because it is important for their career – not necessarily for all majors

If it's just a way to give more busy work, then portfolios aren't a good idea, but if certain majors would be helped (good for jobs) then maybe --- ask experienced REAL WORLD people

Electronic Portfolios - This sounds like a good idea that being able to connect the purpose of taking a class to overall edu is great – however, this will lead to an endless parade of weak, generic, wishy-washy – “ooh I loved that class – it helped me...”pseudo reflection.

Result Very BAD! For Shame!

(D) Experiential Learning

- **Service learning**
- **Internships**
- **Study abroad**
- **Student teaching**
- **Undergraduate research**

Faculty Responses

Is every student up for this? Great for those who are.

Advantages: All of these get students into the world to learn in different contexts. Helps students connect with course material. Gets Simpson's name out.

Disadvantages: Sometimes experiential aspect not adequately connected to course material so students just doing cool stuff without direction so may not learn anything.

Yes – a lot of students graduate without any of these exp

This is what employers are asking for –

Absolutely – doesn't necessarily have to be done off campus – so much learning is done out of class

Good idea – this matches the research on the learning preferences of millennial generation students.

With a broad definition of the term, most do this now. Could be a requirement student could meet thru major or gen ed. classes

Why don't we do this already? This is part of the strategic plan, best practices in higher education, and students love it. They often learn more from this than a "course". Several other good schools have moved to experiential course requirements (as long as you give students some options within it).

Experiential learning can be the place where students learn to apply the skills and knowledge they learn in class. I don't think we should have experiential learning for its own sake – but if there are experiences which have been demonstrated to improve learning then by all means make those a part of the curriculum – If those experiences fit into a GE curriculum (instead of the major) then they should count it.

Where approp. & if faculty want, yes. Required of all faculty, NO

We do this already but we could do it better. Every student should do at least one of these things. Promotes deep learning.

Staff/Admin Responses

I agree that if well planned, this can be very beneficial for students.

Advantages: Increase employment opport./contacts prior to graduation, Develop skills necessary for employment, Social/Professional support systems.

Disadvantages: Must be well planned & developed prior to placement or else... 1. Student could develop neg. opinion of experience 2. Burn bridges w/community organizations or employers.

Student Responses

Good idea – cultural component expose students from small town to more cultures and aspects of life

Be good – students would get out of their comfort zone & see a different way of life

Advantage: It seems that most jobs like to see related experience. I think it will help students realize the necessity of it.

Experiential learning brings theory and practice together – need much more of it

Allows students to gain tolerance & gain diversity through these activities. Most people that come from rural Iowa aren't able to understand different lives. This allow it to happen.

This is what college is about – textbook memorization won't get us far after graduation

ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE. What is college about if not to expand your horizons? You can't learn everything in a classroom.

Yes, this would be imperative to the education experience, it gives the student a chance to learn outside the classroom.

I've learned more in my service learning, internships, and study abroad than any prof can teach. I would love to see them as req.s, esp. service learning. However, I wouldn't want to overwhelm service sited. Catholic Worker House – sometimes the volunteers outnumber the clients, which serves no one. Needs to be well organized.

These are essential to personal and application. Eventually everyone has to learn to apply their college skills to the real world.

A great idea! - just make sure the services are geared toward majors and not random!

I think this is an awesome idea...will better prepare students for real world & will open doors & the students will learn better from hands on interactions..which has been proven that people learn much better this way! ☺

These are good for developing real world exp

NO! Some students can barely pay Simpson for tuition so why should more expenses be added to study abroad? REQUIRED? NO!!

These are definitely necessary as long as the students don't have to pay an extra cost because they usually don't now w/service learning and internships. Requiring study abroad might be tricky if stud h/to pay a lot more

Provided it is affordable or included in tuition... These types of experiences would be great addition to the ciric. The concern being connecting with businesses both far and near and the students obligation to pay...

Experiential learning would be the most relevant to every student! This would be most beneficial to students b/c it pertains to real life experiences and would have an actual effect on students rather than focusing specifically on learning. If a class could have the best of both worlds, (meaning that combo of experiential & learning) this would be ideal. As long as there in NO learning in the classroom taken away from this process, good idea. This allows students to actually learn & experience.

(E) Limit on the number of classes a student can take within the division and department of their major

- **Current structure requires students to take 44 credits outside the division of their major**
- **Current structure does not allow students to take more than 42 credits within the department of their major**

Faculty Responses

Yes, to insure a broad experience

The current structure is essential to maintaining breadth of study

Only req. should be to meet gen ed -- requirement of other courses could be in the div. of the major

I'd be in favor of designing a Gen Ed curriculum that takes care of the breadth issue so that we don't have to impose artificial constraints on the curriculum

Agreed (to above)

Bad, how does this help the student?

Just dumb – we routinely ignore this now – with good reason. It punishes excellence in a field!

Not needed in addition to gen ed requirements.

Pro: A liberal arts education means broad exposure to a variety of disciplines. Placing a reasonable limit on division & major course loads supports the liberal arts mission.

I would favor a base # that had to be taken “outside” but not limit to what can be taken “inside” ex. 10 classes outside of major division

I agree (to above)

44 credits outside the major division is too high. Similar goals can be accomplished reducing this number. The concentration model is a good start.

Yes, unless there are outside (licensing) requirements that necessitate more.

I don't support a divisional limit because our divisions don't all “make sense” organizationally. But I think limiting the # of courses in a single major that counts to graduation is a good idea to prevent over-specialization. You'll find this idea at good liberal arts schools like St. Olaf, Cornell, and Ill. Wesleyan (Max = 14 courses in a major count toward graduation)

Staff/Admin Responses

There is merit to having students take a “broad” range of coursework at a liberal arts inst. like Simpson and the policy seems to help ensure this.

Student Responses

NO, DUMB IDEA. WHY WOULD YOU LIMIT THEIR AREA OF INTEREST?

Dumb.

I do not like this idea. If I am majoring in an area I should be able to take any/or all of the classes they offer without penalty.

I think a requirement “outside” major is important to keep up exposure to other areas. The limit on major is difficult because it limits exposure to different areas w/in major

I think if the student still meets all of the cornerstone requirements they shouldn't be limited in their major. Many people with double majors have a lot of overlapping classes in the same department.

I have to petition to graduate because of this. This is SO unnecessary! Why punish me for wanting to be an expert in my field after I met the gen ed require.?

Why would you deny a student more experience? Ridiculous!

Don't you want more experience in the major?

I think you should be able to take as many courses related to your major as possible. The more knowledge you have – the better you'll be in the real world!

I think limiting it to a certain point is good. After all cornerstones are already fulfilled for example, students should be able to go as far in their major as they want.

Stupid, the more classes the Better!

It's stupid that you have to take more general classes than major related classes!!!

How will I be prepared if you don't prepare me?

Maybe specifying when you take these non-major related classes? Avoiding seniors who are completely isolated in their departments?

No – if you want a “liberal arts” experience put a minimum on classes outside division, but don’t limit within department

I HATE this one! Makes it really hard for students to engage in practicums – example: The Simp...a great experience but will push you over the limit...

Why would you limit the classes in your major when you want the most information about your profession to be the best you can at it. Accounting majors need 150 credits to take the exam and you want to know as much as possible to pass it. More knowledge = more marketable. Stupid!

Agreed! Amendment needs to be made otherwise people take classes that don’t help them and get screwed out of classes they need.

Ridiculous! Why should we be limited in the number of courses we can take?

I have a double major within the humanities so I have to petition to smash this guideline of my credit hours. The repeal of this limitation is both necessary and proper. Amen to this proposal!

Aside from general classes, students should be able to take as many classes in whatever division if it works for their major/minor! It’s ridiculous to require classes and then say they can’t take so many of them.

(F) All –college symposium

- **Students present their work at an all-college symposium**

Faculty responses

I love this idea – adds level of student pride to work & raises academic atmosphere, which we desperately need

A symposium is a good idea, but should not be a gen ed requirement – could be a major requirement. Yes!

Yes – Calendars for these presentations should be distributed, posted on campus.

I'm in favor of this idea – provides a reason to strive for (and celebrate) excellence

Great idea that rewards students for their accomplishments. An event like this makes for a great recruiting tool.

Learning how to present is critical for real-world prep.

Love the symposium idea – they just started this at my alma mater – but requiring it of all students as a general ed requirement is a one-size-fits-all solution. I'd rather have students voluntarily participate because of their interest of faculty encouragement.

Great, but do we want to require at college level rather than by dept. or division?

Beside the point.

The presentation could be discipline specific – so students would attend presentations /events that they are interested in. The GE part of it is the growing need of students to learn to present their work well, and if we had a college-wide symposium, we could use it as an assessment of the curriculum.

Staff/Admin Responses

Yes! I did this as an undergrad and it was a great experience. Raises the academic bar on campus.

Could be a lot of work to coordinate this (requiring additional staffing)

Student Responses

It raises expectations

Good idea!

Shouldn't be required for gen ed

Not sure... what if fear of public speaking?

Great....just one more thing on my list of things to do!

Let each dept. do this on their own – Yes!

Good idea, should be optional but not required

Good idea, but it should be in front of dept. chairs

Interesting. Would raise standards --- but I think making it required wouldn't be the best --- students may not do their best work... view it as just another requirement to fulfill, resent it, etc.....

I don't know how practical this is for all majors. Perhaps if it were by each major or dept.?

Would be good real world prep but I wouldn't wanna go to the symposium to listen to ppl talk about other fields that I'm not interested in

We sorely need more academic events such as this. So long as it is not required for graduation, it would make a great addition to campus events

I think this is a good idea but I would support it more if it was done w/in a major or dept.

This instead should be a show-case of selected works/people by profs in a forum structure not another requirement for everyone.

Good on paper, but symposiums are so boring for people who are uninterested & it serves few if talking & texting become the symposium. In my major, the symposium serves well, though. Theatre req. it for seniors, and the entire company learns about the upcoming project. It was very helpful & useful for us. I would've liked one for my other major (Soc.)