

# **“LIVING AND LEARNING IN A DIVERSE COMMUNITY”**

## **A PLAN FOR COLGATE’S LIBERAL ARTS CORE CURRICULUM**

Sep 13, 2021

### ***Core Revision Committee, 2019-2021:***

Antonio Barrera, Associate Professor of History, Elected from the Division of University Studies  
Jeff Bary, Associate Professor of Physics and Astronomy, University Professor for First-Year Seminar, Global Engagements, and Core Distinction  
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Rebecca Metzler, Associate Professor of Physics, University Professor for Core Scientific Perspectives  
Jenna Reinbold, Associate Professor of Religion, Elected from the Division of Arts and Humanities  
Nancy Ries, Professor of Anthropology and Peace and Conflict Studies, Division Director of University Studies, Chair of the CRC (2019-2020)  
Alicia Simmons, Associate Professor of Sociology, Elected from the Division of Social Sciences  
Susan Thomson, Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, University Professor for Core Communities and Identities

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***University Professors, April-June 2021***

Jeff Bary, Associate Professor of Physics and Astronomy, University Professor for First-Year Seminar, Global Engagements, and Core Distinction

Ben Child, Associate Professor of English, University Professor for Core 152: Challenges of Modernity (2020-2021)

Elizabeth Marlowe, Associate Professor of Art & Art History, University Professor for Core 151: Legacies of the Ancient World

Rebecca Metzler, Associate Professor of Physics, University Professor for Core Scientific Perspectives

Susan Thomson, Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, University Professor for Core Communities and Identities

***New Members of the Combined Group, Fall 2021***

Georgia Frank, Professor and Chair of the Religion Department, Member of the Curriculum Committee

Ernie Nolen, Gordon & Dorothy Kline Professor of Chemistry, Division Director of Natural Sciences and Mathematics,

Lynn Schwarzer, Professor of Art & Art History, Division Director of the Arts and Humanities

Meg Worley, Associate Professor and Chair of Writing & Rhetoric, University Professor for Core 151

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## Recommendations from the CRC for Transitioning to a New Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, Updated by the Combined Group in September 2021

A. Overview of Colgate's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum:  
*Living and Learning in a Diverse Community*

*Living and Learning in a Diverse Community*, the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC) under consideration, is structured around five required elements with a sixth, Core Distinction, remaining optional:

**I. The First-Year Seminar** completed during fall of a student's first year of enrollment at Colgate.

**II. The Living & Learning Workshop**, required of all students taking the first-year seminar. It does not carry academic credit.

**III. The Core Components** completed during a student's first and second years of enrollment. These three courses may be completed in any sequence.

Core Communities  
Core Conversations  
Core Sciences

**IV. The Liberal Arts Practices and Areas of Inquiry** completed during any year of a student's enrollment and in any sequence.

- a. Confronting Collective Challenges
- b. The Process of Writing
- c. Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning
- d. Language Study
- e. Artistic Practice and Interpretation
- f. Human Thought and Expression
- g. Natural Science and Mathematics
- h. Social Relations, Institutions, and Agents

Most courses will be designated as fulfilling one of the Areas of Inquiry (f, g, h). Some courses may also carry up to two Liberal Arts Practice designations (a-e). Core Component classes do not fulfill Liberal Arts Practice requirements.

**V. The Physical Education and Wellness** requirement may be completed during any year, but students are encouraged to complete at least one credit by the end of the second year. It is a two-unit requirement that does not carry academic credit.

**VI. Core Distinction**, an optional capstone experience within the Core curriculum.

### *Some Notes on Meeting the Requirements of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum*

To ensure a well-rounded liberal arts education, students must engage with disciplines throughout the curriculum and across the full reach of the academic program at Colgate. Thus, to fulfill the Liberal Arts Practices and Areas of Inquiries requirements, students must take at least seven courses, from at least six different departments or programs.

Although a course may have multiple designations, a student may not fulfill multiple designations through a single course. The following exceptions apply:

- Students may double-count their Process of Writing Practice course to also fulfill one Liberal Arts Practices or Areas of Inquiry requirement.
- Students may double-count the FSEM to fulfill one Core Component or any Liberal Arts Practice / Area of Inquiry requirement except their Process of Writing course.

Opening as they do with the First-Year Seminar (FSEM), these requirements presume that students begin their undergraduate careers as first-year students at Colgate. Requirements for students who transfer to Colgate after the first semester of the first year will be worked out during the implementation process.

Apart from transfer students, all Colgate undergraduates are required to meet these requirements; students may not place out of any of them. Students will fulfill the proposed LACC in no fewer than 10 and no more than 12 courses. Faculty involved in the implementation process will make recommendations to the AAB about whether these courses must be taken at Colgate (including Colgate off-study programs) or whether any of these requirements may be met by taking courses elsewhere.

### *Some Notes on Staffing the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum*

The vitality of the LACC depends on the active participation of continuing faculty members. Tenured and tenure-stream faculty members are normally expected to teach either an FSEM or a Core component class at least once every four semesters.<sup>1</sup> Faculty members in departments and programs facing exceptional enrollment or staffing challenges may contribute somewhat less frequently to the FSEM or Core components, although the benefits of Core component teaching to pre-tenure faculty members in the form of university-wide networking and formal and informal mentoring should be carefully weighed against departments' curricular needs.

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<sup>1</sup> If one quarter of Colgate's roughly 300 faculty offered one Core component every term, this would yield 75 sections per term, and 150 sections per year. To staff the three Core components at 20 sections per term requires 120 sections per year. The remaining 30 sections of teaching power would go toward staffing the 45 First Year Seminars needed annually, many of which are not taught as Core component courses.

## B. Colgate's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum: *Living and Learning in a Diverse Community*

If adopted, the Core curriculum before us would become the first Core curriculum of Colgate's third century. Core revisions are always responsive, building on the strengths of whatever Core came before while attending to its deficits, all with an eye to the current moment. This Core revision, which unfolded over the period from the drafting of the Colgate Vision Statement to the waning of Covid-19 in the Northeast of the United States, responds not just to the previous Core, but to the tremendous and varied challenges of the current moment. It seeks to deepen our sense of intellectual and institutional community and to develop our students as local and global citizens.

The process of revision began in 2018-19, at a moment of heightened hope for the University, as it celebrated its bicentennial and established its vision for the next one hundred years. The collective aspirations were captured in three significant documents: *Colgate University's Third Century: A Vision Statement*, *The Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*; and *The Report on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression*. As the DEI plan notes, "The celebration of Colgate's Bicentennial year saw the University adopt, first, a Vision Statement that defined a number of foundational pillars of the University. These include the intellectual strength and rigor of the academic program, the enrollment of outstanding students, and the ongoing development of a strong sense of community marked by affection, ritual, and pride."

The plan made clear, however, that a strong sense of community is not a monolithic sense of community. Rather, it stressed the importance of diversity within a community:

A great institution is a diverse institution. It is one that brings students of different socioeconomic backgrounds, races and ethnicities, and religions to campus. There are myriad reasons for this to be a priority, not least of which is our obligation to the broader American community in which we have been permitted to prosper. But beyond any responsibilities we might feel to the commonweal, or principles by which we might be motivated, is the simple acknowledgment that an education today is a poor thing if it does not include first hand engagement with a wide range of perspectives and experiences. We simply cannot claim to be a first-tier institution providing a first-tier education to our students if we do not expose them to a rich diversity of perspectives and backgrounds in their educational and social experiences. (*Colgate University's Third Century: A Vision Statement*, p. 8.)

Similarly, while *The Report on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression* asserted the importance of open inquiry, unfettered creation of knowledge, and the free exchange of ideas, it also affirmed a "commitment to learning, inquiry, and community that encourages individuals to listen and speak with care, so that all voices among us are heard." Together these guiding documents articulated Colgate's commitments to the values of diversity and community. Their expressed ideals were consistently set within the framework of fostering an inclusive community, one which "respects individual differences, recognizes them as valuable, and works to build bridges across differences, so that all members of the community can contribute fully. Such an environment, it should be said, is the strongest possible foundation for excellence as a university" (DEI plan).

This moment of hope and aspiration at Colgate has coincided with a period of deepened anxiety within the nation and across the globe. The past few years have been marked by fierce political

divisions and instability, by incontrovertible evidence of climate change and environmental degradation; by a national awakening about racial inequity, and systemic and structural racism; by heightened awareness of profound economic inequality and widespread food insecurity; by social fragmentation hastened by the algorithmic dissemination and perpetuation of information; and by the threats of scientific illiteracy, innumeracy, and disinformation to national and global security and stability. As if this were not enough, this past year, all humanity reeled from the rapid spread of a lethal virus and its unfathomable toll. The weight of these many anxieties was felt keenly, if variously, on our campus and in our community.

Against this turbulent backdrop, Colgate sought to continue the work of revising its Core Curriculum, one of its signature programs. The revision process revealed varied and sometimes competing expressions of hope and aspiration for the institution. It also revealed manifestations of the anxiety and divisiveness that have marked the broader cultural moment.

The document now before us was refined in a period of relative calm, after the close of a turbulent year. At this moment, we have the luxury to reflect and not simply react, to be able to ask questions and consider their answers. We can, and should, ask what it means to have been and to continue to be “Colgate Together”—the banner under which we have faced the pandemic. More broadly, as we come back together after physical separation and intellectual division, we can and should probe questions of community and commitment to others both at Colgate and well beyond. What does it mean to live in community in times of calm and times of crisis? What does it mean to live in a community marked by both commonality and difference? In what ways have we unwittingly privileged our relationships with members of the community who are most like us? How do we engage empathically with the experiences, identities, and beliefs of those whose backgrounds or perspectives are unlike our own? How might we speak with members in our community with whom we disagree? In short: what does it mean to live and learn in a diverse community?

Community is a critical idea for a liberal arts college in a rural setting like Colgate, which is small enough to imagine itself as a single body of teachers and learners, and isolated in many ways from larger communities. Our residential structure, particularly with the Commons model, is designed to foster living and learning communities. And yet within the Colgate community are myriad other communities, some formally organized, others springing up organically. Some of these are made up of teammates, classmates, floormates. Others form around affinities and interests. Still others consist of people with similar identities, experiences, perspectives, or worldviews. Like the people within them, communities are dynamic and evolving. They can be inclusive or exclusive, inviting or threatening, invigorating or challenging. To be healthy, they need to be nourished and sustained.

Diversity, similarly, is a critical concern, both within the classroom and without. The *Vision Statement* notes:

It is clear today that the future of this country will belong to those who are culturally dexterous. To be culturally dexterous is to be able to navigate across diverse cultural perspectives with authenticity and skill. We would be doing a disservice to our students, and would relinquish our standing as a leading American institution of higher education, if we did not take seriously our charge to enhance our students’ cultural understanding and adroitness. These are qualities that depend not only upon the classroom but on what happens in our residence halls and social spaces. It depends upon friendships and authentic intimate contacts between students of different backgrounds, cultures, and belief systems.

The social and ethical benefits of diversity to community are abundant. In the context of this document—a consideration of curriculum—we need also to elevate the intellectual benefits of diversity. Research suggests that a diverse learning environment “promotes creativity and innovation, improved problem solving and decision-making, organizational flexibility and a tolerance for ambiguity”<sup>2</sup>—that is, diversity enhances the very abilities championed within a liberal arts setting. And, importantly, research further indicates that all students, regardless of their background, benefit from participating in a diverse learning community.

That benefit is not limited to student learners, however. Exposed to and influenced by the ideas of only those within a small sphere or subset of a field, a scholar—or researcher—can become intellectually paralyzed, ceasing to question or challenge conventional wisdom. Exposure to dissimilar views or alternative assumptions about a problem encourages one to think harder and better. Demographic and cultural diversity broadens learning. It opens up new areas for inquiry, enlarges disciplines, and changes the shape of knowledge.

Thus, this reorientation of the Core requires students to consider thoughtfully notions of community, identity, and belonging. It asks that they be open to learning with and from people who are different from themselves. More than that, however, it asks our students to attend to the experience of diverse community: to be intentional in their living among one another, to participate broadly in varied communities within Colgate and beyond, to honor the diversity of community in our midst, to be responsive when communities fail to live up to their ideals, and, importantly, to carry this attention forward in their lives. It asks students to take on, here and in their future communities, what is asked in the DEI Plan: to grapple with the challenges of living in a diverse community; to recognize that, for a wide range of reasons, these challenges will continue to be felt acutely by some members of our campus community more than others; and to respond with commitment and compassion when failures of equity and inclusion do harm to community members.

As the heart of Colgate’s academic program, the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC) builds upon these foundational principles. To this end, it aims to:

- Create a common intellectual project for the University
- Expose students to diverse fields of study and modes of intellectual and creative inquiry across the curriculum
- Further Colgate's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Taken together, these principles guide the central ambition of this Core, which is to foster deep understanding in a complex, rapidly changing, and diverse world. The LACC asks students and faculty to grapple with questions that shape knowledge, experience, and practice across time and space as well as across divisional and disciplinary boundaries.

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<sup>2</sup> Hurtado, S., & Dey, E. (1997). Achieving the goals of multiculturalism and diversity. In M. W. Peterson, D. D. Dill, & L. A. Mets (Eds.), *Planning and management for a changing environment: A handbook on redesigning post-secondary institutions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



The elements of the Core should be understood by Colgate students not as requirements simply to be met, but as a logical, connected approach to becoming an informed, ethical, and perpetual student of a complex world. The Core should be seen as being foundational to the liberal arts form of education that is central to the academic life of Colgate. A Core curriculum should be part of an education that current and prospective students see as compelling, coherent, and inspiring, with well-communicated goals worthy of their attention, commitment, and time. As a liberal arts college, Colgate strives to convey to students the value of a variety of skills and a willingness to examine one's own experience and conditions from a variety of perspectives as well as to learn of contexts different from one's own. Thus, this Core was conceived as encouraging students toward lifelong learning, thoughtful citizenship, and inclusivity.

The values expressed above do not hold for students alone. Faculty similarly live their professional lives and learn their fields within the context of our diverse community. For Colgate faculty members, the Core is not only a site of teaching but also learning, a shared intellectual endeavor, as foundational to their lives as scholars on this campus as it is to students immersed in a rigorous liberal arts education. Through regular workshops and meetings about the elements of the Core, faculty can see themselves as engaged with and responsible for one of Colgate's most cherished academic traditions. Debates among faculty—even heated arguments, set within the context of a shared commitment to a learning community—about the foundational ideas of this Core will not be evidence of this program's failure but rather a sign that the Core at Colgate is a source of intellectual energy and engagement.

## C. The Elements of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum

### I/II. The First-Year Seminar and The Living & Learning Workshop

#### I. The FSEM

The First-Year Seminar (FSEM) Program introduces incoming students to their new intellectual community as well as to college-level expectations for reading, writing, academic integrity, and engagement with scholarly work. Populated only by first-year students in their first semester, FSEMs provide a unique opportunity for members of an incoming class to build a supportive, inclusive community as they integrate into the collegiate environment.

In accordance with longstanding practice, FSEMs comprise a menu of seminars, normally capped at 18, spanning all academic divisions. Any Core component, introductory-level department or introductory-level program course can be taught as an FSEM. Thus, FSEMs continue to serve as opportunities to recruit future majors and minors. Many faculty members also use FSEMs as a place to innovate, experimenting with new pedagogical approaches and introducing new courses to the curriculum.

In addition to learning goals that are specific to their course content, all FSEMs will have the following four features:

1. In order for all students to begin developing mindful and rigorous writing practices from the outset of their college education, all FSEMs, regardless of the disciplinary focus, are Process of Writing courses.
2. Each FSEM instructor and class are directly affiliated with a community of students and faculty based in one of the Residential Commons.<sup>3</sup>
3. All FSEM students are automatically enrolled in the Living & Learning Workshop.
4. Instructors who teach in FSEMs have a number of special obligations, described below.

#### *Focus on Writing in the First-Year Seminar*

Receiving and responding to feedback are important parts of the writing process and a student's development as a writer. As one of two courses in the LACC dedicated to the process of writing, all FSEMs will therefore:

1. Include assignments of varying length and complexity. These could be distinct, scaffolded parts of a larger project, or separate assignments. The form or the genre of the writing will vary and be specific to the discipline of their FSEM. These can include blog posts, music reviews, songwriting, scientific research articles, research papers, lab reports, abstracts, personal essays, short stories, artist's statements, exhibition catalog entries, and essays in upper-level language classes.

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<sup>3</sup> The structure of some of the scholars' programs means that there exist a few exceptions to this principle.

2. Emphasize the iterative process of writing. Throughout the semester, students will write and revise their work in response to specific feedback from instructors. Peer review might also support students' growth as writers.

To support writing instruction in the FSEM, workshops coordinated by the Writing and Speaking Center and the Department of Writing and Rhetoric will be offered regularly during the academic year and at the annual Core Pedagogy Retreat. In addition, students will be guided and encouraged to integrate the support services of the Writing and Speaking Center into their FSEM writing practice.

The second writing-focused course required of all students is the Process of Writing requirement (described below). Instructors should advise students seeking more explicit focus on the craft of writing to take designated classes in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

#### *FSEM and the Residential Commons*

To further encourage emerging learning communities, each FSEM and its instructor are directly affiliated with one of Colgate's Residential Commons, forming one of the most direct links between living and learning on campus. This means that, normally, all students in an FSEM belong to the same Residential Commons. FSEM instructors, in their roles as academic advisors, trusted mentors, and Residential Commons affiliates, become valuable resources for first-year students. Cohort building within the FSEM and the Residential Commons-based living and learning community begins with New Student Orientation and is sustained for the first two years through the Residential Commons program with the support of its faculty directors, residential fellows, community leaders, Residential Commons Councils, faculty and staff affiliates, and staff of the Divisions of the Dean of the College and the Dean of the Faculty.

Integrating additional Core component programming and the Residential Commons program will further strengthen the connection between living and learning on campus. Core component instructors are strongly encouraged to collaborate with the Residential Commons program, whose faculty directors have resources, a dedicated staff, and facilities to support co-curricular events that bring students and faculty members together.

## **II. The Living & Learning Workshop<sup>4</sup>**

A new, non-credit bearing element added to the LACC is designed to prepare Colgate students to thrive at college. The Living & Learning Workshop is taught by a range of library faculty, staff members, and trained stakeholders in the Division of the Dean of the College. The Workshop aims to educate the whole student, both inside and outside of the classroom, and to build a more inclusive community with well-adjusted and socially aware students ready for the academic and personal challenges that lie ahead.

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<sup>4</sup> The goals of the Living & Learning Workshop will be to provide students with a deeper and more meaningful engagement with the topics outlined in the longstanding pedagogical and programmatic expectations of the FSEM program. These topics, which have typically been in competition with a discipline-based course curriculum, will now find more adequate and standardized coverage in the stand-alone Workshop. For a detailed discussion of such workshops, go to the [First-Year Seminar Linked Living & Learning Workshop Appendix](#).

The Living & Learning Workshop is a requirement for graduation that does not carry academic credit. The Workshops are coordinated by the FSEM-Commons UP, Residential Commons directors and staff, and the Dean of the College Division.<sup>5</sup> The modules will be developed in a partnership between faculty and staff and may change from year to year. Living & Learning Workshop modules might include:

- An academic freedom, integrity, and freedom of expression module taught by members of the faculty and the Dean of the College staff.
- An effective writing module taught in consultation with the Writing and Speaking Center staff members.
- A library skills module taught by members of the library faculty. The content of this module may be tailored to a specific assignment given by the FSEM instructor.
- A career exploration module taught by professional advisers from Career Service. In this module, students might engage in self-assessment, gaining insight into their unique strengths, interests, preferences, identities, and values.
- A campus culture and climate module taught by staff members from Haven, Counseling and Psychological Services, and the Network Peer Group.
- A sustainability module taught by the Office of Sustainability staff members.

FSEM instructors are supported by faculty from University Libraries who are available to tailor Workshop meetings to support course-specific assignments.

Instructors are not required to attend the weekly Workshop meetings, but are encouraged to stay abreast of the topics being addressed and attend when possible. Instructors have no responsibility for assessing students' achievement in the Workshop.

The Living & Learning Workshop will be a non-credit-bearing graduation requirement for an initial trial period of three years. During the third year the program runs, the FSEM University Professor will conduct a review of the workshop and work together with the Dean of the College staff and interested faculty to make any necessary adjustments to its topics, organization, or structure. This review will also consider the viability of converting the Workshop into an S/U, 0.25-credit add-on to the FSEM. Any such proposal would go before the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Academic Affairs Board before being presented to the faculty for a vote.

**Special Obligations for FSEM Instructors.** All faculty members are encouraged to teach FSEMs with some regularity. However, because of the two-year advising obligations, instructors normally should not teach an FSEM in consecutive academic years. FSEM instructors are required to be on campus at the beginning of the week leading up to the first day of classes. As part of New Student Orientation, FSEM instructors meet individually with their new advisees to review their schedules

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<sup>5</sup> Details of the role of the Academic Affairs Board and other branches of faculty governance in the functioning and evolution of the Living & Learning Workshop will be determined during the implementation process of this curriculum.

and discuss future academic plans. Instructors will normally serve as the academic advisor to their FSEM students until students declare a major.

As with previous versions of the Core, FSEM instructors are expected to build community and provide support as students transition to college. The affiliation between FSEMs and the Residential Commons makes these obligations easier to fulfill and opens up new possibilities for creative activities and programming. Such activities may include attending on-campus events such as lectures, panel discussions, film screenings, hosting off-campus dinners, and the shared experience of the Summer Reading Program. Instructors are encouraged to contribute to or participate in the activities of their Residential Commons.

Students may double-count the First-Year Seminar to fulfill one Core Component, Liberal Arts Practice and Areas of Inquiry requirement (excluding the Process of Writing). When a course that normally fulfills the Process of Writing Practice is offered as an FSEM, it will not double-count toward the Process of Writing Practice.

### **III. The Core Components**

Foundational to Colgate's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, the three Core courses together embody the goals of a liberal arts education. They invite students to develop the capacity and desire to call common assumptions into question, to move beyond one's limited experiences, and to ask critical questions of practices and systems in which students now operate. These courses are expected to be challenging. They stand outside departments and programs, asking students and faculty to move across disciplinary boundaries and scholarly methods.

#### **Core Communities**

Core Communities courses foreground multidisciplinary engagement with the historical and contemporary factors influencing peoples' experience living in community. Courses in this Core component ask students and faculty to examine community dynamics across time and space, in order to understand the lives of peoples, places, and things in relation to social, religious, political, economic, and military networks.

Courses in this component address the ways in which peoples' lived experiences unfold in social and material worlds that have been shaped and reshaped by global, transregional, and historical phenomena,<sup>6</sup> such as slavery, colonialism, capitalism, industrialization, and new technologies. These courses also recognize that the gains and losses catalyzed by such forces are not equally shared; rather, communities are marked by legacies of difference.

The Core Communities component consists of a menu of courses, each focusing on a topic selected by the instructor. All courses in the component emphasize three pedagogical goals:

1. Gaining academic and empathetic understanding of the experiences of people in communities that may be different from one's own.

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<sup>6</sup> For comparison to the current Core Communities and Identities course, please see the [entry in the current catalogue](#).

2. Understanding the cultural, ethical, economic, and political significance of belonging, in particular the degree of peoples' access to rights, resources, and respect within communities.

3. Explaining dynamics of power that shape patterns of inclusion and exclusion within a community, with attention to their histories and contemporary implications.

The communities explored in this component take a variety of shapes. They may be: 1) nations and societies, 2) geographic regions, 3) historical communities, 4) transregional or transnational communities, 5) communities of practice, or 6) communities emerging through things, technologies, or markets. Additional cross-cutting categories might be proposed by faculty members in consultation with the Communities UP.

#### *Pedagogical Structure and Expectations*

Communities courses are unified by the pedagogical goals listed above, which will be achieved through multidisciplinary materials and multimodal instruction. Three requirements hold for all courses:

- All students in a Core Communities course will complete an academic research project designed by individual instructors that promotes information literacy and effective communication skills.
- All courses in this component are expected to address the themes outlined in the description of the course above, but the manner in which they do so and the amount of time within the course dedicated to each will vary based on the choice of the individual instructor.
- The component will hold monthly staff seminars during the academic year. During semesters in which they are teaching, faculty members are expected to attend at least two meetings and are strongly encouraged to attend them all.

Beyond these expectations, there is considerable flexibility in the design of these courses. The following are guidelines to help instructors shape their courses:

- Instructors are strongly encouraged to teach with primary texts and materials, so that students can engage directly with multiple voices and perspectives. Such primary sources might include maps, photographs, film, dance, music, theater, visual art, historical archives, memoirs, oral testimony, demographic and statistical data, interviews, and physical or digital artifacts.
- As possible, Communities courses will offer students a sense of the history of the community under consideration.
- Close and critical reading of relevant literature, poetry, and sacred or political texts, or of cultural rituals and practice may be a central mode of teaching.

- Instructors are encouraged to choose one or two theoretical sources to ground their section. Use of such sources allows students to understand and analyze questions of belonging, power dynamics, and life experiences possibly different from their own. Core Communities courses do not require use of any shared texts across the component. Faculty members may promote some commonality across their sections in a given semester, at their discretion and in consultation with the Communities UP.

Given the multidisciplinary nature of this component, faculty members from all four divisions are welcome to teach in this component.

Core Communities courses are distinct from departmental courses in the SOSC Division. Introductory-level courses in SOSC are largely focused on a particular discipline whereas Core Communities courses are interdisciplinary, and must meet, to some degree or another, the three pedagogical goals listed above (experiences of people in communities; significance of belonging; and dynamics of power). Like many SOSC and area studies courses, Core Communities courses can serve as gateways for study abroad or extended study, as inspiration for language study, or as requirements for some area studies majors in a range of departments and programs.

#### *Sample Course Ideas*

This list includes both existing Core CI courses and ideas for new courses that would address the pedagogical goals of Core Communities. The list is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive, but is intended to give some sense of the range of possible courses that might fit into the component.

Nations and societies	Core France Core Maya Core Japan
Geographic regions	Core Africa Core Danube Core Appalachia
Historical communities	Core 1915-1970: The Great Migration Core Classical World of the Eastern Mediterranean Core 1968: Global Protest
Transregional or transnational communities	Core North American Indians Core African Diasporas Core European Union
Communities of practice	Core Monasticism Core Black Lives Matter
Communities emerging through things, technologies or markets	Core Sugar Core Opioids

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## Core Conversations

Conversation is central to Colgate's educational mission. Having a conversation with others requires actively listening to them -- paying attention to what they say and how they say it. Having a conversation equally requires actively responding to your interlocutors -- opening your mind to theirs through the expression of your thoughts and feelings. Conversation thus presupposes mutual respect, and it knits its participants into a community. Being in a conversational community is not always a matter of agreeing about the topics under discussion: identifying and acknowledging our differences can bring us into community just as finding common ground does. And an institution of higher learning *should* constitute a diverse community encompassing differences of life experience, many kinds of expertise, and multiple schemes of value. The conversations that sustain such a community are the warp and weft of the education Colgate offers. As occasions for self-expression, conversations allow individuals to discover and develop their own ideas; as exercises in interpretation, conversations allow an individual to learn from others; as communal endeavors, conversations allow their participants to identify areas of agreement and disagreement, and deepen their understanding of the worlds they share.

This Core component extends the scope of Colgate's conversations to encompass perspectives from the past. These perspectives come to us as texts -- a term we use in a broad sense to refer both to written works and to other kinds of cultural artifacts. Any creative expression relies on an inherited web of significations, and to enter into conversation with a text accordingly requires locating it within its historical and cultural context. At the same time, juxtaposing texts from diverse times and cultures can lead to surprising illuminations not available from a single interpretative position. Studying texts from the past and from a variety of cultural traditions can widen our sense of what is possible in human life. Such texts may challenge our present convictions, and they may provide fresh modes of understanding. Indeed, it is hard to predict the effect of engaging with texts from other times and places, and this is part of the intellectual excitement of studying them.

This course will employ a set of common texts to promote wide-ranging conversations, anchored in the past and directed toward the present. This course will highlight intertextuality, putting texts into conversation with each other. In the classroom, this course will create conversations between readers and texts, between students, between teachers and students, and between members of the teaching staff. This course aims to create a common intellectual project shared by every Colgate student and, over time, a widening circle of alumni and faculty; this shared experience will create conditions for the sort of extended conversations that will make for a lifetime of learning.



The texts selected for this course will be multivalent and lend themselves to multiple interpretations. Rather than telling readers what to think, the common texts for this course should open conversations about their themes and about the bearing of these themes on our lives. The texts engaged within this course may explore moral issues that cannot be definitively resolved, challenge deeply held commitments, present students with practical and ethical dilemmas, or defend ways of thinking that will at first strike some students as alien. The texts should be rich enough to allow individual instructors to highlight issues that engage them and their students. Studying these texts should promote the open-minded and mind-opening conversations that are central to living and learning in diverse communities. The value of this study lies not in participants' embracing any prescribed positions on particular issues, but in their learning to think through issues of real gravity and their cultivating the habits of mind that sustain enduring and transformative conversations.

### *Pedagogical Structure and Expectations*

- **Core Conversations is one course taught in many ways.** This component is distinguished from Core Communities and Core Sciences by its common texts, which will be supplemented by readings selected by each instructor. As such, it allows the teaching staff to embrace thematic coherence at the same time that they emphasize particular aspects that mesh with their own pedagogical interests.
- **Core Conversations gives sustained attention to texts of various kinds.** This component defines a text expansively, not limiting it to written work but encompassing many modes of intellectual and creative expression. The focused attention on texts -- whether films, poems, dances, legal codes, statues, music, or buildings -- allows students to develop the skill of close reading and the value of re-reading, particularly for difficult or challenging texts.
- **Core Conversations includes at least five common texts.** The defining feature of this component is the close reading of common (shared) texts. The selection of these texts will be made by those teaching in the component. That quest for objects of common attention, however, will build intellectual community among the staff and, ultimately, among the students.
- **The common texts were created in multiple times and places.** Concomitant with the goal of sustained engagement with challenging texts is a commitment to texts from different cultures, in terms of both location and time period (and including pre-modern texts). These two dimensions of the course encourage students to develop an ability to see connections and commonalities across ideas from different periods and places as well as to challenge preconceptions about ideas from different eras and different places.
- **Individual instructors will select any additional texts for their Core Conversations sections.** Instructors are encouraged to complement the common texts with other material in order to augment the intellectual themes of the course and deepen the interplay between readings.

Once the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum has been voted in by the faculty, those interested in teaching in the Conversations component will work out structural and thematic details of the course, including the selection of common texts, with initial discussions facilitated by the five University Professors. The final responsibility for defining this course lies with the prospective staff under the guidance of the University Professor for Core Conversations.

## Core Sciences

The present world has been fundamentally shaped by the products of the scientific endeavor, from the nearly instant connectivity of the globe to our ability to fight global pandemics at the genetic level. As a result, many of our most important issues require a scientifically literate populace to successfully address them. For such literacy, it is necessary to understand the processes and practices behind the development of scientific knowledge.

Courses in Core Sciences courses explore the complexities of creating scientific knowledge, and applying it to broader contexts in wide-ranging ways. As these courses explore the broader impacts of science, they also include consideration of historical forces, inequities, or social differences that influence the production, application or reception of scientific knowledge.

Core Sciences courses explicitly engage a range of scientific practices and processes. They work to deepen students' understanding of how these methodologies produce knowledge of our world. They also help students reflect critically on the limitations of empirical and theoretical investigations and the institutional, ethical, or social contexts of scientific knowledge and practices. Students will develop this understanding by confronting the complex nature of scientific knowledge and recognizing that it is reliable, yet dynamic and subject to change.

These courses also ask students to consider the connections between scientific knowledge and other areas of inquiry.<sup>7</sup> Courses may address societal issues that affect and are affected by scientific research. Other courses may help students make connections between scientific methodologies and areas of inquiry outside the typical purview of science and mathematics, such as courses that examine the rhetoric or politicization of science. Thus, the courses in this component should enhance students' capacity to evaluate scientific knowledge and its influence upon individuals, societies, and the natural world. As such, Core Sciences asks instructors to explore how social or racial inequities influence participation in the production of scientific knowledge, its application, or its reception. There are many ways in which courses might accomplish this: they might examine the ways in which historical and disciplinary dynamics have determined who participates in science; or they might explore inequities in the resources committed to the production of scientific knowledge. They might examine the differential impacts of science on global, local, or ecological communities.

This component consists of a menu of courses, with each instructor determining the manner with which the pedagogical goals are addressed and the amount of time within a course that will be

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<sup>7</sup> For comparison to the current Core Scientific Perspectives course, please see the [entry in the current catalogue](#).

dedicated to each goal. Faculty members from all four divisions are welcome to teach in this component.

### *Pedagogical Structure and Expectations*

Courses in Core Sciences engage students in the scientific process, with a focus on helping them develop an understanding of the ways that observations and experiments lead to empirically based theories about physical, human, technological, and natural worlds. Component courses offer many pathways through which students can explore the nature of scientific knowledge broadly conceived.

Core Sciences courses will be menu-based, with each course focusing on a topic chosen by the faculty member. Faculty teaching in this component are expected to:

1. Address the educational goals of:
  - a. understanding the scientific process and the nature of scientific knowledge
  - b. connecting science to broader society; in discussions of the broader impacts of science, instructors should address historical forces, inequities, or social differences within the frame of the course topic.
2. Model the scientific process and bring all students through that process using methods such as data collection and analysis, discussion, modelling, and workshopping.
3. Attend component meetings held in the semester in which they are teaching the course, including a component meeting held prior to the start of the semester, that will focus on the component goals and ways classes are working to achieve those goals.
4. Attend the annual Core Curriculum Retreat to discuss pedagogy and goals of the component and to develop collaborative projects and programs that will bring students and faculty together across the component.

The courses in this component are distinct from, yet complementary to, departmental courses in the NASC Division. While some courses in that division consider the methods used to obtain scientific knowledge, they do not always do so in depth, and most do not explicitly address or spend time on the broader impacts of science.

### *Sample Course Ideas*

This list includes both existing Core SP courses and ideas for new courses that would address the pedagogical goals of Core Sciences. The list is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive, but is intended to give some sense of the range of possible courses that might fit into the component.

Core Earth Resources	Core Time and Space
Core Natural Disasters	Core Water

Core Anthropocene	Core Digital Surveillance
Core Biology of Women	Core Energy and Power
Core Living and Dying in an Unequal World	Core Mapping Linguistic Communities
Core Climate Change and Climate Crisis	Core Colorants
Core Language Acquisition Technology	Core Election Methods and Voting
Core Food	Core Nanotechnology

#### IV. The Liberal Arts Practices and Areas of Inquiry

A liberal arts education is designed to free the mind to think critically and independently, abilities which are developed through exposure to a wide range of subjects and ideas. The structure of Colgate's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum emphasizes habits of mind, skills, breadth, and depth, while encouraging students to move freely through the curriculum.

Core courses, as described above, have a range of goals, but common to all three is the development of habits of mind: they invite students to develop the capacity and desire to call common assumptions into question, to move beyond one's limited experiences, and to ask critical questions of practices and systems in which students now operate.

Courses fulfilling Liberal Arts Practices requirements develop important skills and competencies: attention to the process of writing, familiarity with quantitative and algorithmic reasoning, insight into the ways languages work, and the capacity to interpret visual, literary, and performing arts. Development of targeted skills is part of current best practice models for higher education, as, for example, set out in "[High-Impact Educational Practices](#)" by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Indeed, the introduction of Liberal Arts Practice requirements puts Colgate in line with many peer and aspirational institutions.

Students achieve greater breadth of knowledge by taking courses in each of the University's three predominant areas of intellectual inquiry: Human Thought and Expression; Natural Science and Mathematics; and Social Relations, Institutions, and Agents.

Finally, the major (or combination of majors and minors) affords students the chance to investigate a field of study deeply.

Thus, to ensure a well-rounded liberal arts education, students must engage with disciplines across the curriculum and the full reach of the academic program at Colgate. Therefore, this plan identifies a new set of targeted Liberal Arts Practices:

- a. Confronting Collective Challenges
- b. The Process of Writing

- c. Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning
- d. Language Study
- e. Artistic Practice and Interpretation

and maintains these Areas of Inquiry:

- f. Human Thought and Expression
- g. Natural Science and Mathematics
- h. Social Relations, Institutions, and Agents

Courses tagged with a Liberal Arts Practice or Area of Inquiry belong to specific departments or programs, may be taught at any level, and may count toward a student's major or minor.

Students may complete these requirements in any order, at any point during their progress toward degree.

Students may double-count the First-Year Seminar to fulfill one Areas of Inquiry or Core component requirement. Students may double-count their Process of Writing course to fulfill one Liberal Arts Practices (a-e) or one Areas of Inquiry requirement (f-h). In fulfilling these requirements, students must take at least seven credit-bearing academic courses from at least six different departments or interdisciplinary programs.

Most courses, including interdisciplinary courses in the University Studies Division, will carry a tag for one of the Areas of Inquiry. Courses can also carry up to two additional tags from the five Liberal Arts Practices (a-e). Faculty are strongly encouraged to consider how their existing courses may be tagged with one or two Liberal Arts Practice designations. Core component classes (Communities, Conversations, or Sciences) do not count as a Liberal Arts Practice or Areas of Inquiry course.

Departments and programs will oversee the tagging of their courses by identifying those that intentionally and substantively emphasize the skills outlined in each Practice description. Tags apply to courses, regardless of the individual instructors teaching sections. Syllabi for tagged courses will include one or two sentences explaining how the course fulfills the goals of the designated Liberal Arts Practice. Approving Liberal Arts Practice and Areas of Inquiry tags will become a part of the new course review process overseen by the relevant Department Chair/Program Director, Division Director, and the Curriculum Committee. The most efficient method for assigning tags to existing courses will be determined during the Implementation phase of the new Core rollout.

### **a. Confronting Collective Challenges**

A liberal arts education instills curiosity about the world and a sense of responsibility to local, national, and global communities. This Practice presents an opportunity for students to engage with acutely pressing issues facing the world, and to develop some of the analytical, interpretive, and creative tools they will need to address them. Confronting Collective Challenges courses aim to teach students lifelong ways of looking at large-scale challenges and to see themselves as

open-minded problem-solvers capable of taking action in the world around them.. Faculty are strongly encouraged to consider how their existing courses may be tagged with this Practice. Historically oriented courses that connect the past to present problems are welcome.

**A course offered under the Confronting Collective Challenges Practice will be devoted to studying and addressing urgent, highly complex problems that call for purposeful, collective action.**

A course with the Confronting Collective Challenges Practice tag should normally:

- explore compelling and pressing questions and confront them through disciplinary and scholarly expertise, while also recognizing the limits of such knowledge in the face of new or long-standing problems.
- model collective approaches with, for example, group work within a course, across courses or with community partners, or by examining case studies.
- weigh multiple and opposing perspectives on the problem being studied.
- identify structures and systems that shape opportunities and obstacles affecting humans, nonhumans, or the more-than-human.<sup>8</sup>
- evaluate the global implications of these challenges even if the focus of study is local, and the local implications if the challenge is global.

Courses tagged for this Practice will focus on such topics as social inequity and inequality; climate change; systemic and structural racism; disinformation; the challenge to democratic norms, institutions, and practices; the rise of authoritarianism; immigration and statelessness; environmental degradation. Issues studied may span multiple geographies, nations, species, and nonhuman phenomena.

## **b. The Process of Writing**

The ability to communicate clearly, convincingly, and effectively through writing is a skill that transcends all academic disciplines. To fulfill the Process of Writing Practice, students must take one course—beyond the FSEM—which emphasizes developing one’s writing within a particular discipline. It is expected that most departments and programs will offer at least one writing course and that many students will fulfill this requirement through a course in their major or minor.

As indicated in the description of writing in the FSEM, all Process of Writing courses will:

1. Include assignments of varying length and complexity. These could be distinct, scaffolded parts of a larger project, or separate assignments. A five-paragraph essay or long research paper is one of many assignments that could satisfy this requirement as long as students receive timely feedback and an opportunity to revise the paper in parts or as a whole (see point 2). Others include songwriting, scientific research articles, abstracts, personal essays, short stories, artist’s statements, exhibition catalog entries, and essays in the target language of foreign language classes.

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<sup>8</sup> The “more than human” is used throughout Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013), the First Year Summer Reading of 2021.

2. Emphasize the iterative process in the work for this course. Throughout the semester, students will write and revise their work in response to specific feedback from instructors. Peer review might also support students' growth as writers.

Process of Writing courses are the only one of the five Liberal Arts Practices that can be fulfilled by a course that also fulfills a Liberal Arts Practices or an Areas of Inquiry requirement. When a course that normally fulfills the Process of Writing Practice is offered as an FSEM, it will not double-count toward the Process of Writing Practice.

### **c. Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning**

Quantitative and algorithmic reasoning form the basis of knowledge in a variety of departments and programs across Colgate's academic divisions, and it is essential that each student be able to understand, interpret, and apply algorithmic or quantitative methods.

To fulfill this Practice, students must complete one course that emphasizes themes such as how numerical evidence can facilitate the analysis of a problem; how to locate, collect, or interpret quantitative data; how to recognize the limitations of particular algorithmic or quantitative methods; or how to communicate algorithmic or quantitative arguments.

### **d. Language Study**

The experience of being introduced to a different way of ordering ideas through language and the ability to communicate, however rudimentarily, in another language are key ways of bridging difference. College language courses, even at the introductory level, help students learn new languages and encounter new cultures. Even students who enter Colgate conversant in more than one language can benefit from such courses, either by studying a new language at the introductory level, or in a language course that develops literacies in a heritage language.<sup>9</sup>

To fulfill this requirement, students must complete one semester of college-level instruction in a language. This requirement may be completed on campus, during accredited, intensive summer study, or on a Colgate study group or Approved Program. The requirement cannot be waived through testing or coursework before college.

### **e. Artistic Practice and Interpretation**

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<sup>9</sup> Instituting this language requirement redresses the systemic inequity of our existing practice. Colgate's current language requirement can be fulfilled by students who have taken three or more years of language in secondary school, scored above a 580 on the relevant SAT subject test, or by taking language classes at Colgate through at least one term at the intermediate level. The current requirement results in some students, particularly those from under-resourced schools, needing to take three semesters of language at Colgate and others needing to take none. Thus, for reasons both of pedagogy and of equity, all students must fulfill the Language Study requirement during their time at Colgate.

The study of the arts, whether through practice or interpretation, exposes students to unique pedagogies and learning experiences, and enhances their understanding of the diverse modes of creative expression. This engagement not only deepens students' appreciation for the arts, but also has the potential to nurture their creativity and increase their openness to experimentation, risk-taking, innovation, and exploration of new media.

The development of the Middle Campus for Arts, Creativity, and Innovation as an interdisciplinary arts neighborhood on Colgate's campus, with maker-spaces and other spaces designated for artistic practice, performance, and exhibition, will encourage our students to understand artistic practice and interpretation as fundamental elements of both a liberal arts education and a lifetime of exploring and enjoying the myriad forms of human creativity and self-expression.

To fulfill this requirement, students must complete one course that emphasizes either applied or interpretative artistic methodologies, practices, and theories. Courses in studio art, creative writing, music, theater, dance, or the interpretation of literature, poetry, art, film or other creative or artistic media may fulfill this requirement.

*The following three **Areas of Inquiry** offer students exposure to disciplinary modes of thinking and the opportunity to discover their majors, minors, and unexpected passions in new fields of study. Courses offered by interdisciplinary programs in the University Studies Division are included in these Areas of Inquiry.*

#### **f. Human Thought and Expression**

Courses in this area develop an understanding of what it means to be human: they focus on cultural and intellectual expressions throughout time.

#### **g. Natural Science and Mathematics**

Courses in this area apply theoretical and empirical methods to the study of living organisms, the physical world, and abstract and practical mathematics.

#### **h. Social Relations, Institutions, and Agents**

Courses in this area expose students to the study of social order and human behavior in societies of the past and present.

### **V. Physical Education and Wellness**

The Department of Physical Education and Recreation offers a variety of programs and courses addressing students' physical, mental, social, and environmental well-being. These include programs and courses such as dance, outdoor education, volunteerism, and varsity and club-level athletics, and five-week courses in health, fitness, positive sexuality, and stress management.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Physical Education and Wellness courses fulfill an important aspect of Colgate's Mission Statement by immersing students in "the exhilaration of physical challenge, the value of group effort to achieve common ends, and the confidence that comes with developing the skills we need to participate in a lifetime of healthy activity." They can also encourage students to "set an



Participation in approved extracurricular activities may earn up to one unit per activity. Students are required to complete two units. These do not carry academic credit. The Physical Education and Wellness requirement may be completed during any year, but students are encouraged to complete at least one credit by the end of the second year. Varsity athletes may earn one unit for every full year of team participation. Further information regarding the Physical Education and Wellness requirement is available on Colgate's [Physical Education web pages](#).

## **VI. Core Distinction Capstone**

Taught by two instructors, normally from different divisions, to students from a range of majors and minors, Distinction courses are transdisciplinary. They provide students and faculty with opportunities to consider topics and ideas from multiple vantage points and to engage in dialogue across disciplines. Throughout the course, the instructors model transdisciplinary exchange and thoughtful consideration of different perspectives. Choice of course content is open to the team of instructors.

Each instructor participates fully throughout the term and receives one teaching load credit. Admission to the seminar is by application. The team of instructors will review the applications and select up to 12-15 seniors from any major. Students with an overall grade point average of 3.33 (B+) or higher GPA are eligible to apply. To earn Distinction in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, students must earn an A- or better in the Core Distinction Seminar and achieve an overall grade point average of 3.33 or better at the time of graduation.

Each year at the Core Pedagogy Retreat, there will be an opportunity for those interested in teaching Core Distinction to discuss their ideas with faculty from other divisions and to hear from previous Distinction instructors about their experiences. During the fall semester, the University Professor for Distinction will issue the call for proposals for the following year's seminar. Prospective Distinction seminar leaders should work with the University Professor for Distinction and the Division director of University Studies to develop their proposals.

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example of ethical behavior in public and in private" (9) and "grow in confidence and humility" (12). Another aim is to create the grounds for lifelong learning (13). Some programs and courses that fulfill this requirement also allow students to "appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression" (4).

## Appendix A: Summary of the process of preparing and continued discussion of *“Living and Learning in a Diverse Community”*

In 2020-21, Colgate faced what has arguably been the most challenging academic year in the institution’s two-hundred-year history. A global pandemic threatened the physical and economic health of the University. Our response to those threats was comprehensive and coordinated. We faced the crisis under the banner of “Colgate Together,” and because of the care and commitment of so many members of our community, the University is emerging with the health of its members largely intact, with its finances sound, and with its reputation enhanced.

The sense of care and community that carried us through the past year needs also to carry us forward into the next one. Measures taken to protect us from the spread of illness destabilized some of our foundational ways of being. Mandates by local and state governments necessitated radical departures from our normal rhythms as we rearranged the academic calendar and abandoned, temporarily, cherished rituals that mark the passage of the academic year. In the classroom, the wearing of masks depersonalized the learning environment and complicated communication. On an interpersonal level, the intentional de-densification of the campus in the name of health and safety led to many faculty and staff working remotely, severely diminishing opportunities for both casual and intentional interactions with one another. Additionally, the campus-wide shift from predominantly in-person meetings to ones held exclusively via Zoom or other remote meeting technology had a number of unanticipated effects. On the one hand, remote technology enabled more faculty to attend meetings; on the other, faculty differed in how they experienced these meetings. Some felt it allowed them to be more active participants in faculty affairs; others found the medium alienating and became less engaged. The stresses of living, working, and caregiving during a pandemic compounded our frayed sense of connection to one another.

Because we remained in full academic session during the year, the institution resolved to continue work begun before the pandemic: strategic planning, campaign planning, and—at the heart of this discussion—academic planning. The Core Revision Committee (CRC), constituted in Spring 2019, continued its work on the mandated decennial revision of Colgate’s Liberal Arts Core Curriculum. As always happens in the process of a Core revision, differences began to reveal themselves. Over this past year, in particular, these intensified — a development certainly exacerbated by the extraordinary demands of teaching and interacting with colleagues in constrained conditions and the stress of an enforced hiatus on much research and scholarship. President Casey’s memo to the faculty recognized these cracks: “Finally, it must be said, there have been moments in our discussions about the Core — both in the faculty meetings themselves and in other venues — where we have not sustained the level of empathy and care that is required for both productive discussion and the maintenance of collegiality.”

Intellectual and curricular discussion became particularly heated in faculty meetings held during the 2021 spring semester devoted to discussions of the January 2021 CRC proposal (all held via Zoom). For quite a number of faculty members, representing a wide range of views about the Core, the heat was experienced as personal attacks and the failure of empathy and care felt quite personal. The course of these difficult semester-long discussions culminated in a March 22nd vote that revealed

broad and strong faculty support for the CRC proposal (65.2% in favor) but did not meet the two-thirds threshold for adoption.<sup>11</sup>

In a March 25, 2021 letter to President Casey, the Committee on Faculty Affairs (FAC) set out recommendations for moving the Core Revision process forward. The letter was, in its way, a call for “Colgate Together.” Responding to the CRC’s successful motion to set a two-thirds majority as the threshold for the proposal passing, the FAC stated: “We applaud the CRC’s commitment to consensus-building, and it is in that spirit that we recommend you proceed.” The letter went on:

We recommend that, in a timely but unhurried fashion, you consult further with us and other appropriate governance committees to move the Core revision forward in a way that honors the wishes of the 65% of the faculty that voted in favor of the proposal but also hears the objections of the 35% that did not. We recognize that the CRC has learned an enormous amount about the views of the faculty and has developed ideas that enjoy considerable support. There is much here on which to build as the revision of the Core continues. The goal, as we all agree, should be a Core Program that brings the faculty together enthusiastically and helps us build a vibrant intellectual and collegial community. A Core that divides us down the middle is not a Core.

President Casey, in turn, charged the Dean’s Advisory Council, in consultation with the University Professors and with the engagement of the Curriculum Committee, as “an elected body concerned with all matters curricular at Colgate,” to — in the words of the FAC — “move the Core revision forward.” For the record, the Dean’s Advisory Council consisted of Provost/ Dean of the Faculty Tracey Hucks; Division Directors Jill Harsin (SOSC), Krista Ingram (NASC), Padma Kaimal (UNST), David McCabe (AHUM); Associate Deans Lesleigh Cushing, Doug Johnson, and Martin Wong; and incoming interim PDOF Ellen Percy Kraly, *ex officio*. The University Professors were Jeff Bary (FSEM and Core Distinction), Ben Child (Core 152: Challenges of Modernity); Liz Marlowe (Core 151: Legacies of the Ancient World); Rebecca Metzler (Core Scientific Perspectives); and Susan Thomson (Core Communities and Identities). The elected faculty members of the Curriculum Committee were Michelle Bigenho (UNST), Fred Chernoff (SOSC), Tim McCay (NASC), and Ed Witherspoon (AHUM). Together, the three bodies functioned as a “Combined Group” (a term that will be used throughout this document) and it is that body that negotiated and drafted the thoughts contained herein and now present them to the president, the FAC, and, ultimately, the faculty for their collective consideration. The Combined Group expresses their gratitude and values the original and creative work of our CRC colleagues in crafting the January 2021 proposal.

The charge of the president (provided in an appendix to this document) indicated that the work of the three groups was to devise “both a Core proposal and a framework for continued faculty discussion and consideration,” which the Dean of the Faculty would present to him and the FAC, for distribution by the FAC to the faculty as a whole. President Casey noted that the August dates for the annual Core Pedagogy Retreat (formerly, White Eagle) would provide the faculty with a venue for discussion of the Core proposal submitted by the faculty charged with its consideration.

In his memo, President Casey expressed his agnosticism about the “nature of this work — including the extent of any revisions to the proposal — as that is a matter properly to be taken up by these

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<sup>11</sup> When the CRC first presented the January draft in the Faculty Meeting, they brought a motion to have 67% be considered the threshold for passage of the proposal. Faculty approved the motion.

faculty members under the leadership of the Dean of the Faculty.” He reminded the faculty that “Colgate’s last Core revision likewise saw a first proposal not pass. But the work continued, not from square one, but from the foundation of the work and the deliberations (and support) of the revision process up to that point. In a similar fashion, we will press onward.”

Echoes of the FAC’s declaration that “There is much here on which to build as the revision of the Core continues” and the president’s nod to a previous instance of building on the foundation of earlier efforts were also found in Provost/ Dean of the Faculty Tracey Hucks’ April 19 memo to faculty soliciting feedback during the next phase of the revision process. She asserted that, “As the DAC enters this process, we must first recognize that a significant majority of faculty members have offered their support for the existing proposal. ***Therefore, as we approach this task, we intend to honor that support by working within the fundamental framework of that proposal***” (emphasis added). Like President Casey who, in his memo, cautioned that “sensitivity to the complexity of reasons for any individual faculty member’s vote is necessary,” Dean Hucks noted that “a number of members of our community have expressed a range of reservations about the existing proposal” and these “defy characterization into any single issue or perspective.” She invited the faculty to share their thoughts and concerns with the body that would work to move the process forward and “adapt the Core to meet deep-seated questions with evolving frames and approaches.”

The document before us responds to the guidance of the FAC, the president, and the Dean of Faculty, and works “within the fundamental framework of the CRC proposal.” Admittedly, there was at times some appetite from a few faculty participating in the process to ask for more extensive revisions. Some faculty expressed dismay at the substitution of one text-based course for two; some were disappointed that issues of injustice and scientific denialism could not occupy a more prominent location in the curriculum; some felt keenly the diminished focus on the human past in the new curriculum. In collaborative commitment to serving the broader faculty, we moved forward to operate within the parameters of “building upon” set forth by the president and the dean.

This current document preserves those elements of the CRC proposal that had been the object of strong faculty support while trying to address some of the shortcomings identified both by faculty who were enthusiastic about the proposal and those who had reservations. The June 2020 and January 2021 proposals on which the present draft is based were authored by the appointed and elected members of the CRC.<sup>12</sup> The elected members are, in alphabetical order: Antonio Barrera, University Studies, Geoffrey Holm, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Jenna Reinbold, Arts and Humanities, and Alicia Simmons, Social Sciences. Christian DuComb, University Professor for Core 152: Challenges of Modernity and Nancy Ries, Division Director of University Studies also contributed to the CRC’s prior proposals in their respective roles before cycling-off the committee for the 2020-21 academic year. The appointed members are the University Professors as listed above as members of the Combined Group.

Responding to the desire expressed by a number of faculty members for a more thoroughly articulated organizing principle for the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, the Combined Group first attended to the question of rationale. The conversation oscillated among the foremost concerns at this moment: a sense of fracture within the faculty community, a wish to preserve the themes of diversity and inclusion (in line with the Third Century Plan) that the CRC had woven through their proposal, a commitment to reflecting the mission and vision of the University, a hope of engaging those who have felt disaffected without alienating those who had been enthusiastic about the CRC

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<sup>12</sup> Both of these draft proposals are found on the Core Revision Process landing page: <https://www.colgate.edu/about/campus-services-and-resources/core-curriculum-revision>

proposal. The group arrived at the frame of *Living and Learning in a Diverse Community*, an idea expounded in greater detail in the body of this document. In addition, the group restored the language of “Core” to the titles of the Core components, to emphasize the presence of that signature program and reinforce its place at the center of our curriculum.

The Combined Group likewise identified five other issues that emerged from the spring faculty meetings, discussions among members of the DAC, and more recent feedback from the broader faculty: the need for specification of the “text-based” component of the Core; problems with the conceptualization of Current Crises, both in terms of aperture as well as its identity as a Liberal Arts Practice (LAP); the logistical implications of tagging of courses for Liberal Arts Practices; the relative degree of “presentism” in the current proposal; and the disappearance of Core Distinction. Members of the Combined Group self-selected into working groups formed to consider these respective issues in detail and to prepare a narrative way forward, meeting separately, and then coming together to gather thoughts of the entire body. In brief, the results of that work are:

- the development of a text-based course centered on the idea of encounters, later revised to center on the idea of conversations;
- an opening up of the Current Crises Practice to become the Confronting Collective Challenges Practice, providing a wider aperture to allow for various courses that engage highly complex, pressing problems, in the past and the present, that require collective action to address;
- a renaming and refining of other Liberal Arts Practices, including a return to the label of Areas of Inquiry;
- and the reinstatement of Core Distinction as an optional capstone experience.

Understanding well the import of this moment for Colgate, its faculty and students, the faculty participating in moving forward the Core revision present this document not as a proposal but as a curricular design for the faculty to consider. It has been informed by perspectives shared this spring by faculty in support and faculty critical of the proposal voted on in March and reflects, with humility, new curricular ideas that emerged from conversations in our Combined Group. We believe as a group that this is an improved version and so advance it to President Casey and the Committee on Faculty Affairs. While this document is not unanimously endorsed by all the faculty members who participated in its creation, as collective bodies the Dean’s Advisory Council, the University Professors and the participating members of the Curriculum Committee strongly encourage support for the ideas contained herein.

#### *Framework for Continued Discussion*

The Combined Group offer this framework for continued faculty discussion and consideration of these guiding principles:

1. As requested, this revision of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum is presented to President Casey and the Committee on Faculty Affairs for their considered thoughts and decisions about distribution of this draft to the Colgate faculty.
2. The Director of University Studies in collaboration with the University Professors will determine effective ways of considering the document by the faculty at the Core Pedagogy Retreat (formerly “White Eagle”) in August.

3. Members of the faculty participating in the revision process of the 2021 spring proposal (the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, the Dean's Advisory Committee, University Professors and members of the Curriculum Committee [the "Combined Group"]) stand ready to participate in Core Pedagogy Retreat discussions and anticipate working with the University Studies Division Director and the UPs to organize sessions regarding the Core revision.
4. At the Core Pedagogy Retreat, members of the Combined Group are committed to listening closely and carefully to responses and reactions of our Colgate colleagues to the revised Core program in order to consider further revisions to the document.
5. Immediately following the Core Pedagogy Retreat, members of the DAC, the University Professors, and the Curriculum Committee (for both 2020-21 and 2021-22) will convene to process input from the Retreat and assess next steps.
6. Should the Combined Group decide to carry this document forward, they will, in consultation with the FAC and parliamentarian Courtney Young, bring it to the faculty meeting for a vote.
  - 7a. If the vote does not show support for the document, the Combined Group will reconvene to discuss next steps.
  - 7b. If the vote is supportive, legislation will be proposed and moved for formal consideration by the faculty.

## Appendix B: “On Our Core Revision”

### Memo from President Brian Casey to Colgate Faculty

March 29, 2021

Dear Colgate Faculty Members,

I write to this faculty, one week after our last faculty meeting, to offer a sense as to where we are procedurally in our curriculum deliberations and to set a pathway forward as we continue the work of the revision to our Core curriculum. I know that this has been a difficult and long week for many. I thank you all for your patience as I undertook the necessary consultation these critical matters require.

It is important for me first to acknowledge the great emotion and concern caused by the ending of our last faculty meeting. The passions produced by the closeness of the vote and the importance of the matter have affected all of us. The confusion about procedure and parliamentary protocols at the end of the meeting further heightened the distress felt by many. Finally, it must be said, there have been moments in our discussions about the Core — both in the faculty meetings themselves and in other venues — where we have not sustained the level of empathy and care that is required for both productive discussion and the maintenance of collegiality.

As we go forward, I will insist that all of us maintain respect for one another in our continued discussions. We are a university in which differences of opinion are expected, recognized, and understood to be the inevitable product of the nature of our mission. We debate, we discuss, we disagree. But we must all do so in a manner consistent with our highest values and our care for each other.

Dean Hucks, FAC Chair Cooper, and I received a letter this past weekend from several faculty colleagues who were members of the task force that developed Colgate’s *Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression*. Their plea is worth including here:

As we look ahead to where we go from here, we would like to make a plea: Our community must work much harder to treat each other with openness, dignity, and compassion. Because the issues in the Core proposal are so personally meaningful and so emotionally charged, we need to proceed with extra sensitivity. **Freedom to express your position does not mean freedom to carelessly disparage others.** As a contingent of faculty who helped author Colgate’s [Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression](#), we were very disappointed by comments made that were disrespectful and dismissive of extremely sensitive and important issues addressed in the Core revision. This lack of care and generosity is not welcome, and we must all work hard to ensure that it has no place in our community.

We would like to remind our colleagues of this quote from our Statement: “Free expression is more powerful when we, as members of our broader community, consider the perspectives of the people with whom we are communicating and when we approach discussion and debate with a spirit of humility, curiosity, generosity, and care... As a community, we must be mindful that the exercise of intellectual freedom without consideration of these other values can and

does cause harm to others, and these harms often linger long after the harmful words have been spoken.”

As we consider where we are in these discussions, I also believe it is important for me to state that — based on the many recent emails I have received and conversations I have had — the reasons for any single faculty member’s vote last week were complex. While we heard from a number of faculty members about why they planned to vote one way or another, we did not hear from most. To have productive conversations going forward, I believe sensitivity to the complexity of reasons for any individual faculty member’s vote is necessary.

Finally, I should note that prior Core revisions in Colgate’s history also experienced moments in which proposals did not obtain a sufficient number of votes for passage. Colgate’s last Core revision likewise saw a first proposal not pass. But the work continued, not from square one, but from the foundation of the work and the deliberations (and support) of the revision process up to that point. In a similar fashion, we will press onward.

This is extraordinarily hard work. It will remain so. But we can complete this work in a way that will bind us more closely one to another, in service of one of the most important elements of Colgate’s shared academic enterprise.

### **Where We Are**

Let’s first look at what happened in our last faculty meeting.

It was a feature of the Core Revision Proposal that passage would require assent from two-thirds of the faculty. This supermajority requirement was in the proposal language itself. It was also voted on as a separate matter at the February 15 meeting. This decision to require a supermajority in voting was offered by the CRC in the belief that our Core should be embraced by a significant portion of the faculty. That sentiment was a sound one. Most importantly, however, it was formally embraced by the faculty through a vote.

Immediately after the vote on the proposal last week, when the two-thirds majority number was not obtained, a motion was made to have the vote reconsidered. A motion to reconsider, however, must come from the prevailing side. This motion was, therefore, not proper and has since been withdrawn by the faculty member.

Directly after the faculty meeting, I contacted the FAC to ask for their guidance and recommendations on the procedural matters left unresolved at the end of the meeting. This past Thursday the FAC offered their recommendations. They recommended that the meeting be considered adjourned, that the Core Revision Proposal be understood not to have passed, and that a pathway forward for the continued work of the revision be established. (*The letter from the FAC in which these recommendations and conclusions were offered is enclosed here as Appendix A.*)

I have accepted these recommendations and now offer here a pathway forward for our continued work. The steps for this work have been communicated to the FAC and were accepted by them. (*My letter to the FAC is attached here as Appendix B.*)



## Next Steps

I will charge the Dean's Advisory Council, in consultation with the University Professors, to — in the words of the FAC — “move the Core revision forward.” As the FAC notes, “there is much here on which to build as the revision of the Core continues. The goal, as we all agree, should be a Core Program that brings the faculty together enthusiastically and helps us build a vibrant intellectual and collegial community.”

Specifically, I will call on the DAC, through the Division Directors, to obtain the thoughts and recommendations of Colgate faculty on the Core revision through meetings with academic departments and programs. Further, as this work is being taken up, I will also ask the Dean of the Faculty to engage the Curriculum Committee in this work, such committee being an elected body concerned with all matters curricular at Colgate.

The Dean of the Faculty will present to me and the FAC both a Core proposal and a framework for continued faculty discussion and consideration *by June 1, 2021*. The FAC will then distribute this work to the faculty as a whole. I do not offer any guidance as to the nature of this work — including the extent of any revisions to the proposal — as that is a matter properly to be taken up by these faculty members under the leadership of the Dean of the Faculty.

The June 1 deadline has been set for two reasons. The first is to ensure promptness. It is important that we continue our work now. The second is that this date aligns with an institutional effort to encourage faculty and staff to regain and refocus energies after many months of intense work undertaken in trying circumstances. We are seeking to reduce the University's operations to the barest of essential services during the month of June to allow for renewal of staff. Similarly, we hope that the months of June and July will provide an opportunity for faculty to return to regular summer rhythms of research and restoration.

Importantly, however, June 1 can surely be considered a reasonable deadline as these faculty colleagues will not begin their work *de novo*. They will have these past several years of work, deliberation, surveys and discussion regarding the Core revision upon which to draw.

The White Eagle Retreat has now been moved to August 17 and 18. That later date will allow the faculty to consider the Core proposal and discussion framework. Ultimately the FAC will bring the proposal back to the faculty at the soonest date the FAC deems possible in the fall.

Again, it is important to state here that any proposal developed will be fully and formally taken up by the Colgate faculty for their consideration and vote in a faculty meeting.

## In Conclusion

As I said in our last meeting, the very first time I truly “met” the Colgate faculty was at the White Eagle retreat of 2016. I had not yet begun my service to Colgate, but I had heard of this meeting and its importance to this faculty's culture and spirit. I was struck by the level of commitment and engagement this faculty showed to both the University's Core curriculum and to pedagogy.

The emotions and passions that this faculty have shown over the past several months, and most especially during our faculty meeting debates, show that this commitment and engagement remain, and remain focused on one of the signature elements of this University's academic life.

With care, compassion, and grace we will now continue this most important work. I look forward to supporting those who now take up this work in the weeks ahead and supporting this faculty as we consider the future of our Core curriculum.

Sincerely,

Brian W. Casey  
President

## **Appendices to the Letter**

### *Appendix A*

*Letter from the FAC, Thursday, March 25*

Dear President Casey,

On Tuesday, the Faculty Affairs Committee met to discuss the confusion at the end of Monday's faculty meeting. We agreed that, in a tense moment after a close vote, emotions were running high; in that moment it was understandable that proper process became unclear. The decision to suspend the meeting was the right one, but we now recommend that the meeting be considered to be officially adjourned.

A careful reading of Robert's Rules suggests that a motion to reconsider may not be brought by someone who voted for the position that did not prevail. As a result, the Core Revision Proposal has not been approved, since it did not meet the two-thirds threshold requested by the Core Revision Committee and approved by 81% of the faculty voting on 15 February. This threshold was requested by the CRC because they correctly wanted to ensure that the new Core has the support of the overwhelming majority of the faculty. We applaud the CRC's commitment to consensus-building, and it is in that spirit that we recommend you proceed.

The work of revising the Core must continue, and the question is properly returned to you and Dean Hucks for next steps. We recommend that, in a timely but unhurried fashion, you consult further with us and other appropriate governance committees to move the Core revision forward in a way that honors the wishes of the 65% of the faculty that voted in favor of the proposal but also hears the objections of the 35% that did not. We recognize that the CRC has learned an enormous amount about the views of the faculty and has developed ideas that enjoy considerable support. There is much here on which to build as the revision of the Core continues. The goal, as we all agree, should be a Core Program that brings the faculty together enthusiastically and helps us build a vibrant intellectual and collegial community. A Core that divides us down the middle is not a Core. We look forward to participating in the hard but important work that lies ahead.

With best wishes,  
The Faculty Affairs Committee:

Alan Cooper (Chair)  
Tracey Hucks (Provost and Dean of the Faculty)  
Claire Baldwin  
April Baptiste  
Josh Finnell

Connie Harsh  
Elizabeth Marlowe  
Ani Maitra  
Valerie Morkevicius  
Juliana Smith  
Priscilla Van Wynsberghe

*Appendix B*  
*Message to FAC, Friday, March 26*

Dear Alan,

After consultations with numerous folks, including you as chair of FAC, it seems quite clear to me that this faculty needs to know that work on the Core revision will continue even if the proposal or additional amendments will not be considered at either of our remaining two faculty meetings. (I am aware that our final meeting, April 19, will need to attend to voting on degrees, recognizing those who will be moving to emeritus standing, and announcing a number of awards, including the AAUP award.) To not have a clear sense as to where and with whom this work will continue, and under what time frame, will be greatly upsetting to a large number of our faculty.

So, I plan on charging the DAC, in consultation with the UPs, to develop a Core revision proposal as well as a framework for its consideration by the faculty. These should be completed no later than June 1. I will charge this group to consider carefully the work of the CRC and the discussions of the full faculty during the weeks we have discussed the proposal. I will ask the DDs to meet with their departments and programs to garner additional thoughts and reactions. I will ask that this Core proposal and discussion framework be sent to both me and to the FAC, which will distribute these to the faculty. I will then ask the Division Director for University Studies and the University Professors to prepare for discussions of these at the White Eagle Retreat, which has been moved to August.

I would like to alert the faculty about all of this on Monday, one week after our last faculty meeting, so that they have a sense as to how, for now, this Core revision process will proceed. Before sending this to the faculty, I would ask the FAC to offer comments and suggestions regarding this pathway forward.

Regards,  
Brian

## Appendix C: “Invitation for feedback on the Core revision process”

### Memo from Provost/ Dean of the Faculty Tracey Hucks to Colgate Faculty

Dear colleagues,

As you know, President Casey and the FAC have charged the Dean’s Advisory Council, in consultation with the Core University Professors and the faculty on the Curriculum Committee, to move the Core revision process forward, with the goal of producing a revised Core proposal and framework for continued faculty consideration by June 1.

As the DAC enters this process, we must first recognize that a significant majority of faculty members have offered their support for the existing proposal. Therefore, as we approach this task, we intend to honor that support by working within the fundamental framework of that proposal. At the same time, a number of members of our community have expressed a range of reservations about the existing proposal. The concerns expressed defy characterization into any single issue or perspective. If we hope to offer a revised Core proposal that garners maximum support from the faculty, we must also seek to attend to genuine concerns that have been expressed about the existing proposal.

The significant discussions on the revision process to date — within faculty meetings, faculty fora, and through the amendments offered to date — offer important guideposts for a path forward.

On behalf of the DAC, I write with an invitation for you to share additional thoughts on the proposal for the revision of the Core Curriculum. As you reflect on these issues, we encourage you to consider the Core Curriculum from the perspective of our students and the high-level learning outcomes we want them to take away from this Core. This central purpose should guide all of our efforts as we seek to adapt the Core to meet deep-seated questions with evolving frames and approaches.

In order to receive feedback that is directly focused on the issues at hand, the DAC asks you to consider the following questions:

- What elements of the Core revision proposal do you find to be the most valuable contribution(s) to the Colgate curriculum?
- What elements of the Core revision proposal do you find to be most problematic
- What suggestions would you offer to improve the Core revision proposal

Recognizing that this has been a challenging process in many respects, our intention is to create opportunities in a variety of spaces and forms to provide this important information specifically around the themes listed above. We hope that the variety of formats for providing feedback on the Core revision will allow each of you to participate in the way you feel most comfortable.

1. You may share your thoughts by email to any member of the DAC, faculty on the Curriculum Committee, and University Professors. These members and their contact information are listed at the end of this email.
2. If you prefer to share your thoughts anonymously, you may submit written reflections through the following online form:  
[https://colgate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_e2wtkXpHZ5kjCHY](https://colgate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e2wtkXpHZ5kjCHY)
3. Small conversations are scheduled for the following nine dates in April:

April 21, 11:40 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Facilitated by M. Wong, T. McCay and E. Kraly  
April 21, 7–8 p.m. Facilitated by T. Hucks and E. Kraly  
April 22, 2–3 p.m. Facilitated by M. Wong, D. Johnson and F. Chernoff  
April 22, 7–8 p.m. Facilitated by K. Ingram, P. Kaimal and M. Bigenho  
April 23, 8–9 a.m. Facilitated by T. Hucks and J. Harsin and M. Bigenho  
April 23, 3–4 p.m. Facilitated by D. Johnson and D. McCabe  
April 27, 7–8 p.m. Facilitated by L. Cushing and P. Kaimal and T. McCay  
April 28, 1–2 p.m. Facilitated by L. Cushing and D. McCabe and E. Witherspoon  
April 29, 7–8 p.m. Facilitated by K. Ingram and E. Witherspoon

*Please contact Associate Dean of the Faculty Martin Wong ([mswong@colgate.edu](mailto:mswong@colgate.edu)) to sign up for one of the conversations. We are planning to keep these conversations small and limited to 8–10 faculty per session so if you are available for several sessions, please feel free to convey this in your email.*

*Participants will receive a zoom link the day before their conversation date.*

4. The UPs and members of the Curriculum Committee are also offering two sessions designated for pre-tenure faculty. The dates of those sessions are:

April 21, 4:30 –5:30 p.m.

April 29, 11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m.

Please be in touch with Kelly Snyder ([ksnyder@colgate.edu](mailto:ksnyder@colgate.edu)) to register for one of those sessions.

5. If you, or small groups of faculty, would like to reach out to individual members of the DAC or the consulting groups to arrange individual conversations, we will do our best to meet with as many individuals, or small groups of faculty as possible through April 29th.

We hope that the variety of formats for providing feedback on the Core revision will allow each of you to participate in the way you feel most comfortable. We deeply appreciate your thoughts and perspectives as we work to move the Core revision process forward.

Sincerely,

Tracey E. Hucks, '87 and MA '90

Provost and Dean of the Faculty

On behalf of members of the Dean's Advisory Council

## Appendix D: The Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and the 13 Goals of a Colgate Education

## The Revised LACC and The 13 Goals of a Colgate Education

The Revised BAEE and The 15 Goals of a College Education		First-Year Seminar and Living and Learning Workshop	Critical Perspectives: Communities	Critical Perspectives: Sciences	Critical Perspectives: Texts	Areas of Inquiry	Effective Writing	Foreign Languages	Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning	Current Crises: Social Inequality and Climate Change	Artistic Practice and Interpretation
1	See themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective: recognize that their beliefs, identities, interests, and values are in part a reflection of their background, education, and life experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline: articulate questions for research and craft a coherent argument so as to produce a substantial work in their chosen field.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Conduct interdisciplinary inquiry: synthesize viewpoints from multiple disciplinary perspectives so as to overcome the limitations of any one perspective.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression across time and place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions in order to understand the complex relationship between self and society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Examine natural phenomena using the methods of science and understand the role of science in contemporary society	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Acquire valuable habits of mind: listen and read well; think critically and creatively; ask challenging questions; gather relevant information and construct cogent arguments to answer them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Communicate well: speak and read correctly and precisely; speak and read a second language; present information effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private: take a principled stand for what they believe and be accountable for their actions; uphold the legal and ethical uses of information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Be engaged citizens and strive for a just society: embrace their responsibilities to local, national, and global communities; use their influence for the benefit of others.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Respect nature and the diversity of life on earth: recognize their individual and collective responsibilities for the stewardship of the earth's resources and natural environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
12	Grow in both confidence and humility: affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Continue learning beyond college: sustain a lifelong curiosity and grow in knowledge and wisdom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☐ = some courses meet the goal  
☒ = all courses meet the goal

	First-Year Seminar and Living and Learning Workshop	Critical Perspectives: Communities	Critical Perspectives: Sciences	Critical Perspectives: Texts	Areas of Inquiry	Effective Writing	Foreign Languages	Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning	Current Crises: Social Inequity and Climate Change	Artistic Practice and Interpretation
1 See themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective: recognize that their beliefs, identities, interests, and values are in part a reflection of their background, education, and life experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline: articulate questions for research and craft a coherent argument so as to produce a substantial work in their chosen field.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Conduct interdisciplinary inquiry: synthesize viewpoints from multiple disciplinary perspectives so as to overcome the limitations of any one perspective.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
4 Appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression across time and place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5 Investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions in order to understand the complex relationship between self and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Examine natural phenomena using the methods of science and understand the role of science in contemporary society	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Acquire valuable habits of mind: listen and read well; think critically and creatively; ask challenging questions; gather relevant information and construct cogent arguments to answer them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8 Communicate well: speak and read correctly and precisely; speak and read a second language; present information effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9 Set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private: take a principled stand for what they believe and be accountable for their actions; uphold the legal and ethical uses of information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Be engaged citizens and strive for a just society: embrace their responsibilities to local, national, and global communities; use their influence for the benefit of others.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Respect nature and the diversity of life on earth: recognize their individual and collective responsibilities for the stewardship of the earth's resources and natural environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
12 Grow in both confidence and humility: affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13 Continue learning beyond college: sustain a lifelong curiosity and grow in knowledge and wisdom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☐ = some courses meet the goal  
☒ = all courses meet the goal

**The LACC and The 13 Goals of a Colgate Education**

	First-Year Seminar & Living and Learning <u>Workshop</u>	Core <u>Communities</u>	Core <u>Sciences</u>	Core <u>Conversations</u>	Collective <u>Challenges</u>	Process of <u>Writing</u>	Quantitative & Algorithmic <u>Reasoning</u>	Language <u>Study</u>	Artistic Practice & <u>Interpretation</u>	Areas of <u>Inquiry</u>
1 See themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective: recognize that their beliefs, identities, interests, and values are in part a reflection of their background, education, and life experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline: articulate questions for research and craft a coherent argument so as to produce a substantial work in their chosen field.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Conduct interdisciplinary inquiry: synthesize viewpoints from multiple disciplinary perspectives so as to overcome the limitations of any one perspective.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression across time and place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions in order to understand the complex relationship between self and society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Examine natural phenomena using the methods of science and understand the role of science in contemporary society.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Acquire valuable habits of mind: listen and read well; think critically and creatively; ask challenging questions; gather relevant information and construct cogent arguments to answer them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8 Communicate well: speak and read correctly and precisely; speak and read a second language; present information effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private: take a principled stand for what they believe and be accountable for their actions; uphold the legal and ethical uses of information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Be engaged citizens and strive for a just society: embrace their responsibilities to local, national, and global communities; use their influence for the benefit of others.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Respect nature and the diversity of life on earth: recognize their individual and collective responsibilities for the stewardship of the earth's resources and natural environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Grow in both confidence and humility: affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13 Continue learning beyond college: sustain a lifelong curiosity and grow in knowledge and wisdom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☐ = some courses meet the goal

☒ = all courses meet the goal



*First Year Seminars and the Living & Learning Workshop.* All courses would further students' ability to "communicate well: speak and write correctly and precisely" and "present information effectively" (Goal 8), as well as to "acquire valuable habits of mind" (7). FSEMs would allow students to "grow in both confidence and humility: affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others" (12). These courses, at the start of a Colgate education, also set the stage for the practice of lifelong learning (13). The Living & Learning Workshop would provide many opportunities for students to "set an example of ethical behavior in public and private; take a principled stand for what they believe and be accountable for their actions; uphold the legal and ethical uses of information" (9). They also would encourage students to "be engaged citizens: embrace their responsibilities to local, national, and global communities" and "use their influence for the benefit of others" (10). The heterogeneity of the FSEM courses means that students, depending on their particular course, may also engage with several of the other Goals (1-6, 11).

*Core Communities.* All courses would allow students to "see themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective: recognize that their beliefs, identities, interests, and values are, in part, a reflection of their background, education, and life experiences" (Goal 1); "conduct interdisciplinary inquiry: synthesize viewpoints from multiple disciplinary perspectives so as to overcome the limitations of any one perspective" (3); "investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions in order to understand the complex relationship between self and society" (5); "acquire valuable habits of mind" (7); "be engaged citizens and strive for a just society: embrace their responsibilities to local, national, and global communities; use their influence for the benefit of others" (10); "grow in both confidence and humility: affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others" (12), and inspire learning beyond college (13). Many Core Communities and Societies courses would also encourage students to "appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression across time and place" (4).

*Core Sciences.* All courses would allow students to "understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline" (Goal 2) and to "understand the role of science in contemporary society" (6). A great number would teach students to "respect nature and the diversity of life on earth: recognize their individual and collective responsibilities for the stewardship of the earth's resources and the natural environment" (11), and many would allow students to "see themselves critically within a global and historical perspective (1). Courses also introduce students to the work of: "conduct[ing] interdisciplinary inquiry," teaching them to "synthesize viewpoints from multiple disciplinary perspectives so as to overcome the limitations of any one perspective" (3). Courses would also facilitate students' communication skills (8), and teach valuable habits of mind (7). In addition, most Core Sciences courses would address Goal 9: "set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private: take a principled stand for what they believe and be accountable for their actions; uphold the legal and ethical uses of information."

*Core Conversations.* This Core component, by engaging students in focused and sustained conversations with and about challenging texts, will foster the abilities to "listen and read well; think critically and creatively; ask challenging questions" (Goal 7). The component's stress on conversation will teach students to "communicate well: speak and write correctly and precisely" (8). Because the objects of study will include both written texts and non-verbal creations that are drawn from a range of cultures and historical periods, this component will enable students to

“appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression across time and place” (4) and will require students to occupy “multiple disciplinary perspectives” (3). The mind-opening conversations stimulated by this component should enable students to “affirm a set of values while respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others” (12). This kind of learning should then let students “see themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective” (1). Because the texts for this course are ones that reward reading and re-reading, and because this component will provide a platform of shared experience, this component should enable our students to “sustain a lifelong curiosity and grow in knowledge and wisdom” beyond their Colgate years (13).

*Confronting Collective Challenges.* All courses will help students “think critically and creatively” (Goal 7), “be engaged citizens” (10), and “grow in both confidence and humility” (12). These courses will allow students to “set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private” (9), and “respect nature and the diversity of life on earth,” (11) and “continue learning beyond college” (13). Depending on which track they pursue, students might also “investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions” (5), or “examine natural phenomena using the methods of science” (6). Many of these courses will also allow students to “see themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical perspective” (1), and to either “understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline (2), or conduct interdisciplinary inquiry (3).

*The Process of Writing* All courses will help students to “communicate well” (Goal 8), and “understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of a particular scholarly discipline” (2). Writing intensively helps, as well, to develop “valuable habits of mind,” learning to “listen and read well; think critically and creatively; ask challenging questions; gather relevant information and construct cogent arguments to answer them” (7). As well, Process of Writing courses allow students to “appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression” (4). Process of Writing courses will also, fundamentally, facilitate continued learning beyond college (13).

*Quantitative and Algorithmic Reasoning.* All courses will allow students to “acquire valuable habits of mind” (Goal 7) and to “present information effectively” (8). These skills will facilitate a lifelong ability to “grow in knowledge and wisdom” (13). Many of these courses will also allow students to “understand the methodology...of a particular scholarly discipline” (2).

*Language Study.* All courses will help students “speak and read a second language” (Goal 8) and “grow in both confidence and humility... [by] learning from diverse perspectives, identities, ways of life, and philosophies of others” (12). They will also give students an opportunity to “appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression” (4). Studying a foreign language, as well, is a valuable habit of mind (7), and provides lifelong access to “learning beyond college” (13) as it opens gateways to living, studying, and working in diverse and global settings.

*Artistic Practice and Interpretation.* Courses will help students “appreciate the myriad modes of human creative expression” (4), “think critically and creatively” (7), “communicate well” (8), and “grow in both confidence and humility” (12). They will also allow students to “understand...the modes of thought of a particular scholarly discipline (2). Many will allow students to “be engaged citizens” (10) and allow students to “set an example of ethical behavior in public and in private” (9), and

some courses may “investigate human behavior, [or] social relations,” (5) or “examine natural phenomena using the methods of science” (6).

*Areas of Inquiry* The Areas of Inquiry requirements are grounded in allowing students to “understand the methodology, modes of thought, content, and discourse of particular scholarly disciplines (Goal 2). In facilitating student engagement across the disciplinary/divisional structures of the university, the holistic effect of these required courses is to instill “valuable habits of mind” (7), to “grow in confidence and humility” (12), and to facilitate “lifelong curiosity” across the range of scholarly enterprise (13). Many courses will also allow students to “see themselves honestly and critically within a global and historical context” (1).

Across the three Areas of Inquiry courses, students will appreciate the myriad modes of creative expression (4), investigate human behavior, social relations, and institutions (5), and examine natural phenomena using the methods of science (6).

## Appendix E: Process and Timeline of the Core

### Historical Record of the 2019-2021 LACC Revision

The most recent Core revision, chaired by then University Studies (UNST) Division Director Marilyn Thie, unfolded over a two-year period during which time the committee released four separate draft models, received faculty feedback on each, and returned into committee several times for rethinking and revising, until releasing a near-final draft in late January 2009.<sup>13</sup> After some revision and the production of official catalog copy in collaboration with the Academic Affairs Board, the Core Revision Committee then brought the final draft Core Proposal to the faculty for a binding vote in April 2009. A year of implementation followed (in 2009-10), led by then UNST Division Director Constance Harsh, before the official rollout of the new Core Curriculum, “Crossing Boundaries,” in fall 2010. The class of 2014 was the first to graduate under that version of the Core.

The current Core revision process began in 2017-18, with administrative conversations and data gathering, culminating in a formal announcement of the self-study portion of the revision at the 2018 Core Curriculum Retreat. The University Professors (UPs) oversaw a year of intensive self-study in 2018-19. Faculty, administrative, and student perspectives were gathered in open fora, visits to the student senate, formal online surveys and hundreds of conversations. A Mellon Foundation New President's Discretionary Grant awarded to President Brian W. Casey allowed many faculty members to work together on pilot projects to develop new Core ideas and pedagogies. The UPs also organized a series of “cross-Core” reading seminars, to encourage faculty members from different Components to come together for pedagogical conversations centered on common texts.<sup>11</sup> In consultation with the Faculty Affairs Committee, an election was held in spring 2019 to elect four members to the Core Revision Committee, one from each academic division: AHUM, NASC, SOSC, UNST.

The CRC began its work in fall 2019 with a faculty survey focused on priorities for the revision, and an open invitation to faculty members to submit their own models for a revised Core curriculum. The committee received 183 responses to the survey and over 50 model submissions.<sup>12</sup> These materials, along with the data gathered the previous year, shaped the first set of models proposed to the faculty in November 2019. Feedback on these models, generated through faculty fora, a Qualtrics form, email correspondence, and discussions at faculty meetings, guided our iterative revisions and syntheses of these models, until we arrived at the proposal presented here.

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<sup>13</sup> The history of the Core revision under Marilyn Thie was reconstructed by the CRC from conversations with colleagues on that committee and from the meeting minutes of the Academic Affairs Board, the Faculty Meeting, and the Faculty Affairs Committee.

On August 11 and 12, 2020, the CRC convened Colgate's annual Core Curriculum Retreat to discuss the July 2020 LACC revision. The meeting was held via Zoom video conferencing, with 215 faculty in attendance. Break-out sessions allowed faculty to join meetings specific to their interests. Meetings for each proposed Component course and individual Competencies were recorded, along with the opening and closing plenaries.

As a result of the lively and instructive Core Curriculum Retreat discussions, the CRC asked faculty to provide feedback on the July revision proposal via an additional faculty survey released in September 2020. In October 2020, we asked division directors, department chairs and program directors to host members of the CRC to discuss elements of the proposed Core revision specific to their faculty. From mid-October to early December 2020, members of the CRC held 31 of these informational meetings with our colleagues, including one only for pre-tenure colleagues and one with faculty members in the Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletic Division.

## **Documents Created for the 2019-2021 LACC Revision**

### ***Core Staffing and Mentoring Analysis***

- "Staffing the Core: A Brief Report on Core Teaching Patterns" for the October 7, 2019 Faculty Meeting. (Anonymized data).
- Detailed Core Component Teaching Report (F10-S18)
- Core Mentoring Report (F10-S18)

### ***Stakeholder Surveys***

2018

- Fall Core Faculty Survey Report, September 28

2019

- Spring 2019, Student Survey of students enrolled in Core Courses (mostly first-year and second-year students). 830 responses, redacted. Core Curriculum Revision website (link above).
- Sense of the Faculty Survey, September, 2019. A Report on the survey is on the website as is the Slides presentation on the Survey at the October 7, 2019 Faculty Meeting and other forms of analysis of the survey findings

2020

- February 2020 Straw Poll Report
- March 2020 Sense of the Faculty Survey Report
- August 2020 Sense of the Faculty Survey Report

### ***Stakeholder Input***

- Wall of Post-its (photographs and coded transcription), Core Curriculum Pedagogy Retreat, May 15, 2018.
- Faculty Generated Model Repository, November 2019.
- Faculty Modeling Feedback Repository, January 2020.
- Faculty Modeling Feedback Repository, July 2020.
- Colgate Language Council Response to the Proposed Language Requirement.
- Department of Writing and Rhetoric Proposal for a Writing Competency Requirement, June 1, 2020.
- UNST 350 “Informal Report on Core Revision Design Class.” Karen Harpp, fall 2018. The class visited and consulted with Core leaders and students at peer institutions, and interviewed several hundred Colgate students, faculty, and alumni about their view on the Core; this document is a brief summary by Karen Harpp.
- Mellon Foundation New President's Discretionary Grant.

### ***CRC Proposals (2019-2021)***

- “Draft Models of Possible Core Curricula” presented at December 2, 2019 Faculty meeting. (Four models with variations).
- “Diverse Perspectives, Inclusive Communities Core Draft Proposal.” March 5, 2020. (Model with variations). “Appendix to the FSEM Proposal,” March 5, 2020.
- “Diverse Perspectives, Inclusive Communities: A Core for Colgate’s Third Century,” June 2020.

Documents such as the faculty survey and its results are available on the CRC website, which will remain available as an archive (Colgate login required).

<https://www.colgate.edu/about/campus-services-and-resources/core-curriculum-revision>

### **Description of the Work of the “Combined Group” (DAC, UPs and Curriculum Committee)** (March – June 2021)

*March 29*

Charge from the President

*Early April*

Initially meeting on its own, the Dean’s Advisory Council (DAC), along with Ellen Kraly as incoming interim Provost/ Dean of the Faculty, considered the CRC proposal in detail, and in relationship to the discussions, discourse and silences during the spring faculty meetings. It devised a tentative series of steps for taking on the charge in a consultative and inclusive way.

### *April 19*

Provost/ Dean of the Faculty Tracey Hucks writes an email to the faculty soliciting input during this next phase of the process.

### *Beginning the week of April 22*

The three groups of faculty (DAC, Curriculum Committee and University Professors, hereafter, the ‘Combined Group’) came together during several long meetings to review the spring’s discussion, including background concerning the evolution of the CRC proposal voted on by the faculty, and to settle on the process of ‘moving the Core revision forward’ by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Martin Wong organized both the scheduling of meetings (as well as small group meetings with faculty and the online survey (see next bullet point)) as well as convenings of the Combined Group. In so doing he facilitated an inclusive process of debate and discussion.

### *April 24<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>*

A process of continued listening to faculty was put in place. The President’s charge asked the Division Directors (DD’s) ‘to meet with their departments and programs to garner additional thoughts and reactions.’ These additional thoughts and reactions were gathered through small group meetings--including meetings exclusively for pre-tenured faculty--facilitated by faculty from each of the three groups identified in the charge; an online survey; and invitations to communicate with individual members of the Combined Group privately or by email. Faculty fatigue, some of it specific to continued discussion of the Core, and the end of semester timing dampened the number of faculty coming forward to share additional views, but what thoughts were shared were valued and digested by the group.

### *Week of May 3*

Discussion within the Combined Group of feedback and process for moving the Core forward.

Identification of least four broad issues that emerged from discussions among members of the DAC, the Combined Group and the broader faculty (expressed in spring faculty meetings and also in the gathering of views in April and early May): the need for specification of the ‘text-based component of the Core; the conceptualization of the Current Crises, both in terms of content as well as a Liberal Arts Practice (LAP); the implications of tagging of courses for Liberal Arts Practices; and the relative degree of ‘presentism’ in the current proposal. These issues were seen to have implications for creative and critical analysis of the spring Core proposal, as well as for understanding salient dimensions of both support and rejection of the proposal among faculty

Four working groups were formed, through self-nomination, to talk through each of these respective issues in detail and ultimately offer resolutions/revisions in narrative form. Members of the Combined Group participated in more than one working group; while not choreographed, the working groups included members of each of the three bodies of faculty.

### *Weeks of May 10, 17, and 24*

The working groups met on their own, and then reunited with the Combined Group to report on discussions and gather broader thoughts on sticking points. Text and notes from working groups were often posted as google docs as evolving thoughts and text.

Throughout the discussions of the proposals of the working groups by the Combined Group, Doug Johnson and Padma Kaimal provided insights about implications of various proposals for course registration, class size, staffing, etc.

A running list of specific concerns of individual faculty was also maintained. These were considered and resolved during meetings of the Combined Group.

Toward the end of the third week in May, consensus about most of the more conceptual/thematic issues emerged during meetings of the Combined Group. On one occasion concerning LAPs a straw vote was taken with a strong majority supporting a representation of six departments/programs rather than seven in implementing the breadth of the LAPs while also supporting depths in major and minor concentration programs.

#### *Week of May 24*

Initial drafting of the narrative was undertaken by Lesleigh Cushing and Padma Kaimal, who synthesized revisions emerging from the working groups as considered by the Combined Group. Suggestions and critique, general and specific, of the draft document were offered by faculty in Combined Group meetings.

#### *Week of May 31*

Concluding discussions of the Combined Group discussed next steps, the place of the document at the August Core pedagogical retreat, revisited the evolving Core Conversations component brought forward by that working group, and the 'authorial' voice presenting the document to the President and the Committee on Faculty Affairs.

The Combined Group, reconstituted with new representatives from respective groups, reconvened after the Core Pedagogy Retreat and reviewed detailed notes from the retreat meetings. They made the revisions represented in this document, including: changing Core Encounters to Core Conversations in order to reflect more dialogical relationships among texts; clarifying the practices involved in Confronting Collective Challenges; further modeling the Language Practice.

### ***Detailed Chronology of CRC Work on the 2019-2021 LACC Revision***

#### **Core Curriculum Pedagogy Retreats**

- May 15-16, 2018: Core Curriculum Retreat 2018: "The Liberal Arts Core Curriculum in Colgate's Third Century." This meeting produced the "Wall of Post-Its" viewable on the CRC website.
- May 14-15, 2019: Core Curriculum Retreat 2019: "A Core for Colgate's Third Century." Mellon Grant Presentations and wide-ranging discussions of goals and priorities for the Core Revision.
- August 11-12, 2020: Core Curriculum Retreat 2020: "Diverse Perspectives, Inclusive Communities." Presentations and wide-ranging discussions of the proposed revision, released to the faculty in July 2020.



- August 17-18, 2021: Core Pedagogy Retreat 2021: “Moving Forward.” Presentations and wide-ranging discussions of the proposed revision released to the faculty in June 2021.

### **Core Revision Presentations at Faculty Meetings**

- October 7, 2019: Presentation of Faculty Survey results and Staffing Report.
- December 2, 2019: Presentation of Four Possible Core Draft Models.
- February 10, 2020: Special Faculty Meeting on Revision – Three Draft Models.
- February 24, 2020: Nancy Ries report on faculty feedback to Draft Models.
- March 9, 2020: Special Faculty Meeting presentation of 3-5-20 single Core model with variations – “Diverse Perspectives, Inclusive Communities.”
- March 30, 2020: Faculty Meeting Update on Core Revision Timeline.
- October 26, 2021: Update on the Core Revision
- February 1, 2021: The CRC moves the Core Revision Proposal in Faculty Meeting
- February 8, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- February 15, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- February 22, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- March 1, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- March 8, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- March 15, 2021: Faculty debate the Core Revision Proposal and offer amendments
- March 22, 2021: Faculty votes on the Core Revision Proposal. 65.2% in favor, falls short of the desired 67%. President Casey remands the process to FAC.

### **Fora and Special Revision-Related Component Meetings 2018-19**

- September 14, 2018: Core CI meeting regarding the Core Self-Study.
- February 22, 2019: Core CI meeting: “Self-Study Reflections.”
- March 7, 2019: Core Forum open to all faculty.
- March 18, 2019: Core Forum open to all faculty.
- March 20, 2019: Core Forum open to all faculty.
- April 11, 2019: Core Forum for pre-tenure faculty.

### **Core Fora and Special Component Meetings, 2019-20**

- September 13, 2019: Core CI meeting with Core Revision conversation.
- September 26, 2019: Core 152 component meeting on Core Revision
- October 17, 2019: Combined 151 & 152 staff meeting to discuss the Core Revision and Brian Doerries’ Theater of War.

- October 31, 2019: Core 151 component meeting on Core Revision.
- November 8, 2019: SP component meeting on Core Revision.
- December 5, 2019: Core 152 component meeting on Core Revision.
- January 23, 2020: Core Revision Forum open to all faculty.
- January 24, 2020: SP component meeting on Core Revision for pre-tenure faculty.
- January 29, 2020: Core Revision Forum open to all faculty.
- January 30, 2020: Core Revision Forum for pre-tenure faculty.
- February 6, 2020: CI component meeting on the Core and the DEI Plan, led by Danny Barreto and Mark Stern.
- February 7, 2020: SP component meeting on Core Revision.
- February 14, 2020: SP component meeting on Core Revision.
- February 20, 2020: Core 152 component meeting on Core Revision.
- March 11, 2020: Core Revision Breakfast Forum open to all faculty.
- March 12, 2020: Core Revision Lunch Forum for pre-tenure faculty.
- March 12, 2020: Combined 151 & 152 staff meeting to discuss the Core Revision (also on Antigone production).
- March 12, 2020: SP component meeting on Core Revision.
- July 28, 2020: Core 151 component meeting on the Core Revision.
- July 30, 2020: SP component meeting on Core Revision
- October 19, 2020: Combined 151 & 152 staff meeting to discuss the Core Revision

### **CRC Discussion Zoom Meetings with Departments/Programs – Fall 2020**

- October 20, 2020: Meeting with Sociology and Anthropology
- October 22, 2020: Meetings with Art and Art History, East Asian Languages and Literature, and Classics
- October 23, 2020: Meeting with Religion
- October 26, 2020: Meeting with Math
- October 27, 2020: Meeting with Biology
- October 29, 2020: Meetings with African and Latin American Studies and Native American Studies
- October 30, 2020: Meeting with Environmental Studies
- November 2, 2020: Meetings with Geography and Writing and Rhetoric
- November 3, 2020: Meetings with Chemistry, Philosophy, Theater, History, and Psychology/ Neuroscience
- November 4, 2020: Meeting with Russian and Eurasian Studies
- November 5, 2020: Meeting with Computer Science
- November 10, 2020: Meetings with Geology and Educational Studies

- November 12, 2020: Meetings with the Natural Sciences Division and Peace and Conflict Studies
- November 13, 2020: Meeting with pre-tenure faculty
- November 16, 2020: Meeting with Music
- November 17, 2020: Meetings with English and Asian Studies
- November 19, 2020: Meetings with the Social Sciences Division and Physics

### **Meetings with Student Leaders and SGA**

- November 14, 2017: Meeting with Student Senate on Global Engagements.
- March 20, 2018: Meeting with Student Senate on Core 151.
- April 1, 2019: Meeting with Student Government Association (SGA) leaders on Core Revision.
- April 17, 2019: SGA Open Meeting on Core revision process and priorities.

### **Alumni Reunion Conversation on the Core**

- May 31, 2019: “Alumni Voices: Share Your Thoughts on the Core Curriculum.” All-Alumni Bicentennial Reunion panel.

### **Special Cross-Component Events Providing Ideas and Inspiration for the Revision (2018-20)**

*The UPs organized a range of events to foster collaboration across the Core Components and to further the mission of the revision:*

- September 26, 2018: Combined 151 & 152 Antigone discussion
- October 10, 2018: Combined 151 & 152 Home Fire discussion
- October 16, 2018: Antigone: A Multi-disciplinary Conversation (Faculty Panel)
- October 17, 2018: Combined CI & 151 meeting: “What Do We Do in Our Component?”
- October 23, 2018: Combined 151 & 152 Seminar on Wollstonecraft’s *Frankenstein*.
- February 19, 2019: All-Core Staff Reading Group on Wollstonecraft’s *Frankenstein*.
- February 27, 2019: Combined 151, 152 & SP breakfast: “What We Do in Our Component?”
- March 27, 2019: All-Core Staff Reading Group on Eugenides’ *Middlesex*.
- October 1, 2019: Popol Vuh discussion and dinner with Tony Aveni.
- October 3, 2019: Core CI seminar on teaching climate and environmental issues in CI courses, led by Teo Ballvé and Heather Roller.
- October 3, 2019: Commons Dinner on “Difficult Texts” with Alan Cooper, Ben Stahlberg, Ed Witherspoon and Margaret Maurer.

## Appendix F: Recommendations from the CRC for Transitioning to a New Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, Updated by the Combined Group in September 2021

This appendix outlines the recommendations the Core Revision Committee made regarding effective implementation of the revised Core. These recommendations are updated in this document for consideration by relevant parties and are not presented for a vote of the faculty. Specification of (new) staffing and position descriptions and potential reorganization of responsibilities within the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, and Division of University Studies will flow from considered reflection of the academic administration in consultation with faculty governance.

### **Institutional Investments in Support of the New Core**

#### *Establish a New Position: Director of Campus Writing*

The successful implementation and execution of the proposed Process of Writing Practice and the Writing designation for the FSEM program will require the addition of a full-time Director of Campus Writing (or Director of Writing Across the Curriculum). This position will be charged with curricular development and assessment, programming and consulting for faculty, and coordination of student access to appropriate Process of Writing courses. Working closely with the Director of the Writing and Speaking Center and the Second Language Coordinator, the director will bridge direct support of students' writing with curricular development and pedagogical support for faculty, maintaining a robust writing culture on campus and helping faculty from all disciplines meet the goals of the Process of Writing Practice.

#### *Realign Leadership Duties*

Colgate's LACC will be led by a team of University Professors (UPs), appointed by the Provost/Dean of the Faculty and overseen by the Division Director for University Studies. A leadership team of five UPs will manage this LACC, one each to lead:

1. The First-Year Seminar, Living & Learning Workshop, and Residential Commons Connections
2. Core Communities
3. Core Conversations
4. Core Sciences
5. The Liberal Arts Practices and Core Distinction

This organization of leadership requires no new resources from the university. The two positions once needed to coordinate Core 151 and 152 can be combined into one position, freeing up a position to coordinate the Practices and oversee the Core Distinction program. The FSEM UP will coordinate the Living & Learning Workshop, building strong and enduring connections between the Residential Commons and FSEM communities.

As part of this realignment, the parameters of the contribution of the Administrative Assistant in the Division of University Studies to the operations of the Core should be considered.

#### *Make Resources Available for Supporting Course Transitions and New Courses*

The Division of University Studies has resources to support faculty members' work in transitioning to a new LACC. In the academic year 2018-2019, funds from a Mellon Foundation New Presidents' Discretionary Grant supported faculty members' collaborative projects on envisioning a new Core. Some of those funds have been held over, with Mellon Foundation approval, to support a further round of collaborative Core course development; additional support will come from existing Core component resources.

### **Steps for Implementing a New Liberal Arts Core Curriculum**

Given its scope, the implementation of this LACC will have wide-ranging effects on teaching and learning at Colgate. Faculty deserve and will require support to revise existing courses and design new ones. This process of adaptation will also involve reflexive, interdisciplinary discussion about what we teach and how we teach. When and where appropriate and necessary, the Office of the Provost and Dean of the Faculty will provide and organize support for faculty to undertake professional and curricular development.

To move those conversations forward on three complex changes in this new curriculum, the CRC recommends the following three committees be created to operate through 2022-2023. Each committee will establish clear links to the faculty governance system, in consultation with the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Provost and Dean of the Faculty.

1. Developing the Living & Learning Workshop will require a dedicated Core Implementation Committee. This Implementation Committee will be composed of faculty, including colleagues from the Library and PERA; and representatives from the Dean of the College Division, including Residential Commons staff. This committee will work with the FSEM UP and the Dean of the College to determine the modules that are to be a part of the Workshop and consider the timing of the offerings and schedule.
2. Establishing the Liberal Arts Practice structure will require another dedicated Implementation Committee. This committee will include representation from the Registrar's Office, Curriculum Committee, each of the four academic divisions, the Associate Dean of Faculty for Curricular and Academic Affairs, and the UP for Liberal Arts Practices. One UP will be dedicated to coordinating the work of this Implementation Committee with departments and programs, and managing the Practices once the new curriculum takes effect. Departments and programs will identify which Practice tags should be applied to their courses. In addition, all departments and programs will be strongly encouraged to add the Process of Writing Practice tag to as many of their courses as possible and as appropriate.
3. The third committee should be a Working Group charged with developing a Core Conversations course that adheres to the principles set forth in this document. This Working Group, chaired by the UP for Core Conversations, will consist of the five UPs and all interested faculty committed to piloting this course in the next three years.

Faculty members who have taught Core CI or SP are encouraged to transition their courses to fit the new scope of Core Communities or Core Sciences. The work of transitioning will be managed by each Component's UP in consultation with current and future instructors. An expedited review

process will invite colleagues to highlight content in their courses that already meets the new Component requirements and the changes they are making on their syllabi to meet the new Component requirements. New course proposals will also be welcome. Workshops at upcoming Core Pedagogy Retreats and during the semesters can facilitate these transitions.

## **Ensuring the Success of the New Core**

### *The Core Mentoring Program*

The Core mentoring program, which began in the fall of 2010, provides pre-tenure faculty members with the opportunity to both observe a Core component class, normally in the semester before teaching one themselves, and develop a mentoring relationship with a faculty member outside of their home department or program ([Guidelines for Core Incentives Program](#)). This structure helps to ensure adequate staffing for the Core components that is balanced across faculty ranks, as well as support for the training of new instructors. It has run continuously since its inception, with 108 pre-tenure faculty members having been mentored and 67 tenured faculty members having served as mentors.

The mentoring process should begin with a conversation between the faculty member, their chair or program director, and the UNST Division Director to discuss their options for participation in the Core components and their particular mentoring needs. Regardless of academic division, faculty members are encouraged to teach in any Core component that engages their interest. While pre-tenure faculty members will normally mentor with a tenured colleague teaching in the same component, in some circumstances there may be benefits in a cross-component mentoring relationship.

To strengthen the Core component staff, the University Professors and Director of the Division of University Studies encourage the Provost and Dean of the Faculty to:

1. Increase current levels of incentives and compensation for Core teaching and mentorship, to extend the same incentive to all first-year seminar instructors, by changing the expiration of such incentives from 10 years to 20 years.
2. Equalize class sizes across all Core component courses, and prioritize small class sizes, as university resources allow.
3. Increase support for faculty collaborations across Core components, such as large section team-teaching and other forms of linked or clustered teaching.

### *Assessment*

Following implementation, the new LACC will assess its effectiveness at achieving the academic goals laid out in the First-Year Seminar, the Living & Learning Workshop, the three Core Components, the five Liberal Arts Practices and the three Areas of Inquiry. The UNST Division Director, University Professors, the University Registrar and Director of Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research, and the Assessment Committee will work collaboratively to identify useful tools for both fine-grained assessment of individual pieces of the LACC and holistic assessment of its entirety.

Any assessment will attend to the ways that the LACC meets the 13 Goals of A Colgate Education (see Appendix C).

The Core Curriculum Retreat offers an annual and dedicated opportunity for faculty assessment of and responsive adjustments to the separate pieces of the LACC and to make small adjustments.

An internal assessment of the LACC as a whole in eight years from implementation of this proposal should also take place, so that the results of the assessment can directly inform the next LACC revision.

### **Recommendations for Future LACC Revision Processes**

As with all academic programs at Colgate, there should be a regular cycle of review aligned with faculty governance and best practices in curricular review. At the end of this intensive process, the Faculty Affairs Committee is urged to develop faculty handbook guidelines for initiating future Core revisions, constituting their committees, establishing the committees' mandates, setting up voting protocols for Core-related motions, and implementing a revised Core.

The practices of 2018-2020, as detailed in this text and its appendices, provide starting points. The CRC consisted of the five University Professors and four elected members (one from each academic division), as well as the Division Director of University Studies, who chaired the committee. This structure, which ensured that the CRC was broadly representative of the faculty and that all parts of the curriculum were represented in the committee, should be retained.

Recommended improvements, however, would include changing the term length of positions on the CRC from one year to two. Given the enormity, complexity, and importance of the task, it is not surprising that neither the 2019-2020 CRC nor the 2008-2009 CRC were able to complete their work in a single academic year. Also, plan for compensation for the elected as well as the appointed members of the Core Revision Committee.

## Appendix G: Some Further Thoughts About Core Encounters (from spring 2021)

*Before arriving at the current proposal for Core Conversations, members of the spring 2021 Combined Group began to develop a component called Core Encounters. In order to provide a thorough historical account of the Core Revision process, a document called “Some Further Thoughts about Core Encounters,” generated in spring 2021, is reproduced below.*

The following reflections grew out of small group discussion about the idea of “Encounter.” They are offered here with the thought that they might spark discussion at the Core Pedagogy Retreat in August, but are in no way intended to determine or prescribe the shape Core Encounters takes. It may well be that the faculty who identify themselves as wanting to teach Core Encounters choose to view the frame of encounter as describing the encounters that take place between students and texts, ideas, and each other in the setting of the course, rather than as indicating that the texts of the course must themselves manifest, describe, or explore (the idea of) encounters.

### ***Some Notes on the Idea of Encounter***

Encounters can take many forms. An encounter can be physical, intellectual, emotional, even spiritual. The word suggests not merely a meeting but an engagement between parties, one that quite often includes an exchange of some sort--of words, ideas, goods, gunfire. In contemporary usage, the quality or nature of the interaction is not signaled in the word itself - an encounter can be positive or negative, constructive or destructive, benevolent or antagonistic.

The word’s very etymology indicates opposition (Lat. *in* “in” + *contra* “against”) and in its early English uses designated a meeting of adversaries. While the sense of the encounter as a challenge--being faced with something difficult or hostile (we’ve encountered a problem; they had a dangerous encounter)—pervades, the word is now also, equally, used simply to signal the experience of coming into contact with someone or something. Although an encounter could be banal or inconsequential, we tend to use the word to describe a contact that is meaningful, memorable, or even momentous.

Often the contact is unexpected, a surprise. Experienced positively, we speak of these as chance encounters or serendipitous encounters. If conceived by one party rather than occurring by chance, the surprise encounter might be experienced very negatively, however, as with an ambush, a siege, or an attack. It seems particularly important, then, to hear the voices of those who have been ‘encountered.’

The encounter can be collective--the ‘encounter’ (put overly delicately) between Europeans and the people of the so-called New World, between colonizers and the colonized in various settings through history--or highly personal. Like the collective encounter, the personal encounter between individuals can be dangerous or destabilizing, but it also has the potential to be supportive or enriching. In psychology, an encounter is “a meaningful experience in one person’s relating to another that is characterized by mutual trust and empathy”; in the context of existential-humanism, the encounter has the specific meaning of an authentic, congruent meeting between individuals.

In many meaningful encounters, we are challenged to contend with our own difference from the someone or something we have encountered. We recognize and must respond to the fact that the



encounter has brought us into contact with humans (or nonhuman entities, such as animals or divinities) or ideas that are somehow “other”—unfamiliar, even alien to us.

***Some Examples of Texts that Might Work in this Frame, for illustrative purposes***

Possible texts might describe encounters, both between humans and between humans and the other-than-human. These could be stories about encounters that are illuminating, such as W. E. B. Du Bois’s encounter with his white classmates that makes him aware of the veil, or clarifying, as with the warrior Arjuna’s encounter with Krishna, which clarifies his *dharma* (here, duty in the world) as he prepares for another encounter: a military engagement with his own kinsfolk. They could explore encounters that disrupt one’s worldview, such as the chance encounter between Socrates and Euthyphro at the porch of King Archon which challenges both men to interrogate their understandings of what is pious, or Job’s encounters first with his acquaintances who seek to explain his plight and then with God who unsettles all their notions about the place of humans in the cosmos. They might enact encounters that cause the reader to consider distinctions between the human and the nonhuman, as must the twins in the *Popol Vuh* or the demigod Gilgamesh through his friendship with the mortal Enkidu.

Selected texts might themselves articulate philosophies of encounter, theorizing—as do some of the writings of Kongzi (aka Confucius), Martin Buber, Martin Luther King, Jr., James Baldwin, or Gayatri Spivak, as examples—the relationship between self and other. They could treat encounters that cause one to hone or reshape one’s philosophy, like the Buddha’s four encounters (or four sights), Gandhi’s textual encounter with the *Baghavad Gita*, Gloria Anzaldúa’s experiences at the intersections of cultures on the Texas-Mexico border, or Friedrich Engels’s encounters with the English working class.

Course texts might describe the experience of collective, historical encounters—particularly those driven by understandings of land (and people!) as conquerable. Accounts of colonialism and its aftermath, such as Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Soyinka’s *Ake*, or Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* could work well in this course, as would works like Wolcott’s *Omeros*, which further complicate the legacy of colonialism.

An instructor might establish an encounter or dialogue among the texts of the course. One can well imagine the rich discussion that might occur if one were to consider Camus’ *The Stranger*, about a detached French settler in Algiers who murders an Arab man, alongside *The Meursault Investigation*, Algerian writer Daoud Kamel’s retelling of the story from the perspective of the Arab man’s brother—especially if set alongside a viewing and discussion of *The Battle of Algiers*. A similar cross-textual encounter could occur in a course that read Sophocles’ *Antigone* alongside contemporary retellings like Nez Perce writer Beth Piatote’s *Antikoni*, with its reflections on one’s relationship to one’s ancestors, or Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire*, which transposes the drama to contemporary London and Pakistan.

In a different vein, selected texts might frame encounters between humans and the natural world. Were faculty interested in pressing in this direction, they could choose texts that either diminish the delineations between these (as in many creation stories, both religio-cultural and scientific, or the writings of Barbara Kingsolver, Bill McKibben, or Paul Shepard, as examples) or that accentuate them (as in Genesis, *Moby-Dick*, Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, or Werner Herzog’s *Grizzly Man*). They might explore collisions between competing ways of understanding the physical and natural world, as in Anne Fadiman’s *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* or the film *Inherit the Wind*.