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Standard 12

General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

Context

General education is an important component of all undergraduate and some graduate higher education degree programs. All undergraduate and those graduate programs that include a general education component are expected to meet this standard and the related Fundamental Elements. Graduate programs that do not include general education components should ensure that students at admission have appropriate general education skills.

Institutions should identify and provide a recognizable core of general education that:

- expresses the educational philosophy of the institution for each undergraduate degree program or cluster of degree programs;
- incorporates essential knowledge, cognitive abilities, and an understanding of values and ethics;
- enhances students' intellectual growth; and
- draws students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and sensitivity, and preparing them to make enlightened judgments outside as well as within their academic specialty.

What are presented here as general education skills are not necessarily distinct and apart from each other. There is an inherent relationship among these skills. This interrelatedness is evident in the concept of "information literacy," which embraces all of the specific general education skills (see Context, Standard 11).

Consistent with institutional practices, general education degree requirements may be fulfilled through courses completed at the institution, transfer credits, competencies demonstrated in ways determined by the institution, or admission prerequisites.

A general education program—developed, owned, and reviewed by the institution's faculty—should be purposeful, coherent, engaging, and rigorous. General education skills may be taught or developed as part of courses in the major, in separate courses, or through a decentralized distribution. However, the skills and knowledge derived from general education and the major should be integrated because general education and study in depth, together, comprise a quality undergraduate education.

Institutions offering the associate and baccalaureate degrees will strike an appropriate balance between specialized and more general knowledge. The institution's ability to demonstrate that its students are able to integrate and apply in different contexts the core knowledge and skills learned in their course work is a critical component of successful undergraduate educational programs.

General education offerings should reflect the particular programs and mission of the institution. However, general education courses should not focus narrowly on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. The content of general education within specialized degree programs should be comparable, though not necessarily identical, to traditional academic offerings at the collegiate level or above. Programs in postsecondary vocational technical institutions should evidence recognition of the relationship between broad education and the acquisition of techniques and skills. In professional degree programs beyond the baccalaureate, courses in ethics, humanities, and public policy may be particularly relevant.

Fundamental Elements of General Education

An accredited institution offering undergraduate degrees and some graduate institutions are expected to possess or demonstrate the following attributes or activities:

- a program of general education of sufficient scope to enhance students' intellectual growth, and equivalent to at least 15 semester hours for associate degree programs and 30 semester hours for baccalaureate programs; (An institution also may demonstrate how an alternative approach fulfills the intent of this fundamental element.)
- a program of general education where the skills and abilities developed in general education are applied in the major or concentration;
- consistent with institutional mission, a program of general education that incorporates study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives;
- institutional requirements assuring that, upon degree completion, students are proficient in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and technological competency appropriate to the discipline;
- general education requirements clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution; and
- assessment of general education outcomes within the institution's overall plan for assessing student learning, and evidence that such assessment results are utilized for curricular improvement.

Institutions and evaluators must consider the totality that is created by the fundamental elements and any other relevant institutional information or analysis. Fundamental elements and contextual statements should not be applied separately as checklists. Where an institution does not possess or demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, the institution may demonstrate through alternative information and analysis that it meets the standard.

Optional Analysis and Evidence

In addition to the evidence inherent within or necessary to document the fundamental elements above, the following, although not required, may facilitate the institution's own analysis relative to this accreditation standard:

- evidence of institutional statements of the rationale supporting the curriculum and the benefits of a quality general education program; and evidence that this rationale has been communicated to students, parents, advisors, employers, and other constituencies;
- analysis of statements of institutional mission, goals, or objectives relative to core knowledge and skills (general education);
- analysis of statements of individual curricular or degree program goals/objectives relative to core knowledge and skills (general education);

- evidence of articulated expectations of student learning outcomes for written communication, speech communication, quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning, information literacy, technological competence, and critical analysis and reasoning for all undergraduate degree students;
- evidence of student understanding of the key learning outcomes of each general education requirement;
- evidence of institutional support for the general education program (administrative structure, budget, faculty incentives); or
- evidence of completed analytical review of the general education curriculum that addresses topics such as:
 - appropriateness to institutional mission;
 - relevance to student goals, interests and aspirations;
 - provision of adequate time on task and information to learn and to practice the knowledge, skills and abilities imparted by each requirement within the program;
 - provision of adequate balance between theory and practice, given curricular and institutional goals;
 - opportunity for active student engagement in the learning undertaken;
 - opportunity for collaborative learning and to work with others in the completion of learning tasks; or
 - provision of an atmosphere of inquiry where diverse backgrounds and perspectives are valued.

EPC Subcommittee on Experiential Learning

Members: Brad Frazier, Deb Gagnon, Amy Godert (chair), Nancy Karpinski, John Wells

Summary:

This subcommittee was charged with determining the objectives, outcomes, means, and assessment methods for the experiential learning requirement in general education. We feel that this is an important part of the general education requirement, and we recommend that the experiential learning program be expanded (i.e. increase the number of experiences from 2 to 3) and have increased flexibility in the types of experiences that can count towards fulfilling this requirement. The objectives, outcomes, and assessment methods given in this document are intentionally broad in order to accommodate the various types of experiences that should fulfill the experiential learning requirement.

There is data to support retaining the experiential learning requirement. In a recent survey of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), a majority of business leaders said that experiential learning and application of classroom knowledge to the experience was “effective in ensuring the recent college graduates possess the skills and knowledge needed for success.” In the AACU survey, only 36% of institutions incorporated experiential learning well or fairly well into their general education requirements (see Appendix 1 for a survey of our peer institutions). ¹ Experiential learning could be linked to major requirements and possibly used as a retention tool, as has been mentioned in the strategic planning process.

Our biggest concern, whether it was objectives, outcomes or assessment, was consistency. The entire process needs to be more uniform to ensure fairness and that the objectives of experiential learning are being met. Although it will be up to individual faculty members to approve and evaluate learning experiences, a set of objectives that is common to all experiences should improve consistency.

This proposal is different from the current requirements in the following ways:

1. A proposed name change from Experiential Learning to Experiential and Intercultural Learning (EIL).
2. An increased number of experiences are required, from two to three, which can be completed in the fall, spring, winter, or summer.
3. At least one of the experiences must be off campus (and students should be encouraged to do all of them off-campus).
4. Instead of requiring two experiences from all students, the number of experiences required will be based on the semester hours obtained at Wells. For every 40 semester hours completed at Wells, the student must complete one experience.
5. Instead of excluding specific experiences, all experiences that fulfill the objectives can be counted (this would include on-campus opportunities), as long as a faculty member agrees to sponsor the activity. [Note: In assuming sponsorship and granting academic credit for this ‘course’, it is the sponsoring faculty member’s responsibility to ensure that the objectives, as specified in the EIL plan, can be and have been met by the experience.]
6. There is a limit of one, one semester hour experience.
7. Reflection and sharing are required for all experiences.

Description of Experiential Learning

Experiential learning occurs through engagement in, and reflection on, planned activities outside the classroom, and contributes to personal growth, intellectual development, and awareness of community and culture.

Objectives

Experiences should meet all of the objectives outlined below. The experiential learning requirement will allow students to:

1. Apply course based learning in the liberal arts to situations outside the classroom.
2. Gain new perspectives and an appreciation of difference and diversity, and improve understanding of others and enhance their interpersonal skills.
3. Engage in on-going critical reflection of the experience.
4. Consider and explore the potential for life-long learning.
5. Develop individual objectives, which are realistic, intentional and measurable, for the specific learning experience.

Outcomes

Although all the objectives must be met, the number of outcomes met can vary and will depend, to some extent, on the nature of the experience. The faculty sponsor is responsible for determining which outcomes must be met by a particular experience. At the end of fulfilling their experiential learning requirement, students will:

1. Develop knowledge that is tied to their liberal arts education through critical examination of the experience.
2. Cultivate a greater sense of civic and social responsibility.
3. Demonstrate the ability to apply theories and concepts learned in the classroom to situations encountered outside the classroom.
4. Understand the needs of others, gain cultural awareness, and appreciate the diversity in people and environments.
5. Develop communication and interpersonal skills.
6. Share their knowledge and experiences with others at Wells and at the experience site.
7. Evaluate a potential post-graduate path or future pursuit.
8. Assess whether original objectives were met.

Means

Options that can be used to fulfill the proposed experiential and intercultural learning requirements:

- Off campus internships
- Service based learning
- On campus experiences (including research, TA's, student government)
- Prior experience internship credit
- Student teaching
- Experiential learning seminars (including PLEN and January experiences)
- Off-campus study abroad
- Domestic off-campus Study

Options that cannot be used to fulfill the proposed experiential and intercultural learning requirement:

- Independent study
- Senior thesis

Assessment Methods

We discussed potential assessment methods and decided that there are two that would be required for all forms of experiential learning: reflection and sharing.

Reflection

Reflection requires that students demonstrate they have completed the objectives and achieved the desired learning outcomes. The reflection should take the form of a written document.

Sharing

Sharing requires that a student be able to communicate with others about their experiences. It should involve discussion and can take place through poster presentations, oral presentations, round-table discussions or exit interviews. How the sharing takes place is determined by the faculty sponsor.

Where appropriate, the subcommittee recommends that an evaluation of the student's work/contribution be made by a person who had some supervisory over the student at the experience site. This on-site evaluation will help evaluate whether the objectives were met.

The subcommittee would like to note that additional outcomes/objectives should be defined for individual experiences (by the student in consultation with the faculty sponsor or on-site coordinator), but all experiences should fulfill the objectives laid out above.

Rationale of Changes

Experiential learning requires students to make connections with their liberal arts education and explore potential career paths.

1. A proposed name change from Experiential Learning to Experiential and Intercultural Learning.

The subcommittee recommends renaming the requirement to **Experiential and Intercultural Learning (EIL)**. This change would more accurately reflect the various experiences that could be used to fulfill the requirement. We also recommend that the catalog be reorganized to have a section on Experiential and Intercultural Learning that would include a description and rationale of this requirement, the objectives required of all the experiences, and the different types of experiences (non-exhaustive) that could be used to fulfill the requirement. Currently, OCS and internships/experiential learning are separated in the catalog and there is no clear link between them.

2. An increased number of experiences are required, from two to three, which can be completed in the fall, spring, winter term or summer.

We recommend increasing the number of experiences from two to three. This increase in the number of experiences will give the students exposure to a number of different areas and allow them to see how various experiences connect to their liberal arts education.

This increase reflects the increase in the types of experiences that can be counted, as well as the desire to have students engage in more activities, both on and off campus.

3. At least one of the experiences must be off campus.

This is important in order to remove the student from the comfort of the Wells environment and place them in a new setting that they must adapt to. It also encourages them to make

connections with the community outside of Wells. If a student (such a transfer student) has to complete only one experience, it must be off campus.

4. Instead of requiring two experiences from all students, the number of experiences required will be based on the semester hours obtained at Wells. For every 40 semester hours completed at Wells, the student must complete one experience.

The committee recommends the following structure, which allows for more flexibility in the case of transfer students: For every 40 semester hours completed at Wells, the student must complete one experience. A full-time student admitted as a freshman would have 120 semester hours completed at graduation, and would have to complete three experiences. A transfer student who completes 60 semester hours would only have to do one experience (has not reached the 80 semester hours/two experience threshold). A transfer student who completes at least 80 semester hours at Wells would do two experiences.

5. Instead of excluding specific experiences, all experiences that fulfill the objectives can be counted (this would include on-campus opportunities), as long as a faculty member agrees to sponsor the activity.

Generally, the committee feels that if a student can demonstrate that the experiential learning objectives are met, then the experience can count. There would be some restrictions. For example, a student could not simply repeat the same experience (an issue of breadth). However, a student could do multiple of the same type of experience (i.e. internships) and even at the same site, as long as each experience was different (engaging in different activities, with different goals and objectives).

Ultimately, the faculty are responsible for approval of the experience. The committee discussed the need for administrative support and guidelines.

6. There is a limit of one, one semester hour experience.

In order to obtain one semester hour of experience, a student must complete 40 on-site hours. Two semester hours is 80 on-site hours, three is 120 on-site hours, and four is 160 on-site hours. There would be a maximum of 12 semester hours that a student can earn through internships. All internships, with the exception of Wells190 are required to be at least two semester hours (80 hours). Experiential learning is based on exposing the student to new things, and the subcommittee feels that a minimum of 80 hours is required for students to fully immerse themselves in their experiences.

7. Reflection and sharing are required for all experiences.

This is to ensure consistency for all experiences as well as to encourage the students to think about how their objectives were met. Reflection is a required component in all standards and guidelines for experiential learning that we reviewed. Sharing strongly aligns with the 'sharing the privileges of education in the Wells College mission statement and multiplies the benefits of the requirement for all.

Potential concerns

Since faculty members are ultimately required to approve and evaluate the experiences, the need for faculty compensation (money, time) was brought up. Currently, there is no compensation for overseeing internships. We suggest that either monetary compensation or course relief be considered (as is done for Wells101), but a system would need to be developed to ensure fairness.

Appendix 1: Survey of Peer Institutions Experiential Learning

We surveyed 18 peer institutions to explore their experiential learning requirements. The results are summarized in the table below.

	Is experiential/ intercultural learning mentioned on the homepage?	It is required as part of the general education requirements ?	Are the experiences given credit?	Is OCS separate?	How many are in career services?	UG population Endowment 09-10 tuition/fees (US New and WR)
Albion	Not prominent – hard to find	No, but some majors encourage it	No	Yes	2, director, admin secretary	~1860 \$180,732,242 \$30,006
Allegheny	Not much	No	Yes, some do	Yes	4, director, assoc dir, asst dir, secretary (+student advisors)	~2125 \$157,007,094 \$33,560
Beloit	Study abroad is, but not internships	No, it is encouraged and req'd by some, but not all	Yes	Yes	3, director (asst dean of students) , advisor, coord (+6 student advisors)	~1388 \$131,877,612 \$33,418
Centre	Yes (study abroad and career services)	No	Yes (some)	Yes	4, director, assoc director, asst dir, office coord	~1197 \$191,326,054 \$39,000
Cornell (Iowa)	No	No	Study abroad is	Yes		~1115 \$69,253,283 \$29,580
Hanover	Study abroad is	No	Study abroad is	Yes	4, director, coord, assistant,	~926 \$150,243,680 \$26,350

					spec projects coord	
Hartwick	Sort-of, but not like we are describing	Yes	Yes	No (It is together with internships, etc)	2, director, asst director (+ 7 student advisors)	~1493 \$63,672,189 \$33,330
Hobart and William Smith	Yes – prominently They have centers that Wells might look into	Highly encouraged but not required	No	Yes (Center for Global Education)	6, sr assoc direct, assoc direct, asst direct, asst direct, asst direct of health prof, career serv admin (+student advisors)	~2078 \$185,083,906 \$40,221
Juniata	No	No	Yes	Yes	2, director, asst	~1523 \$74,083,985 \$31,550
Knox	No	Yes (as gen req and by specific programs as well)	Yes	Yes	3, assoc dean (director) , intern coord, office coord	~1382 \$71,423,257 \$31,911
College of Wooster	No	No	Yes	Yes	4, director, asst director, admin coord, pre-health	~1884 \$289,021,270 \$34,951

					advisor (+2 student advisors)	
Randolph- Macon	Yes (J-term is featured)	No	Yes	Yes	3, director, career counselor , admin asst	~1201 \$129,048,06 1 \$29,182
Ripon	No (study abroad is as “our students’ excellent adventures”)	No	Yes (through departments for jr and sr students)	Yes (with many US OCS opportunitie s)	3, assoc dean (director) , prog coord, secretary	~1057 \$55,539,460 \$25,445
Southwester n	No (but they do mention the new lifelong learning center they are building)	No	Yes (through departments)	Yes	?	~1270 ? \$30,220
St. Lawrence	No (study abroad is though)	No	Yes	Yes	6, director, asst direc, asst direc, internshi p coord, alumni coord, principal clerk (+many student advisors)	~2206 \$244,832,14 9 \$39,765
Ursinus	No	Yes, one independent learning experience is req’d		Yes	5, director, career advisor, career advisor, info	~1680 \$124,485,63 4 \$38,670

					manager, admin asst	
Washington (MD)	Yes (career development)	No	Yes	Yes	?	
Wheaton (MA)	No	No	No	Yes	5, director, asst director, internshi p coord, events coord, office coord	

EPC Subcommittee on Oral Communication and Information Literacy Spring 2010

Bryan Duff, Muriel Godbout, Susan Wansor, Christina Wahl and Susan Tabrizi, Chair

Subcommittee Charge: The charge for the Oral Communication and Information Literacy Subcommittee is to discuss how these skills might be incorporated into Gen Ed and how they relate to the College's mission, institutional goals, and academic program goals (2009-2010 Catalog, p. 26). If it is determined that the general education curriculum should include requirements related to oral communication and information literacy, then a proposal should be drafted that includes the following components:

- (1) Specific learning objectives (with accompanying rationales)
- (2) Examples of learning outcomes
- (3) Means or methods of the ways students will fulfill requirements
- (4) Ideas for assessment

Wells College Mission Statement: *The mission of Wells College is to educate students to think critically, reason wisely, and act humanely as they cultivate meaningful lives. Through Wells' academic program, residential atmosphere, and community activities students learn and practice the ideals of the liberal arts. The Wells experience prepares students to appreciate complexity and difference, to embrace new ways of knowing, to be creative, and to respond ethically to the interdependent worlds to which they belong. Committed to excellence in all areas of its reach, Wells College equips students for lifelong learning and for sharing the privileges of education with others.*

Oral Communication and Information Literacy: In support of the Wells College Mission statement, the EPC Subcommittee on Oral Communication and Information Literacy believes that both the general-education and the major-specific curricula should provide multiple opportunities for students to develop information literacy and oral communication skills. Information literacy is essential to the mission components of thinking critically, reasoning wisely, and continuing to learn throughout life. Effective oral communication is necessary for responding ethically to interdependent worlds (which cannot be understood without communicating with diverse others) and for sharing the privileges of education with others. To address these issues, we have drafted several options for integrating information literacy and oral communication into the curriculum and present them for faculty review in this report.

Information Literacy: We assume that the information literate student can create a focused research question or thesis statement; access relevant, high quality information efficiently; read and integrate that information and responsibly apply it toward the creation of original work. Information literacy reflects an iterative process, as depicted in the attached flowchart. It is important to note that some students can do elements of the literacy process, but may be unable

to do every step. The goal of information literacy can only be satisfied when the entire process is mastered.

Information Literacy (IL) Learning Objectives and Outcomes

IL Learning Objective 1: The student purposefully articulates the need for specific information and is able to revise the need based on the results of the ongoing research process.

Learning Outcomes:

Students can:

1. identify a general topic
2. narrow a topic to a specific aspect
3. create a focused thesis or research question

IL Learning Objective 2: The student will select the appropriate search systems and access relevant information efficiently.

Learning Outcomes:

The student will:

1. engage in an iterative search process
2. be able to identify and select the most appropriate existing source
3. understand and utilize the different information retrieval systems
4. know the different types of available resources and how to locate them
5. identify search terms (subject headings), knowing the difference between controlled vocabulary and keywords
6. incorporate Boolean operators in the search strategy
7. understand what librarians do

IL Learning Objective 3: Students will develop the skills to prioritize resources based on the topic.

Learning Outcomes:

Students can:

1. identify the timeliness of a resource
2. evaluate the scope of a resource
3. identify the intended audience of a resource
4. recognize distinction between primary and secondary sources

IL Learning Objective 4: Students will be able to understand information from resources and integrate it into their existing knowledge base.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. identify and understand the “philosophical orientation” of sources and resources (including underlying assumptions)
2. understand methods section
3. assess the extent to which claims are supported
4. compare and contrast competing claims

IL Learning Objective 5: The student applies the integrated information in a novel way to address the original thesis or research question.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

1. Incorporate information into the product in a well-organized fashion
2. Ensure that information that does not fit the point one is trying to make is not ignored but, instead, is acknowledged and explained.
3. Ensure that statements, claims, or observations in the final work are well-supported by cited evidence.

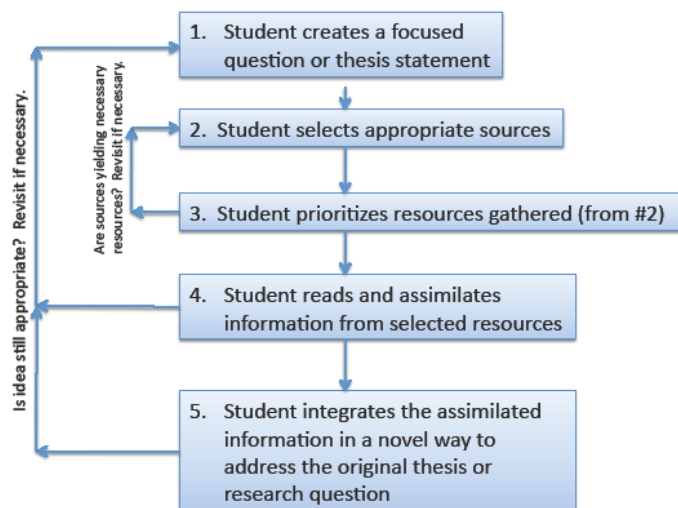
IL Learning Objective 6: Students will understand and observe ethical and legal guidelines surrounding information and information technology.

Learning Outcomes:

The student will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss security and privacy issues related to information retrieval
2. Demonstrate an understanding of intellectual property and adhere to copyright and fair use laws
3. Use the appropriate documentation system

Process Students Master to Achieve Information Literacy



Oral Communication: Competence in oral communication is evidenced by the ability to share information in a clear and concise manner in formal presentations as well as informal discussions. It is important to note that successful oral communication includes the ability to listen as well as the ability to speak.

Oral Communication (OC) Learning Objectives and Outcomes

OC Learning Objective 1: Students will develop confidence in sharing information orally

1. Reduced anxiety
2. Increased willingness
3. Improved learning environment for class

OC Learning Objective 2: Students will develop effective methods for communicating information

1. Organization - audience can follow
2. Clarity – purpose is clear
3. Conciseness – say enough but not too much
4. Style – clear voice, eye contact, body language, loud enough, minimal reading
5. Audience – adaptation of formality, vocabulary, syntax, etc.

OC Learning Objective 3: Students will develop effective strategies for listening

1. Take notes
2. Discern main point
3. Craft relevant questions
4. Retain information

OC Learning Objective 4: Students will become proficient in the ability to use relevant presentational aids (visual, auditory, experiential).

1. Design and deliver PowerPoint or other presentation software
2. Integrate props, handouts, demonstrations into presentation

Assessment: Assessment methods are yet to be constructed. The subcommittee notes the importance of assessment in this proposal and the centrality of assessment to the academic project of the College in general.

Subcommittee Proposal: The subcommittee has identified the need for a two stage approach for achieving the goal of developing information literacy and oral communication skills among Wells students: the first stage is an introduction to the ideas, techniques, and processes in a uniform way at the first-year level; the second stage builds upon this introduction and reinforces skills as students develop in their scholarship.

Stage 1: Foundations for Information Literacy and Oral Communication: Wells 101

This proposal represents a broad outline to be developed in consultation with the director of Wells 101 and individual faculty. The subcommittee's suggestion for the first stage of developing information literacy and oral communication skills among Wells students is centered on a regularized component of Wells 101. Information literacy and oral communication are basic skills that support the development of educated persons. As such, the subcommittee sees Wells 101 as a first step in the process of developing these skills among students. Wells 101 is required of all entering first year students and provides a common baseline for introducing basic skills (see *Goals for Wells 101*, attached). While content across sections varies greatly, a common objective is evident in the stress on basic skills and supports the notion of serving students with an early introduction to information literacy and oral communication that can be built upon in the ensuing years at Wells. The basic elements of the proposal offered below include:

- a structured research task designed to introduce the foundations of information literacy
- multiple faculty-guided opportunities to engage in and practice oral communication
- exposure to the expertise of library professionals

Proposal for Wells 101:

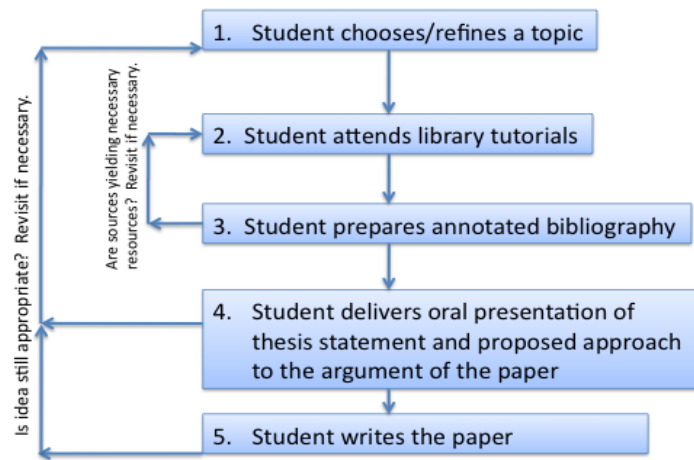
Recognizing that each section of 101 is taught around a unique topic, the proposed IL-OC component is a general activity and assessment framework. This framework is intended to be held in common by each section of the course, within which each faculty member can develop subject matter without constraint.

A portion of the course grade will be based on writing a research paper, topic chosen by the student in consultation with the course professor. The paper assignment will include the following components designed with information literacy and oral communication in mind:

- a. A first trip to the library: to be held early in the semester during a regular session of the class. This session, taught by the library staff, will offer a general introduction to the physical library, its services, and a short tutorial on the general principles of information retrieval.
- b. Paper topic presentation: students give a short oral report regarding their paper topic, its significance and their initial/preliminary research question or thesis statement (what are they going to investigate, why and what question or ideas will guide their research). This gives students the opportunity to revise their paper topic and initial question/statement based on feedback from the instructor and fellow students. This task also serves as an exercise in oral communication in that students will receive feedback regarding poise, pace, organization and other elements of effective oral communication and they will be asked to listen to fellow students.
- c. A second trip to the library, to be held shortly after midterm, to be taught jointly by library staff and course professor. This class will be a more focused information retrieval workshop relevant to the specific topic of each section of 101. It will be held in one of the campus computer laboratories, and each student will be expected to finish the class session having successfully retrieved a substantial number of resources relevant to his/her paper topic.
- d. An annotated bibliography of the top resources gathered by the student in (c) and evaluated by the course professor on the basis of consistent citation style, quality of each retrieval, and potential usefulness of each summary statement.
- e. The final paper in which the student demonstrates that they have addressed their research question/thesis statement using information gathered and integrated into their original work
- f. A short oral presentation to the class in which students present their original work and during which there is an oral exchange of information such that each member of the class is expected to ask questions (demonstrate quality listening) and the presenter is expected to extemporaneously answer based on their research.

Conclusion: The elements of this activity will engage each student in a structured practice towards mastery of information literacy and oral communication as outlined in the following flowchart. A copy of this flowchart will be given to each student, along with an explanation of the objectives and elements of the assignment. Note that the flowchart is designed to correlate with the learning objectives and outcomes for information literacy in general (see above).

Wells 101 Activity and Assessment



Stage 2: Developing and Refining Information Literacy and Oral Communication

Major Programs at Wells: While Wells 101 can provide a common baseline, it is the major areas that have best position for reinforcing and developing information literacy and oral communication skills as students develop their scholarship at Wells. We recommend that major areas overtly include oral communication and information literacy into assessment plans. The idea is that making an overt effort to assess the learning of these basic skills will bring their instruction to the conscious level of planning and curricular development within each major.

Continued Library Instruction: We recommend continuation of the instruction course in information literacy and oral communication currently offered by library staff, its advertisement to students and the encouraged practice of faculty recommendation to students that they take the course.

Oral Communications Workshop: Offered twice a year (at minimum, fall and spring), this workshop would be led by President Ryerson and supported by faculty. President Ryerson will speak to the group regarding her expertise in the area of oral communication and will initiate a small group “break-out” session in which faculty will lead students in exercises designed to enhance confidence, improve skills, develop listening and expose students to the use of presentational aids. This workshop will be mandatory for First Year students in the fall and open to all students in the spring.

Conclusion: We believe that these suggestions reflect the iterative and foundational nature of the information literacy and oral communication skills inherent in the development of educated persons to which Wells aspires.

Appendix

Table of Goals for Wells 101

DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM	WRITING	CONTENT	BASIC SKILLS	DISCUSSION	TRANSITION TO COLLEGE
<i>Students will increase their awareness of the world as both diverse and multicultural</i>	<i>Students will improve their writing</i>	<i>Students will master a challenging core content</i>	<i>Students will acquire the learning skills essential for successful college work</i>	<i>Students will refine their discussion skills in the seminar format</i>	<i>Students will comprehend the culture and expectations of higher education and Wells College</i>
--begin to overcome stereotypes	--understand writing as a process	--think observantly and critically about the world around them	--develop note taking skills	--use discussion as a means of inquiry and intellectual exchange	--understand the value and nature of a liberal arts education and of lifelong learning
--develop community, tolerance, inclusion, appreciation of difference, and humaneness within the classroom and in the broader College culture	--refine their facility with Standard Written English	--read for meaning and critical evaluation	--manage time effectively	--learn how to disagree open-mindedly and civilly	--read for meaning and critical evaluation --begin to take responsibility for their own education
--identify theirs and others' preconceptions and biases	--develop skills to construct and carry out an argument	--begin to comprehend the interdisciplinary nature of work in the liberal arts	--read for meaning and critical evaluation	--begin to lead small discussion groups	--think observantly and critically about the world around them
	--practice writing for various purposes, including exams, charged papers, papers involving outside sources, and essays or papers with free response and free source conditions	--develop a level of expertise in a subject	--learn to prepare for each class meeting	-- practice effective methods of interpersonal/intergroup dialogue	--develop community, tolerance, inclusion, appreciation of difference, and humaneness within the classroom and in the broader College culture
		--develop information literacy skills appropriate to course content			--promote creative expression as a component of wellness and self exploration

EPC General Education Physical Education Subcommittee Report
December 8, 2009

Members: Bryant Adams, Deb Gagnon, Rachel Gunderson, Erin Hunter and Cindy Speaker

The subcommittee met throughout the fall semester to discuss the College's current physical education requirements in light of the College's mission, institutional goals, and academic program goals as charged by the Educational Policy Committee. Our work included reviewing EPC's past considerations of the requirements and the physical education requirements (including swimming proficiency and wellness-type requirements) at peer institutions. Additionally, we discussed research related to the mind-body connection and multiple intelligences (e.g., Gardner, 1983, 1993, and 1999).

The current requirements include four classes in physical education:

PE 100 Wellness (1 semester hour)

PE 110 Beginning Swimming (.5 semester hour or exemption through examination)

Two physical education activity courses (variable credit)

The subcommittee recommends revising the requirements and placing them within a new designation that we propose calling "Lifelong Wellness" (LW). While Standard 12 on General Education from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education focuses on oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency, it also indicates that curricula are to be designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency. Members of the subcommittee agree that personal wellness is critical for effective learning and achieving academic success. Additionally, developing bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (i.e., awareness of the body and what to do to take care of it) leads to engaging in healthy behaviors and making good choices that facilitates the cultivation of meaningful lives. A liberal arts education which educates the whole person should provide students the opportunity to develop multiple intelligences. The subcommittee believes that in addition to the intelligences typically included in general education requirements (verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical) that it is important to include bodily-kinesthetic as well. The subcommittee believes "Lifelong Wellness" is a more appropriate label for what we hope students learn from the requirement in the general education curriculum. Additional reasons to move to the concept of "lifelong wellness" include the College's lack of a physical education major or minor and students' perceptions of PE courses as gym class.

The subcommittee proposes that the revised requirement comprise the following two components:

1. LW 100 Wellness (2 semester hours)

Course Description: This course is designed to provide opportunities for students to develop knowledge and skills for healthy habits that will enhance the quality of life during their college years and beyond. Topics include nutrition, physiology of fitness, emotional and mental health, healthy eating and sleeping habits, effects of stress and stress reduction strategies (e.g. mindfulness), and risky health behaviors (e.g., alcohol abuse, smoking, unprotected sex). Students will develop an individualized wellness plan for themselves.

Knowledge Learning Objectives – Students will

- a. identify the connections between the mind and body

- b. evaluate nutritional requirements and status and discover ways to engage in healthy eating habits
- c. discuss the overall effects of stress on the body, and identify connections between stress and overall health

Skills Learning Objectives – Students will

- a. develop and practice stress reduction strategies
- b. invent an individualized wellness plan (both mind and body)
- c. practice mindfulness strategies including meditation
- d. gain exposure to and practice of different types of physical activity (e.g., sports, Pilates, weight lifting, swimming, yoga, etc.)
- e. discover and practice strategies for reducing risky health behaviors.

Required within students' first year of study at Wells.

2. Physical Activities

Students are required to complete at least one physical activity per year of residence. Options for physical activity include the following:

- a. Non-credit bearing activity courses*
- b. Dance courses
- c. Intercollegiate Athletics
- d. Intramurals
- e. Recreation Participation **
- f. Self-Designed Plans at the Fitness Center ***
- g. Waiver process for local community physical activity****

*The subcommittee is recommending that what have been physical education activity courses no longer bear academic credit. The courses then will be able to be scheduled in a manner that is consistent with the learning objectives of the course. Currently courses are forced into a schedule based on academic credits. Additionally, some concerns have been expressed that (1) instructors of current physical education courses are not members of the faculty and (2) courses have no assessment of student learning and consequently should not be influencing the academic standing of students.

**Assumes developments of an organized recreation program by Student Life. At one time there had been discussion of developing seasonal programs with fall water activities and winter snow ones.

***These currently occur under registration for PE 199.

****Since the goal of the requirement is to encourage lifelong physical activity, the development of skills to allow that and exposure to possible activities should fulfill that goal. This could include students' engagement in a local gym, league sport, club, dance studio, etc.

Activities can be repeatable. However, students must participate in a minimum of two types of activities. The subcommittee discussed some concerns which were raised regarding possible effects on the enrollments of what are currently PE courses. Since students are currently only required to take two activity courses, the increase in requirement should balance out any loss. Additionally, the subcommittee felt that the availability of options may help ensure that the course offerings are of activities of interest to current students. Specific processes for documenting activities that occur outside

of course registration would need to be developed. The subcommittee assumes some variation of the current petition process with students working with their advisors should be possible.

The subcommittee is recommending that Wells drop the swimming requirement. Few of our peer institutions require any physical education. Those that do, require elements of wellness and or activity courses; none have a swim requirement. Our current swim test includes two parts. Part I is swimming 100 yards continuously (four lengths of the pool using freestyle/front crawl, backstroke, sidestroke, or breaststroke with no more than 30 seconds of rest at the wall). Part II is treading water for one minute. Data from last year's entering class notes that during 2008-2009 130 new students had taken the swim test, of which 119 passed (92%). Some students come to campus unaware of the requirement, not even owning a swimsuit. Current exemptions from the swim test include a medical doctor's note (skin conditions, asthma, etc.), medical or psychological disabilities, life guard certification, SCUBA certification, and swim team participation. Enrollments for PE 110 Beginning Swimming can be seen in the attached spreadsheet.

While the exact reason Wells began the swim requirement is unknown, we know that at Cornell their swim test "began around 1918 for women when the Director of Women's Physical Education felt that it was a necessary skill for women to have. The swim test requirement for men was instituted about 1937 and was the result of World War II [*sic*] Cornell's strong connection to ROTC; many Cornellians served in the war" (Cornell University, <http://swimtest.cornell.edu/>). This history is consistent with the national effort to improve water safety and colleges' role in training during World War I and World War II. Swimming at that time was also a way of ensuring physical fitness. While some institutions (e.g., Cornell, Washington & Lee, Bryn Mawr) with swim tests have recently voted to continue the requirement, no substantial rationale is given.

Data published in 2005 indicate that the top three causes of deaths among college-age young adults (ages 20-24) in 2002 accounting for 73.3% of all deaths were unintentional injury (accidents), assault (homicide) and self-inflicted injury (suicide). Automobile accidents account for 29.7% while drowning accounts for 1.6%.

The subcommittee has concluded that it could not justify swimming above any other physical activity or lifelong living skill. This is not to say that members do not see the value of students learning how to swim if they do not already possess that skill, especially given some of Well's traditions that involve jumping in the lake. We urge advisors to discuss swimming with their advisees and encourage students to enroll in beginning swimming as an activity if it is appropriate. However, we do not believe the College should focus on that one single skill. The swim test will remain as a means of placing into courses that require swimming competency as a prerequisite as well as recreation activities taking place in the water.

Course #	Course Title	F 2006	S 2007	F 2007	S 2008	F 2008	S 2009	F 2009
PE 100	Wellness	23	20	21	2	18	20	20
PE 100-01	Wellness	17	21	20	19	22	21	18
PE 100-02	Wellness				19	16	19	20
PE 101	Tai-Chi				15	5		
PE 101-01	Tai-Chi					1		
PE 105	Meditation				22	18	16	15
PE 105-01	Meditation						15	14
PE 109	First Aid & Safety	10		11	11	2	14	13
PE 110	Beginning Swimming	9	7	6	2	10	9	6
PE 110-01	Beginning Swimming	9	8	4	5	4	19	0
PE 115	Kickboxing					8	19	18
PE 115-01	Kickboxing					9	19	19
PE 118	Beginning Sailing	6		9		7		7
PE 119	Canoeing/Kayaking	11		9		10		10
PE 119-01	Canoeing/Kayaking					8		4
PE 121	Water Aerobics	4		9	4	6	10	0
PE 123	Yoga	20	20	17	19	13	13	14
PE 123-01	Yoga				12	14	14	
PE 124	Toning	21	17	17	19	7	13	10
PE 124-01	Toning				10		14	
PE 125	Weight Training	15	18	12	20	14	24	7
PE 125-01	Weight Training	12	17	13	14	14	21	8
PE 128	Downhill Skiing		11		12		8	
PE 129	Beginning Horseback	8	7	6	9	7	9	4
PE 129-01	Beginning Horseback				8			
PE 130	Beginning Tennis	3		7	4	4	8	7
PE 130-01	Beginning Tennis				0			
PE 134	Badminton		14					
PE 135	Golf	9	10	6	7	5		
PE 141	Indoor Hockey		9					
PE 143	Indoor Soccer		14					
PE 145	Beginning Lacrosse	12		0				
PE 145-01	Beginning Lacrosse			0				
PE 149	Softball			0				
PE 151	Basketball		7					
PE 175	SCUBA Diving	3	2	3	4	0	1	3

Course #	Course Title	F 2006	S 2007	F 2007	S 2008	F 2008	S 2009	F 2009
PE 175-01	SCUBA Diving				0	0		0
PE 180	Self-Defense	22	16	15	12	18		12
PE 180-01	Self-Defense			16		5		
PE 185	Beginning Karate	14	10	12	13	13	8	9
PE 190	Nutrition for Women	7						
PE 199	Independent Study	1	4	1	0	1	4	3
PE 199-01	Independent Study	1	6	8	7	6	5	2
PE 210	Intermediate Swimming	6						
PE 218	Intermediate Sailing					1		2
PE 223	Intensive Yoga							6
PE 223-01	Intensive Yoga							6
PE 229	Progressive Horseback					7	5	3
PE 230	Intermediate Tennis	3	0					
PE 280	Advanced Self-Defense				4	0	10	4
PE 280-01	Advanced Self-Defense					6		
PE 290	Internship		0					
PE 305	Ath. Injuries		0					
PE 310	Swim Fitness		4		4			
PE 315	Lifeguard Training	3	3	4			9	
PE 410	Varsity Swimming		8		10		18	
PE 410-01	Varsity Swimming				4		4	
PE 415	Softball Team		13		11		15	
PE 416	WSI		7		11	4		5
PE 430	Varsity Tennis	7		7			7	
PE 435	Cross-Country	4		16		7		12
PE 435-01	Cross-Country					3		
PE 440	Varsity Field Hockey	14		13		14		19
PE 442	Varsity Soccer			19		21		17
PE 442-01	Varsity Soccer	21		22		18		17
PE 445	Varsity Lacrosse	14	19	0	14		15	
PE 445-01	Varsity Lacrosse			0	23		15	
PE 446	Basketball						11	
PE 447	Golf Team						16	
	Total PE Enrollment	309	292	303	350	346	448	334
	Total FTE	474	441	546	518	576	534	562