



STATE OF THE CORE REPORT

June 2021
University Core Curriculum
Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Boston College

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I. Executive Summary

Reflection on the State of the Core during this year of COVID-19

The Core Curriculum is at the heart of a Catholic, Jesuit University. It requires prayerful attention, reflective renewal, and meaningful integration with all areas of the University and, in the words of Colleen Griffith (Professor of the Practice, BC School of Theology and Ministry), is the way in which one, “put(s) the soul of Ignatian spirituality back into the body.” The importance of such a curriculum, and its role in Jesuit education, has taken on a new significance in the face of the first global pandemic of our lifetimes throughout the last year. We know that Saint Ignatius Loyola also lived in the time of plague, and lived through illness, confinement, physical dis/ability, and the sudden emptiness within everyday life that we have all now experienced. We all had numerous plans for travel, study, and milestones that were indefinitely delayed this year. We had to worry that our bodies, homes, schools, and families would become invaded by a deadly virus, and we lost the physical proximity and connections that make us all feel alive and human. St. Ignatius had this experience and he too learned what happens when “real” life stops and you have only God to rely upon for all the answers to the uncertainty that reveals itself in isolation. Perhaps this is one reason why he understood that to love the soul, you must love the body as well. The end of the life of the body—what life means, what is a good life, what is a good death—all of these questions have been so close to us during the pandemic and we have been forced to confront them. These enduring questions, and others, are posed to students in some of our most challenging and rewarding first-year Core courses, and the lessons of such a humanistic view of education have brought a renewed meaning to our work this year. The questions that our students ask, and the studies that they will pursue for the next century, will inevitably be influenced by Covid-19. Our students have been forced to engage with the harsh realities of an unpredictable world like never before, and their ability to thoughtfully engage, question, and critique the world around them will help shape their actions and leadership as they step into a new post-pandemic world. We have spent the past year reflecting on the State of the Core, assessing various aspects of our work, and using multiple forms of Assessment (highlighted here more than in past reports) to plan for the curricular and pedagogical needs of the Core in the years to come.

Selected Highlights of the Annual Report

1. Assessment throughout the Core: With the University in the midst of preparing its interim report for the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), the Provost had stated that a concerted focus on Assessment in the Core would be helpful for this year's report. While the Core utilizes Assessment annually in various forms, we have highlighted it here, commenting on how the process informs decision making and changes to our approach. Some notable areas of Assessment include: 1) Reviewing student evaluations (indirect Assessment) of Core courses in general versus Complex Problem (CP) and Enduring Question (EQ) courses in particular; 2) Adding questions linked to renewed Cultural Diversity learning goals (i.e., *Engaging Difference & Justice* (EDJ) and *Difference and Justice & the Common Good* (DJCG)) and analyzing for effectiveness; 3) A Course Design Workshop exit survey; 4) Analysis of faculty participation patterns in CP/EQ teaching: 2015-present; 5) Continued improvement on direct Assessment of student work in CP/EQ courses to measure interdisciplinary learning success; 6) A Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD) survey and focus group to assess effectiveness of this mentorship and Reflection model; 7) A Core faculty survey on whether adjustments were made to courses to engage with Racial Justice teaching in the classroom; 8) An EQ/CP student survey and focus group on effectiveness of new EDJ/DJCG courses; 9) A Reflection on Core Renewal from Professor Mary Crane, who has worked closely on Core Renewal since its inception in 2012; 10) An *ad hoc* subcommittee of the UCRC to review the Math Core requirement at Boston College vis-a-vis competitor universities; 11) Analyzed patterns in History Department Core course offerings (2014-present) to help inform the department on decision making on their Core revisioning efforts.
2. UCRC: The UCRC continues to be successful, approving an unprecedented 56 non-CP/EQ courses this year, mainly in areas that renew Cultural Diversity through EDJ and DJCG, and approving 28 new CP/EQ faculty pairs for next year (including Core Fellows). Over 97% of CP/EQ seats (1,272/1,311) were filled this year.
3. The Core Fellows Program continues to thrive: Four Fellows moved on with positions at UCLA (Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship), Boston College (2 Professors of the Practice

in Engineering), and a consultant position for the World Bank. Three Fellows were hired to support CPs and to teach EQs.

4. University collaboration: The Core is well networked with multiple areas of the University, from Advancement to Marketing and University Communications to Student Services to Admissions to the professional schools. The UCRC has in many ways become one of the Core administrators' many areas of focus, which in our view is an excellent development for the Core, and demonstrates its commitment to Strategic Direction I of *Ever to Excel*.

Selected Recommendations for AY22

1. Update the UCRC Charge to authenticate participation of the Assistant Dean for the Core on the committee (and serve as UCRC Assistant Chair), and convert Lynch School of Education and Human Development, Carroll School, and Connell School Associate Deans of Undergraduate Affairs positions to appointed.
2. Continue the work of making study abroad and BC summer courses more closely aligned with Core standards, not only Cultural Diversity, but also for all core credits. The Core has begun this work and all parties are in favor of it (UCRC, Office of International Programs, and Global Engagement).
3. Pursue a "Faith in the 21st Century" Complex Problems course.
4. Continue the process of exploring a renewal in the Math Core requirement, perhaps revising it to be a "Quantitative Reasoning" requirement. This would be a year-long process, likely extending into 2023.
5. Continue renewal of Cultural Diversity through a new call for EDJ/DJCG courses.
6. Make the POD Leadership Program grade-optional (for those who choose) in the Spring of 2022, allowing students to obtain graded credit for participation (10 students at most). POD Leaders attend all lectures, run all Weekly Reflection sessions, and participate in a weekly seminar with CP faculty. This is in many ways a Capstone experience. Focus Groups and surveys illustrate the value of the program; this would be an uncomplicated way to test its effectiveness as a Capstone course.
7. Pilot a new Living and Learning Community (LLC) on the themes of Justice and the Common Good linked to current EQ courses, with a POD Leadership Program component.

II. Administration

Several areas remain the focus of the Associate and Assistant Deans, areas that extend beyond the work of the University Core Renewal Committee (UCRC). Upon reflection over the past three and a half years, it seems important to note that the growth in both size and reputation of the University Core Curriculum has much to do with the commitment of the Associate and Assistant Deans and their willingness to devote much time and energy to the administrative aspects of their duties as much as the normative integration of Core Renewal across the University. In fact, the UCRC has in many ways become one of the many areas of importance for Core administration. Under current administrative leadership, the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses have grown to over 1,000 seats annually, and the Core Deans are commonly asked to participate in events across the campus, from Admissions and Student Affairs to Advancement and events sponsored by the Office of the Provost. Although the size of the Core staff has not changed considerably since the inaugural three years, the commitment of all personnel in the Core Office has made Core Renewal a *growing* success; Core Renewal is widely understood as an ongoing process, and the Catholic, Jesuit character of this foundational educational experience remains robust.

Administrative Assistance

Success with Core Renewal has meant growth in activities and responsibilities for all involved in Core administration. The Program Assistant now supports two administrators, eight Core Fellows/Visiting Assistant Professors, and manages all of their office space, budgeting, and logistical needs; administrative assistance in the Core involves management of more personnel than that found in many disciplinary departments. The Program Assistant also creates the annual schedule for all CPs/EQs. For the upcoming AY22 schedule this included: Complex Problem courses of 4 lectures with 16 labs, 15 POD reflections, 3 POD leadership seminars, and Enduring Question pairs consisting of 66 courses created and scheduled with 132 reflections sessions, including an increase in the number of courses and faculty, planning, and budgeting needs, all of which is coordinated through the Core Program Assistant. With the introduction of EagleApps the Program Assistant will now need to create seat pools every year for all CP/EQ lectures so

that registration is spread out throughout freshman Orientation. To market EQs/CPs, the Program Assistant also works on the Academic Planning Guide with Student Services. The Program Assistant works closely with University Communications and Admissions to create the CP/EQ brochure and coordinates with the Associate Dean on the Dean's letters for each school to be mailed to incoming students prior to Orientation. Furthermore, Program Assistant duties include updating the MCAS website each semester with the entirety of Core courses by soliciting the information multiple times with the 36 departmental/program administrators. Over the summer months, the Program Assistant prepares for freshman Orientations by: collecting materials for Academic Advising to be shared with advisors; managing the Wisr platform; and representing the Core on REMO. For Core Fellow faculty searches, the Program Assistant works with the Provost's Office to initiate the searches on Interfolio and posts jobs to hiring sites. The Program Assistant currently processes student registration during summer and add/drop periods, as well as hiring and training student workers.

Support of Existing Complex Problem (CP) and Enduring Question (EQ) faculty during the Covid-19 pandemic

The academic year contained challenges previously not experienced by the Boston College community, including in the University Core Curriculum. The Covid-19 pandemic demanded flexibility among faculty and students, and a willingness to venture outside of pedagogical comfort zones as the University prepared to offer as much of an in-person educational experience as possible while adhering to safety guidelines and faculty/student accommodation needs. Workshops and other forms of pedagogical support provided to CP/EQ faculty over the summer of 2020 (see the 2020 State of the Core report) helped the Core have a successful academic year with multi-modal teaching. For example, in the Fall of 2020, the Core offered CP/EQs (4 CPs 9 EQ pairs) with 30 faculty members for 475 students. For CPs, one course ran fully online, one had in-person lectures with labs and reflections online, another had online lectures with in-person labs and mixed reflections, and another was fully in-person. For EQs, three pairs were offered fully online, three were hybrid (with one course taught in person and the other online), and the three were fully in-person. Evaluations show these courses were very successful, including

Reflection sessions, which were often conducted online due to social distancing restrictions. As an example, in Fall 2020, despite the multi-modal approaches used by CP/EQ faculty, over 90% of students indicated that they “strongly agree” or “agree” that class attendance was necessary for learning course material. Spring semester teaching modalities and evaluation patterns are similar to fall results (Appendix I for Fall and Spring CP/EQ Evaluations).

While the year was challenging, it is helpful to hear from individual faculty such as Prof. Jennifer Burns in Art History that courses did indeed work well:

The course is going extremely well. Melissa [Fitzpatrick] and I had a two-hour meeting yesterday afternoon where we opened up all the concerns, critiques, and "what we'll do differently next time" conversations. While there are plenty of things we will change (the biggest is that we each have too much material crammed into the course), we both agreed that it's going wonderfully well, all things considered. The students who are focused on what is happening (which is most, but certainly not all—another question we have for the future) are developing by leaps and bounds in terms of the disciplinary conversations but also their ability to think through and between the perspectives on the animal-human relationship that are being offered in the two classes. We have scheduled some additional overlapping class sessions in the near future to promote these cross-disciplinary discussions, and we have our 'overlap' writing assignment coming up for the Core. We are working on the prompt now to come up with something that will give them a clear model for using both art historical and philosophical analysis in productive interrelationship. A tall order! But a significant group of them is ready to take a stab at this kind of challenge.

For my part, I am truly grateful to Elizabeth and Brian and the Core for giving me the opportunity to participate in a class like this. This structure is, I know, an expensive way to provide first-year education, but from my vantage point has forged a genuine community of inquiry around an issue that is both enduring and highly topical. The model works! And is a pleasure to be a part of.

As noted above, CP/EQ faculty taught CP/EQ courses in a number of modalities: Online, hybrid, and in person. Summer training/workshops provided by the Core were used, and the CTE remained available and utilized by faculty throughout the year. For the entire year, the Core offered 5 CP that included scheduling 20 separate labs, and 27 EQ pairs. 3 CPs used the POD

Leadership Program for weekly reflections, involving over 30 new POD Leaders (i.e., upperclass students mentored weekly in a “POD Leadership Seminar” by CP faculty to facilitate conversations during Reflection). We worked hard to promote these courses in the fall and spring this year. Our promotion efforts currently include: MCAS advising, marketing through the Academic Planning Guide, creating online and hard copy brochures, sending dean’s letters to the incoming cohort of students, continuously updating our website, presenting at Admitted Eagles day, making WISR updates (“BC Orientation”), advising during Orientation and Registration, and training the Orientation Leaders. Each member of our team has a role to play in the various modes of marketing and promotion. The Program Assistant’s work with University Communications on a virtual brochure sent via email in fall 2020 was a huge success. The report (in Appendix II) shows that the email (sent to 2,430 first-year students) had an open rate of 75% and a click-to-open rate of 20%. Since this was the first email of this kind sent to first-years, it performed exceptionally well, likely due to its very targeted audience.

We know more than ever the value of the CP and EQ courses; they are distinctive and help students have a successful first-year experience, and the work by our team and campus partners pays off. In AY21 we filled over 97% of all seats offered in the fall and spring: 1,272/1,311 seats.

Developing new CPs/EQs for the year ahead

Like last year, this year’s new CPs/EQs were planned through remote Course Design Workshops during the spring semester. Faculty participation was high, which matched Core needs in order to maintain 1,000 seats for the incoming class. Core Fellows (discussed below) were included to benefit from the pedagogical training, bringing total participants for the year to 28. To accommodate the large size and numerous scheduling conflicts, the Associate and Assistant Deans ran two separate sets of four workshops for each group of 14. Notably, our process of Direct Assessment of student work continues to improve, and we suspect it is exemplary as an Assessment model for the University (see “Assessment,” below). Additionally, emphasizing the importance of collaboration, integration (including sharing a singular enduring question among faculty pairs), and exploring interdisciplinary education is central to the workshop experience.

An exit survey was conducted, and results show the workshops to be a growing success and beneficial to the faculty (Appendix III).

Course Design Workshops

28 new faculty participated in the Course Design Workshops this year after a particularly competitive response to the call for new courses issued by the Provost's office. There were four online Workshops with two sessions each day of 14 faculty held from 11-1 pm and 3-5 pm to accommodate the various schedules and to make the sessions small enough to build a sense of community within the cohort:

Workshop One: Catholic, Jesuit Pedagogy in the Core Curriculum led by Dean Kalscheur, S.J. held on February 15, 2021

Workshop Two: Core Learning Goals held on March 12, 2021

Workshop Three: Reflection and Formation held on March 26, 2021

Workshop Four: Joint Assessment led by Celeste Wells held on April 30, 2021

Each of the Workshops has a corresponding Module on the Course Design Workshop Canvas website created last year (include a supplemental POD Module). 19 of the 28 faculty were first-time faculty participants, two faculty participants were redesigning their successful EQ into a CP for the first time, and four of the other "veterans" were Core Fellows creating new EQ pairs for the following year.

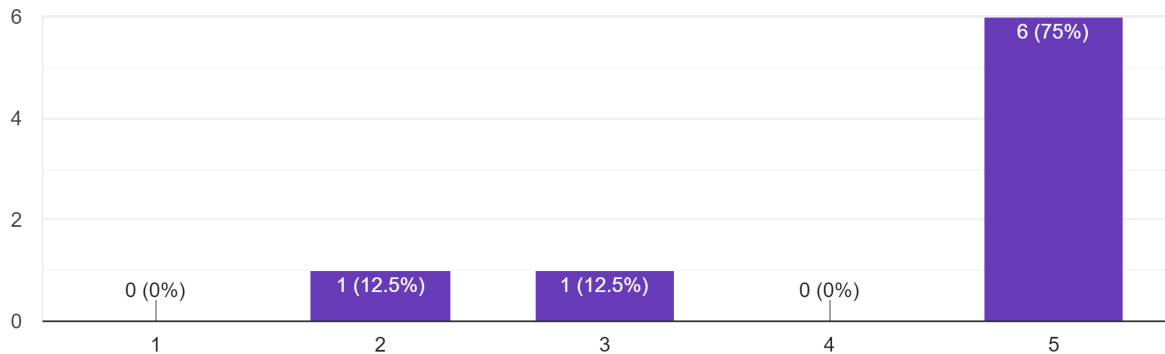
Faculty were surveyed after the conclusion of the Workshops. 19 faculty responded and all but one, who responded neutral, agreed that the Workshops had been useful to them in designing their courses for the following year. The majority of respondents believe that two-hour time blocks are appropriate. On whether the Deans should run the Course Design Workshops online or in person for next year (this was the second year they were online), participants split evenly into thirds of yes, no, and maybe. The Core will consider this feedback for next year (Appendix III).

Renewal also involves improving upon the manner with which faculty engage with Reflection. As the distinctively Ignatian component of CPs and EQs, the Core strives to help faculty

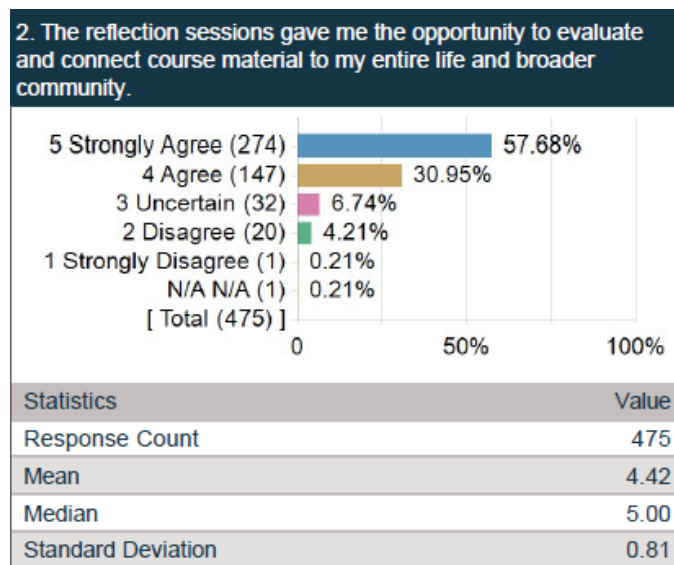
discover innovative, reflective, and formative activities for Reflection. The Workshop survey (Figure below) suggests that faculty are learning about these possibilities for their future courses: Emphasis on Reflection in the Workshops is paying off from the perspective of the students as

After participating, I have a better understanding of how to better utilize reflection sessions.

8 responses



well. For example, Fall 2020 student evaluations show that CP/EQ reflections were perceived to give the students the opportunity to connect course material to the students' whole life (Figure below, but see Appendix I for full evaluation data).



Prof. Tracy Regan who worked with Prof. Mary Ann Chirba on converting their EQ into a CP during the Course Design Workshops shared how valuable the experience was:

Thanks again for the opportunity to teach a CP; Mary Ann and I always enjoy working with each other and get so excited to teach freshmen about health care! Putting this CP together has really been like prepping a brand-new class. While we drew inspiration from some of our EQ topics and sessions, putting together a class for 76 students is a really different process. We'll both continue working this summer and are looking forward to being in the classroom together in the fall. While it took a lot of time to interview and select the POD leaders, we've got a great group of seniors assembled to assist us.

Taking the Workshops for the first time to create a new EQ pair, Prof. Richard R. Gaillardetz, Chair of the Theology Department and Joseph Professor of Catholic Systematic Theology expressed a similar sentiment:

I want to thank you for a quite helpful and constructive set of workshops on the creation of our EQ course. I learned a great deal and found the opportunities to interact with Kyoung-yim [Kim] delightful.

Maintain integrity, ensure academic standards, and uphold intentional focus on the learning goals of the University Core Curriculum.

In addition to work conducted by UCRC in this area, the Associate and Assistant Deans engage in outreach, collaborations, and participate on various committees to ensure Core Renewal is widely understood by the faculty as maintaining a high standard for the entire Core Curriculum, which takes the Latin origin of the word “cor,” or “heart,” seriously. Participation in the following served this purpose: Woods College Educational Policy Committee; Vice Provost of Undergraduate Affairs’ Academic Officers Committee; Collaborations with Office of International Programs and the Vice Provost for Global Engagement; Various conversations with department chairs, notably this year including Theology, History, Sociology, Mathematics, Associate Dean of the Lynch School of Education and Human Development, among others.

Ongoing participation in other forms of outreach by Associate and Assistant Dean for the Core include: MCAS Board of Chairs meetings, MCAS Education Policy Committee meetings, MCAS Dean’s meetings, MCAS Interdisciplinary Minors meetings, Woods College of Advancing Studies EPC meetings, Advancement (Series of “sojourns” given to the Board of Regents to introduce them to the Core Curriculum), University Council on Learning Outcomes,

Division of Student Affairs (annual division meeting), Academic Advising, University Communications, Admissions (Admitted Eagle Day and Summer Orientation), Office of Health Promotion, Residential Life (Living and Learning Communities), Human Resources (Associate Dean invited interview: “Meet your Colleague,” Interviewed by Bernie O’Kane, Director, Office of Employee Development, Boston College Human Resources, 14 April 2021), UGBC and Tom Mogan, Associate Vice President of Student Engagement & Formation (Office of Student Affairs), Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society, First-Year Experience (Center for Student Formation), UGBC (meeting with Academic Affairs Committee), Vice Provost’s Provost’s Academic Officer’s Committee, Institute for the Liberal Arts, Formative Education Conference Steering Committee, monthly Seminar on Catholicism and the University (Jesuit Institute), Professors of the Practice Seminar (Jesuit Institute), Institutional Research & Planning (Cultural Diversity review), NECHE Interim Report Committee, and the President’s Office.

III. Notable Outreach for the Academic Year

Board of Regents “Discovery Expedition”

From November 2020-June 2021, the Boston College Board of Regents took part in a semester-long “Discovery Expedition” to examine and evaluate the Boston College Core Curriculum. The “expedition” assessed everything from the Core’s program launches to interdisciplinary efforts to cultural diversity to the Core Fellows Program and was met with overwhelming positivity and praise for BC’s Core efforts. Regent Mike Ascione, CSOM ‘93, summarized, *“clearly, a tremendous amount of preparation, time and effort from a very broad group was required to develop and implement the program. Overall, I thought it was very well done and went a long way to achieving the objective. I hope that you will find that the Sojourn program was effective at informing and engaging the Regent group, as well as better enabling us to be continued and well-informed advocates of Boston College.... There’s a lot of great work being done at BC, and I am proud of the quality of leadership and programming at the university”* with another Regent, Sue Shea, LSOE ‘76, describing the program as *“a gentle hug... (and) a real gift to experience.”*

The BC Board of Regents was overall particularly impressed with BC’s interdisciplinary efforts in the Core Curriculum, especially within our unique “Schedules of Distinction” programs like the Complex Problems courses, Enduring Questions courses, and PULSE Program. The ethical component of these courses was particularly lauded with Regents commending how it *“allows students to think about different perspectives which is so critical in the world today”* and imparts on its students *“an incredibly valuable skill set”* and *“framework... (that) they can use to understand the variety of issues; to see different constituents and issues and (to) be conveners and work with those constituents.”* Not only were the Regents impressed with the Core programming as *“a great way to introduce these freshmen to the ethics behind of whatever career they launch into”* but they also celebrated the “Schedules of Distinction” programs for emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary learning and exposure to different points of view which, as one Regent stated, should always be held as the *“end game”* of academic teaching. To encourage and offer this level of interdisciplinary, ethical, and meaningful learning to first-year undergraduate students is a feat of pride and *“an encouraging approach”* to education, concluded

the Board of Regents, with one alumnus summarizing, *“I am a person that Pulse shaped; back then you had to seek out programs like Pulse or a course in Ethics. I like that this is readily available to students; it is the Core.”*

NECHE Interim Report Core Committee

The Associate Dean is charged with gathering data and writing the Academic Program standard for the interim report (Committee members include: Peter Martin (chair), Casey Beaumier, S.J., Rocio Calvo, Brian Gareau, Ryan Heffernan, Mara Hermano, Carrie Klemovitch, Patricia Lowe, Jessica Greene, Joe Burns, and Celeste Wells. The committee is supported by UCLO as well).

Formative Education Steering Committee

AY21 Formative Education Webinar Series

During Summer 2020, colleagues from Perspectives, PULSE, The Core, Office of the Provost, CDIL and CTE came together to create a webinar series to share lessons learned from the past spring and summer on integrating formative education in synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid classrooms. The Formative Education in Fall 2020 webinar series was formed.

In the first two webinars led by each of the Core Deans, faculty shared ways to integrate formative education into their courses that they were teaching whether it be hybrid, synchronous, or asynchronous. The purpose of the third webinar was to hear students’ perspectives on formative education and their thoughts on transitioning to different types of classroom settings. The series continued in spring semester with sessions on interdisciplinary studies and formative education and belonging, inclusion, and formative education.

Approximately 400 individuals attended the webinars with representatives of faculty members from every school.

August 18th, 2020

Host: Billy Soo, Vice Provost for Faculties

Moderators: Brian Gareau, Associate Professor, Associate Dean for the Core; Meghan Sweeney, Associate Professor of the Practice, Cooney Family Director, PULSE

Panelists: Andres Castro Samayoa, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Higher Education, LSEHD; Jerry Kane, Professor, Information Systems, CSOM; Celeste Wells, Associate Professor of the Practice, Communication, MCAS

September 17th, 2020

Host: Margaret Laurence, Director, Initiatives for Formative Education

Moderators: Elizabeth Shlala, Assistant Dean for the Core Curriculum, Associate Professor of the Practice in Core Curriculum; Rafael Luna, Associate Dean, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, Director, Pre-Health Program, Director, Gateways Scholars Program in STEM;

Panelists: Michael Naughton, Evelyn J. and Robert A. Ferris Professor and Chair, Physics Department, MCAS; Heather Olins, Assistant Professor of the Practice, Biology Department, MCAS; Holly VandeWall, Associate Professor of the Practice, Philosophy Department, MCAS

October 29, 2020

Host: Gabriella Oliveira, Assistant Professor, Lynch School of Education and Human Development

Moderators: Colleen Simonelli, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Clinical Professor, Connell School of Nursing; Tom Wesner, Associate Professor of the Practice, Director, Summer Management Catalyst Program, Carroll School of Management

Student Panelists: Molly Hueston '21, Carroll School of Management; Armani Mitchell '21, Lynch School of Education and Human Development; Nimsu Ng '22, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences; Zoe Pappas '21, Connell School of Nursing

“Interdisciplinary Studies and Formative Education” - March 10, 2021

Moderator: Conevery Bolton Valencius, Professor, History Department, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences.

Guest Panelists: Tara Pisani Gareau, Director, Environmental Studies Program, Associate Professor of the Practice, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences; Shawn McGuffey, Director of African & African Diaspora Studies, Associate Professor, Sociology Department, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences; Erik Owens, Director, International Studies Program, Associate Professor of the Practice, Theology Department, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences.

"Belonging, Inclusion, and Formative Education"- April 20, 2021

Host and Moderator: Akua Sarr, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs

Guest Panelists: Lisa Goodman, Professor, Counseling, Developmental & Educational Psychology, Lynch School of Education and Human Development; Cherie McGill, Associate Professor of the Practice, Philosophy Department, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences; Alex Puente, Assistant Professor of the Practice, English Department, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences.

Student Affairs Presentation

On February 9, 2021, the Assistant Dean presented to the Student Affairs division meeting to share updates about the Core and Core Renewal. There was a special focus on the new Engaging Difference and Justice and Difference, Justice and the Common Good courses. Roughly 125 staff from 14 different departments attended to learn how the Core is evolving, recent updates, and new courses and initiatives planned. Carrie Klemovitch, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Administration and Strategic Initiatives followed up afterwards, *“thanks so much for joining us for our meeting. I loved how you highlighted the connections between your work and ours, and it was great to get a sense of the variety of courses currently being offered. My sense was it was very helpful for staff, and very timely with the focus on the new course offerings.”* (See Appendix IV)

Admitted Eagles Day

On April 17, 2021, the Assistant Dean and Professor Natana Delong-Bas in Theology gave a presentation on Admitted Eagle Day on their Enduring Question pair, *Geographies of Imperialism*. Three of their former students acted as panelists for questions and answers related to the EQ courses, Core at BC, and student life at BC. They were: Brendan Sherman, MCAS '24, Jasmine Tang, CSOM '24, and Catherine Brewer, MCAS'24. 309 attendees registered for the event. 132 students and families watched the webinar and asked great questions throughout, which made for a dynamic and engaging session, especially on Zoom! Susan Migliorisi, Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions wrote, "We really appreciate you taking time out of your weekend to offer your insights and expertise to our prospective students and families." The video link remains available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9bjzwRiq9Q&t=13s> (See Appendix V).

MCAS Advising, Orientation Leader Training, and FYE

As a part of her role to market and promote new Core courses and Core renewal, the Assistant Dean presented to MCAS Summer advisers at their Orientation Workshop on May 10, 2021. She also presented and spoke to five small groups of Orientation Leaders at their Orientation on Thursday, May 27 in the following format:

11:15 - 11:30 AM: Brief program introductions (2-3 minutes per program) as a big group

11:30 - 11:45 AM: Roundtable/Breakouts - Round #1

11:45 - 12:00 PM: Roundtable/Breakouts - Round #2

12:00 - 12:15 PM: Roundtable/Breakouts - Round #3

12:15 - 12:30 PM: Roundtable/Breakouts - Round #4

12:30 - 12:45 PM: Q&A in the big group

Finally, the Assistant Dean and Program Assistant were in constant communication with Academic Advising throughout the summer in order to keep our courses, Core requirement information, and other aspects of the Core up to date with our partners across the campus (See Appendices VI and VII).

IV. Core Fellows Program

Manage and improve the Core Fellows Program in order to promote teaching and research excellence and professional development in ways that are aligned with the Catholic, Jesuit tradition

With eight Fellows, the Core Fellows Program is a significant component of administrative duties, especially the Assistant Dean's; building meaningful intellectual *and* formative communities around the Core Curriculum is critical to her intellectual work as a teacher, administrator, and scholar. The Core Fellows Program also requires significant administrative support each year such as assigning offices, providing computers, and other onboarding/offboarding activities for the Program Assistant.

Three new Fellows, John Brooks, Nora Gross, and Russell Powell began their Fellowships in the Core at a virtual Orientation in July 2020. As a component of the Core Fellow Orientation, and to provide ongoing resources to them, the Assistant Dean created a Core Fellows module on the Course Design Workshop Canvas page.

To provide the Fellows with ongoing community and support, the Assistant Dean held monthly meetings with them. The highlight of the fall term was the final meeting held in December in which each of the Fellows did a short "Show and Tell" presentation in their course pairings to highlight how the semester teaching went for them and their students. The Core and the Fellows all thought that the presentations and sharing about teaching was helpful. Nora Gross writes, "What a treat to hear about all the exciting work happening in each of your classes! I was writing down ideas for myself for next semester that came out of what many of you shared. Excited to keep learning from you all in 2021!" She shared the following websites generated by the final projects of her students' work:

Art Lab Website:

<https://sites.google.com/bc.edu/blmtometoo/home>

VIB/BARCC Lab Website:

<https://sites.google.com/bc.edu/barcc-vib-lab/home>

AFAB Lab Website:

<https://sites.google.com/bc.edu/bc-afab-2020/home>

Survey Lab Website:

<https://sites.google.com/bc.edu/campusclimatesurvey/home>

The Core Deans remained supportive of Fellows on the job market from writing letters of support and reviewing CVs to sharing job advertisements across their networks. Also new this year, the Assistant Dean hosted a weekly BC Salon for an hour each Friday to discuss publications, teaching, and the job market. Fellow Yasmin Bijani who regularly attended reflects:

The second year (during the COVID-19 pandemic) was ironically much better in terms of sense of community. First, Elizabeth Shlala organized weekly BC Salons, during which she, Jenna Tonn and I met to hold each other accountable to writing, presenting, and teaching goals and to talk through teaching challenges (during the pandemic). I deeply appreciated their peer mentorship and support – especially during the pandemic. I also signed up to be a facilitator for the Courageous Conversations for Racial Justice events, led by Akua Sarr. This was an incredible opportunity to have extended conversations with faculty, staff, and students about race and identity – at the macro level and on campus. Finally, I deeply appreciated the opportunities to co-teach with other Core Fellows and BC faculty.

Two of our Fellows, Jenna Tonn and Jonathan Kronen, were hired by Boston College in the new Engineering Department. Core Fellow Danny Millán Ovando was selected as a recipient of a UCLA Chancellor's Postdoc with Dr. Leisy Abrego as his mentor and given a Chicano Studies Research Center affiliation. Generally, these postdocs translate into permanent tenure line positions in the UC system. Yasmin Bijani Zaerpoor is going on to a consultancy role with the World Bank as an expert on global water rights and negotiations. She will also be an online instructor for Woods College next year teaching courses in *Environmental Policy* and *Environmental Dispute Resolution* in the spring and summer of 2022.

Reflecting upon three years as Core Fellows and now moving into permanent faculty roles in the new Engineering department Jenna Tonn shares:

I joined the Core Fellow program in 2017 to teach the labs associated with the Complex Problem's course Science and Technology in American Society (STAS) with Chris Kenaley (Biology) and Andy Jewett (History). The Core Fellow program has changed significantly since I arrived. In 2017-2018, my experience as a Core Fellow was defined mostly by the courses I was teaching. Over my first summer, this meant getting in touch with my co-instructors to get up-to-speed with the Complex Problems format for STAS and the pedagogical role and purpose of lecture, labs and reflection, and then taking the initiative to

design from scratch a STAS lab experience that would integrated science, technology, and engineering design. This also meant working closely with the Core Fellow Lucy McAllister on designing and teaching our spring EQ courses on the history of nature on display and corporate social responsibility. My experience as a Core Fellow changed after the 2018 arrival of Elizabeth Shlala, Assistant Director of the Core Curriculum, who spearheaded a more cohort-oriented Core Fellow program. Between 2018 and the spring of 2021, I appreciated the introduction of regular professional development programming; the creation of a cluster of offices for the Core Fellows in Stokes which built a fun and vibrant community of scholar-teachers; and the inclusion of Core Fellows in the EQ/CP course development workshops which helped to sharpen my classroom pedagogy...I'm taking these Core Fellow experiences with me as I move on to my new BC position, Assistant Professor of Practice and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the new Department of Engineering. Already, I've been reflecting on how teaching CP and EQ courses related to the history of science, technology, and engineering have paid dividends in raising student awareness and interest in Engineering. Avneet Hira, a new Assistant Professor of Engineering, received 30 applications for her undergraduate research assistant positions, just over half of which came from students who had taken my Core courses (four of whom she hired). Similarly, Joshua Revkin, Director of Design and Innovation, sent out a call for the first summer cohort of University Makerspace TAs and just over a third of the 54 applicants came from my Core Courses (and five of which were offered positions or waitlisted). CP/EQ courses that emphasize conversations between history and science, technology, and engineering creates clear connections between the Core and Engineering and also spark impressive and sustained student engagement. I'm looking forward to continuing to teach in the Core and build these connections in the years to come.

Jonathan Kronos adds:

I had three expectations when I joined the Core as a Fellow: 1) to develop and improve my teaching skills; 2) to pursue interdisciplinary research; and 3) to attain a humane work-life balance. After three years, I feel like goals one and three have been fully met while the second was only partially met. I entered BC with some teaching experience, but it was mainly at the graduate level. My experience as a Core Fellow has made me into a much stronger educator. The wide latitude that I was given to develop my own courses and to teach collaboratively with interesting colleagues enabled me to develop my own style and contribute what I believe to be my distinctive characteristics to the classroom. Teaching first-years is a unique challenge: while the course material is not complex, the pedagogical context is, which forced me to always approach my students as whole people. What good is a brilliant lesson if the

students are not emotionally able to absorb it? The explicit focus on the students' internal lives in course reflection helped to reify this insight. Having the opportunity to attend workshops at CTE and being forced to rapidly restructure my courses due to COVID were also beneficial to my teaching. The Core Fellows program allowed me to have a very happy work-life balance, at least compared with my colleagues who directly entered tenure-track faculty positions. While I did inevitably work the long hours associated with a junior professorship, I have been able to be very present in my son's early life due to my ability to work flexible hours. The relatively high salary (compared to other postdocs) and generous benefits helped as well, as my wife and I were able to buy a house during my employment and not feel like we were in a precarious position, as colleagues who work adjunct jobs often do...But by developing hands-on labs, working closely with students in reflective environments, and having the opportunity to be a summer and pre-major advisor, I enter this new engineering department prepared to advocate for my students in a way that I believe will be vital for the success of the new department. My experience over the past few years has meant that I am entering with much more institutional knowledge than most of the other faculty. I am also entering having spent three years teaching interdisciplinary courses in a reflection-forward way. I ensured that reflection sessions are a central part of the engineering curriculum for four years, and will actively look for ways to provide our students opportunities to blend their engineering with other subjects at BC.

Included in Appendix VIII are full Reflections offered by Danny Milán Ovando and Yasmin Zaepoor who are leaving BC this year as well as fuller thoughts from Nora Gross on her first year and the full texts of responses from Jenna Tonn and Jonathan Krones.

In this most unusual of academic years, the Core did not meet with the new Fellows in person until May 2021 outside, masked, and socially-distanced with Dean Kalscheur, Associate Dean Gareau, and Assistant Dean Shlala. The Core hosted the event to thank all of our Fellows, but particularly those who started under such extraordinary circumstances, and those who were leaving us. Nora Gross, reflects on her experience in joining our program, and larger BC community, during a global pandemic year:

All things considered, I would say I had a pretty great first year in the Core and at BC! I loved the two classes I was part of and the range of teaching I got to do, and I'm so grateful (even though it was terrifying initially) that I was teaching in person because I think I would have been very lonely and disoriented without that. Though I was nervous about the Jesuit model (because I am an agnostic Jew), I

really, really love the formative and holistic education mission and the way it is realized through the Core classes.

The Spring semester always means hiring in the Core; this year it meant four separate searches to replace the outgoing Core Fellows. Extensive searches were conducted by the Associate and Assistant Deans in close consultation with the faculty for whom the Fellows would be teaching Complex Problem labs, as well as department chairs to acquire courtesy affiliations. The Core works closely with the Vice Provost office on these hires. Core Fellows hires were made in Global Public Health and two in Environmental Studies (see bios below). An important change made this year was to “house” Fellows in the newly renamed College Faculty Department of MCAS, and establish courtesy affiliations with departments/programs. It is a welcome development since the Core chairs the searches, provides the office space, manages teaching schedules, administers the research budget, mentors the junior faculty, provides programming, and monitors their evaluations. The Associate Dean for the Core will now be responsible for their Merit Increases and Performance Reviews.

New Core Fellows' Biographies

Vena Offen is a Core Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor in Environmental Studies. She received a Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Connecticut. Her research examines the interactions between humans and the coastal environment, focusing on marine pollution and commercially important shellfish. During her Ph.D. she was an EPA STAR Fellow and a Chateaubriand STEM Fellow in France for her work on emerging contaminants, including the effects of nanoparticles on the development of oyster larvae. Current projects include the impact of plastic pollution on the physiology of oysters and mussels. Vena also holds a B.S. in Biology from Pacific University, and a M.S. in Environmental Science and Engineering from Oregon Health and Science University.

Tara Casebolt is a Core Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor in Global Health. She has a PhD in Maternal and Child Health with a minor in Population Studies from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill's Gillings School of Global Public Health. Her research is focused on access to reproductive health services for people with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries.

During her PhD program, she was a predoctoral Trainee at the Carolina Population Center and served as an adjunct professor at Elon University in the department of Public Health Studies and Poverty and Social Justice Studies. Before beginning her PhD, she spent two years as an ASPPH/CDC Allan Rosenfield Global Health Fellow serving in the Ethiopia and Zambia CDC offices. Her work with the CDC focused on HIV prevention, gender-based violence, and monitoring and evaluation. She also spent a year as a William J Clinton Fellow for Service in India, working with a children's health and sanitation education program in Darjeeling, India. Tara also holds bachelors degrees in social work and women and gender studies from Ohio University and a Masters of Public Health and Masters of Social Work with an emphasis on international development was Washington University in St Louis.

Robin Wright is a Core Fellow in Environmental Studies. She received her PhD in Geography, Environment, and Society from the University of Minnesota. Her research is broadly interested in the ways that race and law function as sites for the creation of identities and environmental landscapes. In particular, her scholarship is concerned with the production of whiteness, and explores the spatial dynamics of resurgent nationalism in the U.S. Her current research project investigates the mainstreaming of far-right politics by examining the production of a right-wing discourse focused on the radical defense of the U.S. Constitution in the Pacific Northwest. Prior to Boston College, Robin taught Geography at the University of Minnesota and Environmental Studies at St. Olaf College. In her courses, Robin teaches to inspire students to confront the consequences of our changing climate and information environment, with a particular focus on how we can build more racially and environmentally just futures. Prior to her PhD, Robin worked on immigrant rights and economic development in Oregon. She holds a Bachelor's degree in History from Willamette University.

V. A Timely Reflection from Mary Crane on the State of Core in 2021

After over six years of implementation of CPs/EQs, a reflection essay provided by Mary Crane, Rattigan Prof. and Director of the Institute for the Liberal Arts is timely and helpful. It notes important successes in the University Core Curriculum:

The Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses have succeeded in these goals beyond my wildest hopes for them...Most of all, we see success in the numbers of students who enroll in EQ and CP courses every year (many courses have waiting lists) and the numbers of faculty who are willing to put the work into creating these courses, and teaching them more than once. Faculty and departments that were initially skeptical about Core renewal have become enthusiastic (or at least, less reluctant) participants. Faculty have embraced the required Reflection sessions and invented creative ways to use that time to meet Core learning goals. These courses are for the most part shaped in distinctive ways by the spirit of Ignatian pedagogy.

In many ways, the improved embeddedness of the Core in all areas of the University seems to have made it possible to highlight continued Core Renewal as a priority in the University's strategic plan, *Ever to Excel*:

There is no question that the new Associate Dean for the Core and Core office (now also including an Assistant Dean, Administrative Assistant, and graduate assistant) greatly improved the efficiency and transparency of administration of the Core, especially the processes for proposing and receiving approval for new courses. The Associate Dean has also increased the visibility of the Core for students, faculty, administrators, and donors. As a result, the Core is better integrated into all levels of the University.

Some limitations noted by Prof. Crane are found at the level of governance:

The UCRC sometimes feels frustrated that its decisions are advisory, especially as regards questions about departmental control over particular core requirements or changing the Cultural Diversity requirement. In general, faculty on the committee bring to bear the different perspectives and interests of their own departments and schools in a constructive way.

Finally, with so much time and energy needfully spent on existing tasks, the continued expansion of renewal would require additional support, especially in the area of staffing, but also funding:

There has been some modest experimentation with CP and EQ courses, including the successful implementation and growth of the POD model for reflection...blurring the lines between CP and EQ (piloting some CP topics as EQs for a few years, which develop into CP when faculty are ready)...the required course design workshop has improved over the years and is now seen by most participants as very useful and no doubt shapes all of their courses...[but] the work of overseeing the Core, approving new courses, matching faculty for EQ and CP courses, etc. doesn't leave much room for taking on big changes.

Prof. Crane's full reflection can be found in Appendix IX.

VI. The University Core Renewal Committee (UCRC)

The UCRC met seven times during AY21 (meeting minutes in Appendix X). Due to Covid-19, meetings were held via Zoom. Additionally, the UCRC subcommittees of CP/EQ, Core Curriculum, Assessment, and Diversity met regularly. The UCRC is critical for several reasons. First, as stated in the UCRC charge, the committee reviews Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, new and existing Core courses, and changes to curriculum. Second, members of the UCRC learn more about the Core, and are able to disseminate information to the broader University community. The bulk of the work, however, is conducted in subcommittees and then evaluated by the full committee. This year, Celeste Wells was appointed by the Provost as a permanent member of the UCRC who will have a particular focus on Assessment and her subcommittee work.

2020-2021 UCRC Committee Members

Brian Gareau, Ph.D., UCRC Chair, Appointed

Associate Dean for the Core, Morrissey College of Arts & Sciences

Elizabeth Shlala, Ph.D., Appointed

Assistant Dean for the Core, Morrissey College of Arts & Sciences

Daniel Bowles, Ph.D., End term June 2022

German Department

Mary Crane, Ph.D., Appointed

Director Institute for the Liberal Arts, English Department

Sylvia Sellers Garcia, Ph.D., End term June 2023
History Department

Stacy Grooters, Ph.D., Appointed
Director of Faculty Programs, Center for Teaching Excellence

Gail Kineke, Ph.D., Appointed
Earth and Environmental Sciences Department

Elida Laski, Ph.D., End term June 2022
Lynch School of Education

Sarah McMenamin Ph.D., End term June 2023
Biology Department

Charles Gallagher, S.J. Ph.D., Appointed
History Department

Brian Robinette, Ph.D., Appointed
Theology Department

Akua Sarr, Ph.D., Appointed
Vice Provost Undergraduate Academic Affairs

Colleen Simonelli, Ph.D., End term June 2022
Associate Dean of Undergrad Programs, Connell School of Nursing

Ethan Sullivan, Ph.D., End term June 2022
Senior Associate Dean Undergraduate Studies, Carroll School of Management

Emily Walker '21, Appointed
Student Representative

Celeste Wells, Ph.D., End term June 2021
Communications Department

UCRC Subcommittees

There are four standing subcommittees of the UCRC (see Table 1), and this year a fifth subcommittee was established to review quantitative reasoning Core requirements at other universities and begin the process of renewing this requirement at Boston College.

Table 1. UCRC Subcommittees

Committee	Members
Assessment	Celeste Wells (chair), Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Sylvia Sellers-Garcia, Stacy Grooters
Diversity	Brian Gareau (chair), Elizabeth Shlala, Danny Bowles, Sarah McMenamin, Akua Sarr
Curriculum	Elizabeth Shlala (chair), Brian Gareau, Brian Robinette, Elida Laski
Renewal	Brian Gareau (chair), Elizabeth Shlala, Colleen Simonelli, Mary Crane, Gail Kineke, Ethan Sullivan
Ad Hoc Subcommittee Math Core Requirement	Brian Gareau (chair), Ethan Sullivan, Emily Walker ('21)

Assessment (with help from Celeste Wells)

The Assessment subcommittee, under the leadership of Celeste Wells, Associate Professor of the Practice in Communication, has continued to see great improvement in both the Assessment process and the quality of course material design and student work. In AY21, the committee continued to assess whether students *demonstrated the ability to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same enduring question or complex problem*. Here we comment on: 1) the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Assessment in 2020 and 2021, 2) the Assessment developments and findings from AY21, and 3) the projections regarding the continual improvement of the Assessment process.

Pandemic Impacts on Assessment

The Assessment subcommittee adapted to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and also worked to provide support to faculty as they faced pedagogical challenges in Spring, Summer, and Fall 2020. The subcommittee identified the major pandemic-driven challenges when faculty submitted Assessment materials for Spring 2020. Seventy percent of Spring 2020 EQ/CP faculty pairs (nine of 13 courses), indicated that their submissions were significantly impacted by the pandemic-induced shift to online learning. For instance, faculty that had planned physical outings or any human face-to-face interaction were required to change their assignments with little preparation. Unsurprisingly, the percentage of submissions that demonstrated the ability to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same enduring question or complex problem was 77%, roughly 8% lower than submissions in Fall 2019.

Given this development, along with the recognition that faculty would likely face similar assignment design issues in Fall 2020, the Assessment subcommittee reached out to all Fall 2020 CP/EQ faculty to offer assistance in assignment design. They additionally encouraged faculty to take advantage of the many resources that CTE provided to aid in the transition to pandemic pedagogies. Results of Fall 2020 Assessment, discussed further below, demonstrated that faculty worked hard over the summer to redesign their courses. They did this to ensure that they met the Core learning objectives and that their courses were robust in their new format (in person, hybrid, or fully online). The subcommittee was deeply impressed and thankful for all CP/EQ faculty's work to make Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 a success.

Assessment-Driven Developments

Over the past several years, the subcommittee has taken the findings from the Assessment process and used them to refine and enhance the Course Design Workshops, particularly the assignment design process. The first Assessment-driven development was undertaken because past Assessment materials indicated that faculty needed further direction on how to make student-friendly, explicit connections between disciplines that would aid the students in independently connecting, and at times, synthesizing discipline-specific materials together. As such, in the Spring 2020 virtual faculty workshops, in which Celeste Wells presented with the

Core Deans on Assessment to the new faculty, further explanation was provided to faculty about the different ways assignments could be designed to foster connections between disciplines. These workshops were held online, and recordings are currently posted for faculty to use at their leisure. Additionally, Wells recorded short instructional videos about submitting materials and the rationale behind the Assessment process that are also posted on the Faculty Course Design Canvas page.

The committee was pleased to see the pedagogical additions to the Course Design Workshops, prompted through the Assessment process, have produced positive results. By the time faculty began teaching their courses, they had been through multiple workshops and had several in-depth conversations focused on making explicit the connections between each of their disciplines. The effort put in by the subcommittee in addressing gaps identified in the Assessment process, and most importantly the faculty efforts made in working through and rising above the challenges they experienced in Spring 2020 made the Fall 2020 Assessment findings extremely positive.

The next Assessment-driven development was the creation of the Successful Ideas in Interdisciplinary Teaching (SIITS) monthly infographic. In Fall 2020, the subcommittee commented on some of the examples of interdisciplinary teaching being provided during the Assessment process. In an effort to make those examples known to the larger CP/EQ faculty, Wells created the monthly SIITS infographics to be distributed amongst the faculty and UCRC. The first SIITS infographic was sent to faculty in December 2020 and remained monthly through April 2021. SIITS will restart in September 2021 (See Appendix XI). These infographics are one of the ways the committee is working to provide faculty with examples of how to do interdisciplinary teaching as well as commend faculty for their excellent work.

The final development by the subcommittee was prompted by discussing Assessment findings with the UCRC. After hearing the positive results coming from Assessment, Mary Crane asked about the possibility of providing an Assessment Design Workshop for faculty who have been teaching CP/EQ courses for multiple years and had likely not been provided the level of guidance in assignment design that is now available. The subcommittee agreed that this was an

excellent idea, and the first Assessment Design Workshop for returning faculty was held on May 10, 2021 through careful planning by the Assessment Chair and Core Deans. This training was optional for returning faculty and had strong attendance demonstrating this was guidance faculty were interested in receiving. The workshop resulted in a robust and positive discussion about course material design. The veteran faculty seemed pleased to see the developments that have happened over time.

AY21 Assessment

Fall 2020 Assessment findings demonstrated students were more deeply engaged with the interdisciplinarity between the courses and that they understood the pedagogical benefit of the CP/EQ courses as interdisciplinary pairs. In fact, course materials assessed from Fall 2020 showed that 99% of course submissions demonstrated the ability to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same enduring question or complex problem. This was a 22% increase from the nadir in Spring 2020 and demonstrates the effort of the faculty and the subcommittee in maintaining excellence during a challenging year.

In the most recent Assessment Course Design Workshops, held in April and May 2021, Celeste Wells, Elizabeth Shlala, and Brian Gareau heard from CP/EQ faculty that they were thankful for the continued guidance and transparency in Assessment. In addition, they asked for further examples of CP/EQ assignments. To this end, the Assessment Chair has created modules within the Core Assessment Canvas page for examples of complete assignment submissions and SIITS infographics (Appendix XI).

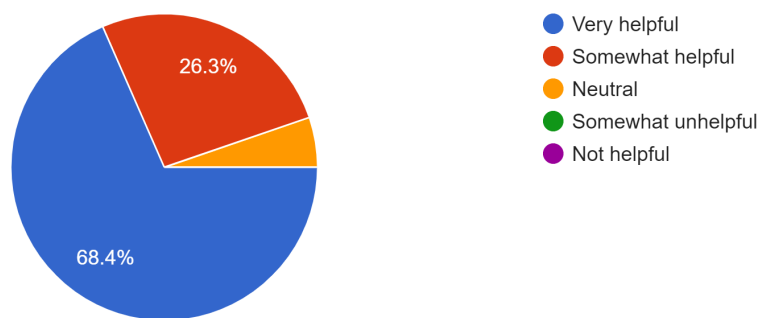
Over the coming year, the committee intends to work with CP/EQ faculty that have had their course material previously assessed to get their approval on providing additional examples submitted for Assessment. The committee will continue to be mindful of student privacy in this process and will ensure all examples are devoid of identifying information. Additionally, the committee will be providing the faculty submitting materials with the option of receiving general feedback from the Assessment process. Historically, this has not been provided as an option as

Boston College is still new to the direct Assessment. However, the committee feels that they are now to the point that providing general feedback to faculty interested will only enhance the communication and transparency in the Assessment process. The committee will continue to use Assessment to refine and improve CP/EQ course design overall.

Faculty Survey of Course Design Workshop Experience indicates that workshop sessions are well-received in general and importantly are helping faculty understand direct Assessment (Figure below; see Appendix III for full survey results).

Was the workshop helpful to you?

19 responses



Core Curriculum

This was likely the busiest and most productive year that the Core Curriculum subcommittee has had since it was established. The Chair, Assistant Dean Shlala, and subcommittee maintain high standards and work very hard to provide meaningful and consistent feedback so that faculty can revise and resubmit in order to meet those standards. On the whole, faculty are grateful for the suggested improvements to meet the learning goals and/or to make the learning goals more explicit for students to engage on their syllabi. In more than one instance this year, the Chair had multiple communication with faculty via email, phone, and in person in order to make submissions amenable to passing through the UCRC. One exemplary syllabus was submitted by a tenured professor in English who was willing to work over many months with the subcommittee for her course to meet the learning goals of Engaging Difference and Justice. It is

now an example for other applicants. The subcommittee met in September 2020 (for the first time ever) to consider 22 unique submissions; in October 2020 for 2 submissions; in December 2020 for 28 submissions; in February 2021 for 6 submissions, and in April 2021 for 4 submissions. A fair number of the submissions were reconsidered in following meetings after resubmission. In a typical academic year, there have been far fewer submissions. We believe three reasons led to the large increase in submissions this year: 1) the Provost's call for EDJ courses; 2) clearer processes and procedures for faculty submissions; and 3) bringing OIP courses in line with the UCRC approval process. The success of the committee's work in such a challenging year was down to the professionalism and commitment of the committee members. The Core Curriculum subcommittee is especially sensitive to how its work impacts student learning on the Assessment side.

Diversity (with help from Danny Bowles)

The members of the UCRC and the Diversity Subcommittee are delighted to report significant progress in their ongoing endeavors to renew the Cultural Diversity Core requirement and update its thirty-year-old learning goals for the twenty-first century. To make our students' formation in matters of cultural diversity a more relevant and distinctive part of their Boston College education and engagement with the world, over the past four years we have spearheaded two different initiatives as new pathways to fulfilling the Cultural Diversity Core requirement: Difference, Justice, and the Common Good in the United States (DJCG) and Engaging Difference and Justice (EDJ). Roughly speaking, the former encompasses topics focused on the United States while courses under the latter rubric may span the globe in their content.

DJCG
Learning Goals

- Students will be able to explain how power shapes differences and creates injustices in the United States, and how power can be used to achieve justice. In the context of the university's Jesuit, Catholic mission, and as appropriate in the particular course, students encounter and engage the reality of a broken world that calls out for justice, love, and mercy.

- Students will develop skills to think more critically about how difference and power have operated both in the past and present. Such skills may include intercultural competence, engaging with diverse others, reflection on one's own experiences and identity, integrating the theoretical and empirical study of difference and power, and connecting academic knowledge to lived experience.

- Students will explore the relationship between justice and the common good and imagine how to act constructively in dialogue with people who are marginalized and dispossessed in the pursuit of justice and the common good.

EDJ
Learning Goals

- Students will reflect on the importance of community, shared values, inclusion, and solidarity at all levels of social connection—from the familial to the global.

- Students will engage critically with past and present instances of injustice. Complex issues concerning race, class, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, religion and other socio-cultural categories may be explored.

- Students will integrate the theoretical and empirical study of difference and power in their many forms; reflect on their own experiences and identities; and connect academic knowledge to lived experience.

- Students will imagine how to flourish in communities in ways that evaluate and embrace difference and overcome injustice by becoming engaged global citizens in service of, and in care for, our common home.

- Students will explore the conditions that need to exist, and how to create those conditions, for all of society's members to live fully human lives of freedom and integrity.

The successful pilot of the DJCG courses in prior years—39 new and revised courses approved through AY2020—and the relative paucity of active CD courses taught (fewer than 130 of the more than 300 identified in the Course Management system) laid the groundwork for the UCRC’s efforts in expanding the reach and scope of this renewal. In AY2021 the work of the Diversity Subcommittee and the UCRC focused on multiplying the options and opportunities for students and faculty to participate in CD Core offerings. General promotion and individual, personal appeals to colleagues who had never considered participating in Cultural Diversity and/or whose disciplinary approaches or concerns went unaddressed by the older CD framework reaped a bounty of new engagement with cultural diversity—and with the Core. To be sure, the sociocultural shifts taking place in national public discourse around personal, institutional, and systemic racism aided the UCRC’s efforts at outreach and promotion of DJCG and EDJ among the Boston College community, too; faculty eagerly responded by addressing the topical challenges of racial justice head-on. Furthermore, in order to publicize these new initiatives in Core renewal among students, Assistant Dean for the Core Curriculum Elizabeth Shlala was interviewed for an article in *The Heights* from April 26, 2021.

After the initial EDJ call for proposals in Spring 2020 and subsequent invitations in AY2021, faculty from across schools and disciplines submitted, in one year alone, 59 proposals for EDJ courses, of which a total of 58 have been approved to date. Five additional courses were proposed and approved under the DJCG rubric as well. To maintain the pedagogical coherence of approved courses, the Curriculum and Diversity Subcommittees and the UCRC asked a number of applicants to revise and resubmit their courses after a collaborative process of discussion and constructive feedback. Successful proposals included syllabi for both newly designed, never-before-offered courses and for existing courses reimaged to engage with our freshly articulated and approved DJCG and EDJ learning goals (see above).

Over this past academic year, 38 renewed CD courses with 874 seats were opened to students. In total, over only four years, 102 DJCG and EDJ courses now exist—nearly equal the number of active CD offerings from before the renewal initiative began. With only a single course

submitted for approval under the older CD framework in AY2021, DJCG and EDJ courses are indeed now the *de facto* centerpiece of Cultural Diversity Core offerings. Previously approved courses offered under the older framework still satisfy the Cultural Diversity Core requirement. What's more, initial Assessment data from EDJ courses in Fall 2020 show significant increases in student "interest, knowledge, and commitment to various issues of justice" from before the courses to after their completion (from a 3.57 to 4.52 out of 5, n=51). And nearly three quarters of these same student respondents, all of whom were first-year students in CP/EQ courses with EDJ credit, signal their interest in taking another such course, and none oppose doing so. Such strong results would suggest these courses are not only achieving their learning outcomes, but also offering students transformative opportunities for greater personal engagement in addressing racial justice, already in their first semester at Boston College.

Engaging Difference and Justice Student Survey and Focus Group in Spring 2021

72.5% of the 51 students who responded to the Core survey indicated that they will take another course on the topic. Many students noted that they were interested in taking Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses that fulfill Cultural Diversity by meeting the Engaging Difference and Justice learning goals because of the unique opportunity they provided them to study interdisciplinary topics. While these courses solidified some student's decisions on their major or career goals, for others they opened up their minds to academic studies that they had not yet considered. For some students these courses exposed them to possible minors and for others the courses helped them to understand specific areas of study they want to focus on within their major.

Some significant ways in which these courses are different from other courses are that they are discussion-based and have real-world applications. One student stated that her class was less about memorizing information or studying for a test and, "*more about understanding the concepts and having conversations about the issues that they represent.*" Assignments and readings are based on current events and relevant issues facing our world. POD groups create a small community within the class smoothing the transition to freshman year easier as students

are truly able to get to know their classmates and get to know an upperclassman who cares about their experience.

When students were asked their favorite part of the course they took, there was an overwhelmingly positive response to the passion that the teachers brought to the classroom. The professors are engaging and “*genuinely care about their students.*” Everyone involved in the courses - fellow freshman, professors, POD leaders, and TAs - all make the class unique and enjoyable. One student noted that “*just being in that environment made me look forward to going to those classes, the material that we were doing outside of class felt relevant, and I just was more motivated to do work for that class.*” (See Appendix XII for full focus group discussion)

Racial Justice Teaching in the Core

Beyond their instructional or administrative roles, members of the UCRC, Diversity Subcommittee, and Core faculty also actively participated in campus-wide initiatives to further the University’s mission of supporting racial justice, diversity, and inclusion. As liaison to the Courageous Conversations program led by UCRC member and Vice Provost Akua Sarr, for instance, Core Fellow Yazmin Zaerpoor supported faculty seeking to incorporate elements of different Courageous Conversations into their teaching and course design. In his CP course, *Powering America*, Core Fellow Jonathan Kroner invited communications strategist Lawrence Barriner to offer his students a pair of workshops on discussing (and practicing discussions of) sensitive topics (Appendix XIII). Student feedback directly pointed out the ways these Reflections sessions furthered the university’s larger mission of formation, and related course content to the real world. And in *Making the Modern World*, Core Fellows, Jenna Tonn, Jonathan Kroner, and Russell Powell instituted a competition for students to present a design solution for a disability-related challenge on campus to an online audience of over 150 faculty, parents, students, and community members (Appendix XIV). As its members regularly participate in events and discussions with formal university programs and undergraduate groups involved in anti-racist work, the UCRC also finds it important to promote among faculty teaching in the Core

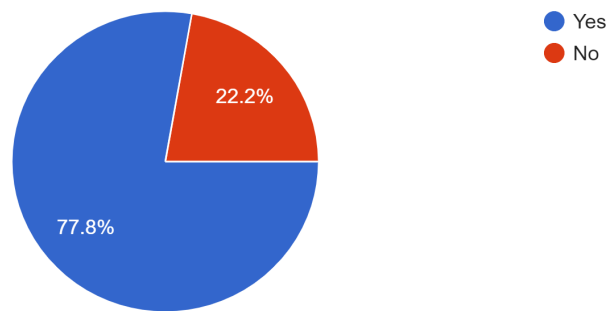
the many opportunities offered by the Forum on Racial Justice in America, the Lowell Humanities Series, the Courageous Conversations initiative, and others.

Racial Justice Teaching in the Core Fall 2020 Survey

The University Core Curriculum is committed to increasing student engagement on issues of race and racial justice in the classroom by encouraging them to learn about “the conditions that result in racism and racist behavior, while suggesting appropriate responses and solutions.” To promote, and measure, the involvement among faculty teaching Core courses, the Assistant Dean surveyed faculty teaching in the Core about their pedagogical reactions to the issues addressed in the BC Forum for Racial Justice. This survey was aimed toward understanding what faculty are doing in the classroom.(Appendix XV).

Of the thirty-six faculty respondents in Fall 2020, almost 90% noted that they made targeted adjustments to their teaching in the Core. Based on the survey, it is clear that there is a direct effort by professors to incorporate material on racial justice into their teaching. When asked “Does this course typically address issues of racial justice,” 77.8% of the professors responded, “yes” as shown in the chart:

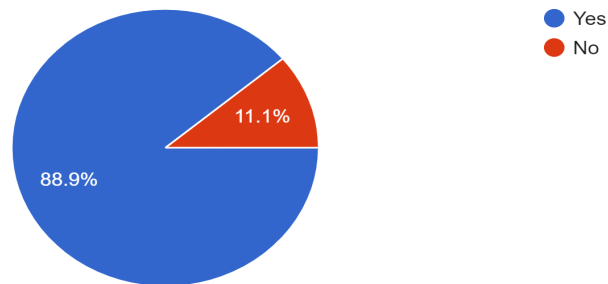
Does this course typically address issues of racial justice?
36 responses



Additionally, after being asked, “Did you make targeted adjustments to your teaching in the Core to address issues of racism and racist behavior,” 88.9% of professors responded, “yes”:

Did you make targeted adjustments to your teaching in the Core to address issues of racism and racist behavior?

36 responses

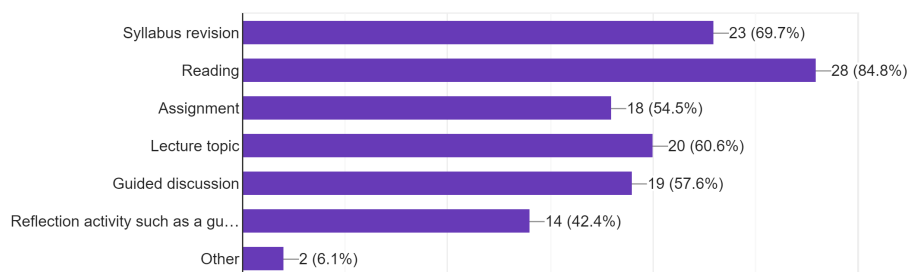


Many of the courses within Core, have already been addressing issues of racial justice, but faculty this year were *“more intentional”* about incorporating such material into their coursework. Some courses gave credit to students who attended events outside of the classroom about racial justice. Others added Reflection sessions to their courses. One professor stated that, *“it was the first time I’ve done a reflective assignment like this in my large lecture course, and I think that students appreciate it.”* Another faculty member noted that he has *“found that (his) students are eager to learn and moreover, offered that they have felt in the past that BC was slow to do much on this issue, and are pleased wherever they see concrete actions taking place.”* The same professor went on to say that he has *“nearly doubled the amount of attention that (he is) giving specifically to race this semester.”* Finally, another colleague offered that what differentiates this past year from prior years in the classroom in terms of racial justice is that *“students are more aware of and open to the issues and topics from the course.”*

To further gauge BC faculty’s pedagogical engagement around race and racial justice, the graph below provides details on specific ways that faculty added or modified their courses to address issues of racial justice. It is important to note that of the 33 professors who responded to this question, 29 of them selected more than one change that they made to the course.

If so, what did you add/modify?

33 responses



Renewal

Core Renewal in the area of CP/EQ course design has evolved from the inaugural years. Through direct Assessment, UCRC conversations, and review of student evaluations, the Core has been able to make changes to courses and recommend amendments to university policy on participation in Course Design Workshops. This year, the Associate Dean worked closely with two faculty, Mary Ann Chirba and Tracy Regan, to discuss converting their EQ pairing into a CP-- a significant change to an otherwise very popular and successful course. They agreed and did so through the Workshops. On the other hand, the Associate Dean needed to work carefully with two other faculty in order to convince them to teach an EQ pair, not a CP-- the Renewal Committee was unconvinced the course would be successful as a CP. Discussions with particular faculty in certain departments to generate interest in renewal is ongoing, time-consuming, and important. Having Assessment data on the patterns of faculty involvement in teaching CPs/EQs allowed the Associate Dean to recommend a stipend for repeat faculty that 1) supported continued involvement in Core Renewal, 2) allowed for justification for repeat faculty to participate again in Course Design Workshops, and 3) eliminated any further “free rider” behavior (a very limited occurrence, but now avoidable). Finally, the Renewal subcommittee revised a rubric for assessing CP/EQ applications, which also was helpful for decision making.

Further work connected to renewal involves working with faculty when a CP/EQ is designed to fulfill a Core requirement with faculty not in a department that customarily provides the requested Core requirement. The work with these faculty, often seeking assistance from department chairs, to assure that the specific learning goals will be met. This year, this work was conducted for five new CP/EQ courses. The following new CP/EQ courses were created in AY21:

Complex Problems

Crisis and Storytelling in the Age of Climate Change

Hilary Palevsky & Min Song

Yasmin Zaerpoor (Core Fellow, Environmental Studies)

→ *Fulfills Natural Science & Literature*

Life, Liberty & Health: The Economics, Policy and Law of Healthcare

Tracy Regan & Mary Ann Chirba

(Public Health/Policy Core Fellow)

→ Fulfills Social Science and History II

Enduring Questions

The Making of the Modern Mind: Morality

The Making of the Modern Mind: Mathematics

Anver Ash & Ryan Hanley

→ *Fulfills Math & Social Science*

Enduring Question: What are the unique ways in which we understand and use reason in the modern world?

For the Love of the Game: A Theology of Sports

For the Love of the Game: A Sociology of Sport

Richard Gaillardetz & Kyoung-yim Kim

→ *Fulfills Christian Theology & Social Science*

Enduring Question: How did sport become a pervasive social phenomenon, and how do sports function in our contemporary cultures and contribute to our undermining authentic human flourishing?

War and Peace in Word and Deed

War and Peace in Word and Deed

Nicole Eaton & Tom Epstein

→ *Fulfills History II & Literature*

Enduring Question: How does War and Peace speak through its historical context and as a description of a perennial human situation?

Microbes and Us: Exploring Nature and the Human in the Environmental Humanities

Microbes and Us: Exploring Nature and the Human from a Microbiology Perspective

Beth Kowaleski Wallace & Babak Momeni

→ *Fulfills Literature & Natural Science*

Enduring Question: How does pairing the study of the natural sciences with the humanities help us discover the nature of human life?

Holocaust: History, Representation & Memory (Art)

Holocaust, History, Representation & Memory (History)

Nick Block & Devin Pendas

→ *Fulfills Art & History II*

Enduring Question: How do representations of genocide differ across national contexts?

The Role of Literature in Understanding the Complex Meaning of Justice

The Rule of Law and the Complex Meaning of Justice

Marla DeRosa & Michael Cassidy

→ *Fulfills Literature & Social Science*

Enduring Question: How do societies define justice, and what role do lawyers, authors, and dramatists play in illuminating the many complex issues underlying this concept?

The Value of Work: A Philosophical Examination

The Value of Work: Significance through Literature

Micah Lott & Aeron Hunt

→ *Fulfills Philosophy & Literature*

Enduring Question: What role and significance does work have in flourishing lives and good societies?

From Hiroshima to K-Pop: Historical Perspectives

From Hiroshima to K-Pop: Filmmakers' Perspectives

Ingu Hwang & Tina Klein

→ *Fulfills History II & Art*

Enduring Question: What is the relationship between politics and culture in Asia?

Morals and Metaphysics: Political Perspectives

Morals and Metaphysics: Theological Perspectives

Jeremy Wilkins & Paul Wilford

→ *Fulfills Christian Theology & Social Science*

Enduring Question: The most important question humans face is "how should I live?"

Shifting Forms: Political Belonging in Song and Film
Shifting Forms: Sexuality and Belonging in Modern Literature

Jonathan Laurence & Kevin Ohi

→ *Fulfills Social Science & Literature*

Enduring Question: What are the relations between aesthetic and cultural forms and political identity and belonging—from the perspective of political science and literary studies?

Encountering Inequalities: Disparity and Protest Art
Encountering Inequalities: The Historical Politics of Inequality

→ **Fulfills Literature and History II**

John Brooks (Core Fellow, English)

Carlos Zuniga Nieto (Core Fellow, History)

Enduring Question: How are inequalities normalized, and how might their normalcy be challenged?

Grief and Resistance: Theological Responses to Climate Change

Grief and Resistance: Social Responses to American Gun Violence

→ *Fulfills Social Science and Christian Theology*

Enduring Question: How do people affectively cope with threats to life, and how do these threats effectively motivate moral and political responses?

Nora Gross (Core Fellow, Sociology)

Russ Powell (Core Fellow, Theology)

The UCRC received and reviewed submissions from 22 full-time BC faculty to teach new CP/EQ courses: two CPs, 18 EQ pairs. In addition, Core Fellows were asked to create seven new EQs, either paired with other Fellows or full-time BC faculty. In total 28 faculty participated in the Course Design Workshop to create these courses. Data show that most faculty are consistently teaching their courses. When partnerships end for whatever reason, there are opportunities for faculty to find new partners. This year, with MCAS Dean and Provost approval, the UCRC established a rule that faculty who teach their course three times in a five-year period may receive a stipend to attend workshops to create a course with a new partner (\$10,000 for CP, \$5,000 for EQ). The UCRC maintains that it is a very important incentive to ensure the continued renewal of these courses and maintain roughly 1,000 seats per year. Table 2 shows that faculty are indeed teaching their courses repetitively; additionally, the number of faculty teaching 1 course 1x has dropped every year from AY19-22 (Table 2 for AY 22 data).

Table 2. Faculty Teaching Patterns in CP/EQ Courses: Up to AY 22

Number of course pairs developed		92
<hr/>		
Number of times those pairs offered		178
<hr/>		
Number of faculty teaching courses X times		
	1 course 1x	57
	1 course 2x	47
	1 course 3x	25
	1 course 4x	9
	1 course 5x	2
	2 courses 2x	1
	1 course 1x and 1 course 1x	2
	1 course 4x and 1 course 2x	3
	1 course 4x and 1 course 1x	1
	1 course 1x and 1 course 2x	4
	2 course 2x and 1 course 1x	1
	2 courses 2x and 1 course 3x	1
	1 course 3x and 1 course 1x	3
	2 courses 3x	1
	2 courses 1x, 1 course 2x, and 1 course 3x	1
	3 courses 1x	1
<hr/>		
Total Faculty		159

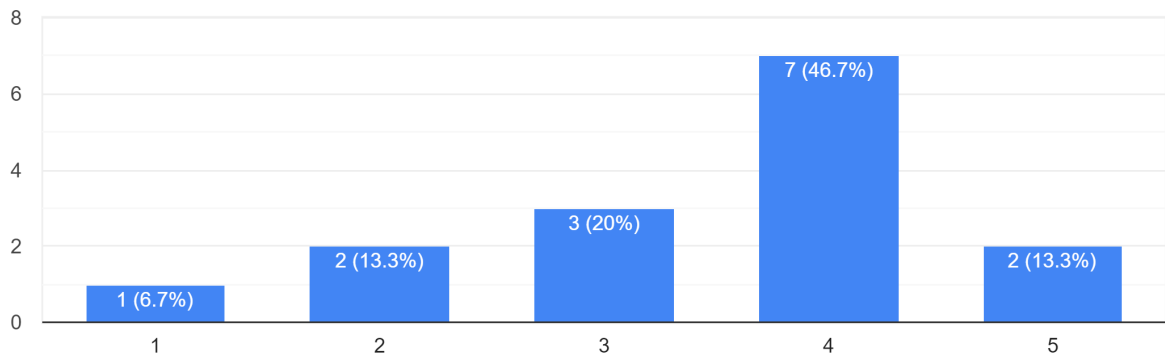
POD Leadership Program

The Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD) Leadership Program continues to expand as a successful and meaningful means of academic engagement at Boston College. Surveys and focus groups indicate it is a highly successful way of engaging in reflections with students with 53% of POD Leaders polled rating it 5/5 and 33% 4/5 in *improving collaboration skills*, over 93% of POD Leaders polled rating it between 3-5/5 in *helping them understand the role of the Core Curriculum in their broader education*, and 100% of all POD Leaders polled saying they *would recommend being a POD Leader to other students*. A majority of POD Leaders noted the experience as contributing significantly to their job/internship interview (Figure below).



To what extent was your POD leadership experience a part of your job/internship interviews?

15 responses



For AY21 three CPs utilized PODs, and for the upcoming AY22 four more CPs will be using PODs. By the end of AY22, 129 students will have participated in the POD Leadership Program as POD Leaders, and 846 students will have participated in PODs as a student.

POD Leader Focus Group Feedback

The POD Leadership Program has proved to be a widely loved, insightful, and helpful program for its participants with one POD Leader stating, *“through my experience as a POD leader, I gained valuable insights into my own thought process, communication style, and analytical process. In discussing a variety of subjects concerning engineering and social justice, I was able to hone my understanding of these concepts with the help of the incredible students and POD Leaders with whom I was able to engage.”*

Students also appreciated the opportunity to improve their collaboration and communication skills and to develop close, mentor-like relationships with their freshman PODs as well as each other. One POD Leader stated that, *“being a POD Leader enabled me to meet wonderful individuals and learn about a variety of leadership and communication styles. In doing so, I have learned valuable lessons regarding strategies for collaboration in creating meaningful discourse”* and another emphasized that, through the program, they learned that they, *“love helping others and connecting with freshman, I love reflecting and being vulnerable with others, interdisciplinary lenses are really important and interesting to solve complex problems, I love working with others, and that I can be a powerful leader!”*

Additionally, the program proved meaningful on the underclassmen side as well with Core Fellow Russ Powell reporting that when *“attending a virtual conference with Jenna Tonn and Jonathan Kronen through Olin College to supplement our course revision for Making the Modern World (one of the AY21 POD CP courses)...a couple of our undergrads...joined us. Reflecting on their*

experience in PODs last fall, both students said they LOVED PODs and that their POD leaders actually checked in on them throughout the spring semester this year, which made them feel cared for and like they had someone looking out for them on campus who wasn't an administrator or part of the BC hierarchy.”

Overall, the POD Leadership Program has proven to be a quickly growing much-loved aspect of the BC Core Curriculum on both the mentor and mentee sides. The program fosters relationships, leadership skills, and a deeper understanding of the academic material and learning process and sets POD Leaders up for success by acquiring unique skills for their future pursuits (Appendix XVI).

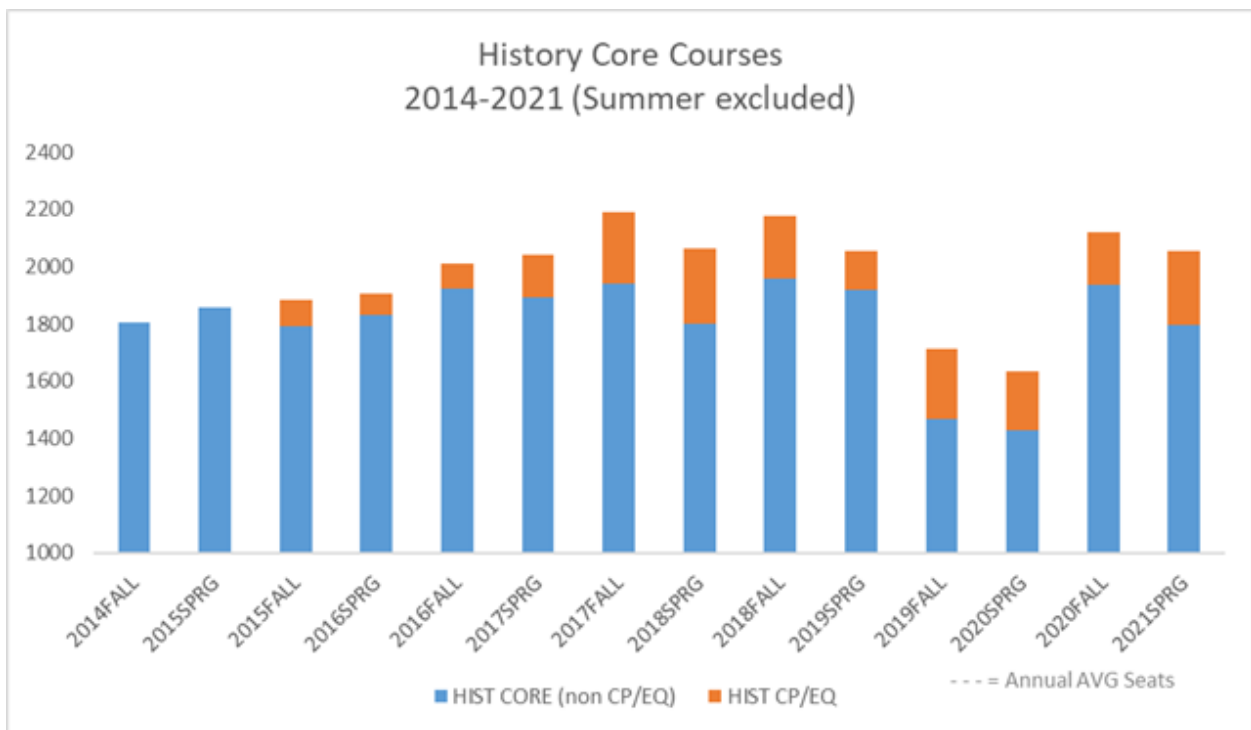
VII. Renewal in Other Core Areas

New Cultural Diversity and Learning Goals: EDJ and DJCG

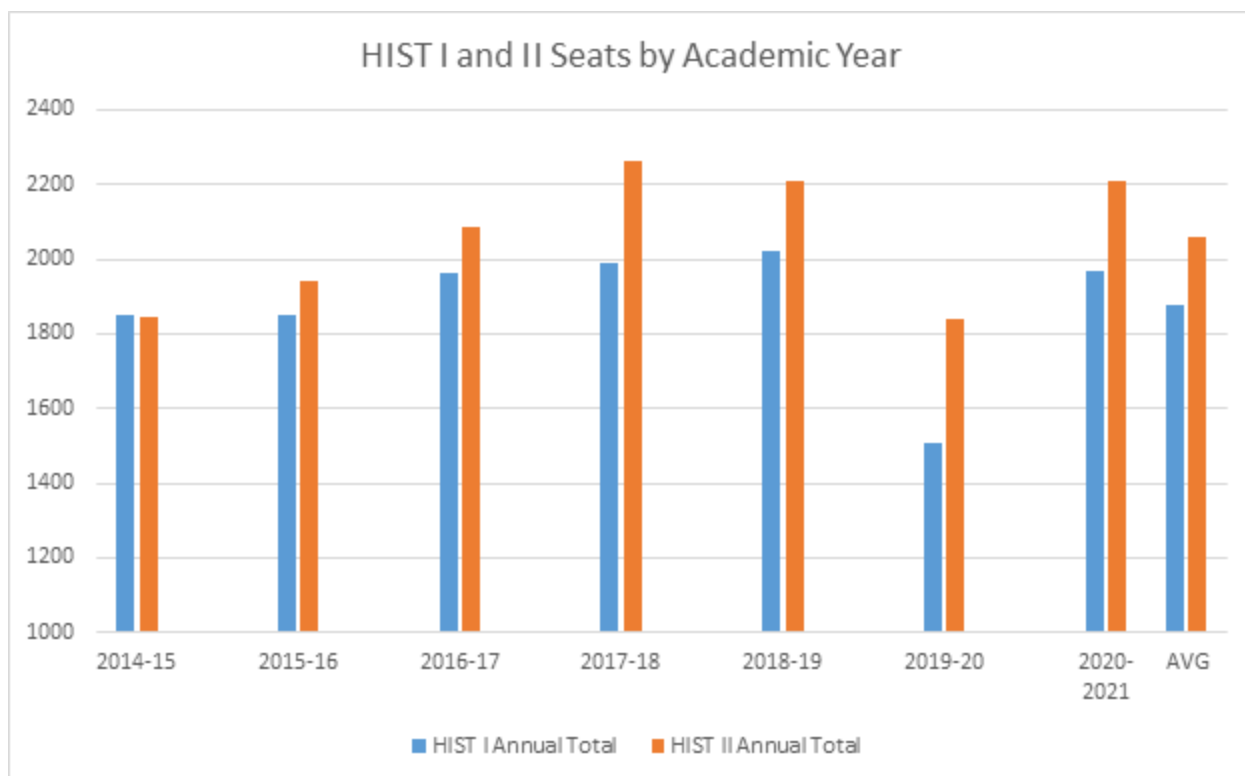
As noted above, since 2016, the UCRC has worked on renewing the Cultural Diversity Core requirement. We have two new pathways to fulfill Cultural Diversity: *Difference, Justice and the Common Good in the United States* (DJCG) + *Engaging Difference and Justice* (EDJ). We currently have 44 DJCG and 58 EDJ courses from across the university. Previously-designated Cultural Diversity courses remain available to students (see Appendix XVII for full list of courses approved in AY21).

Notable Ongoing Core Conversations: History Department

History is in the early stages of proposing changes to their Core courses. One stage of History renewal is evidenced by their new “Core Topics” courses. Now, the department is interested in implementing a modification of the CP model, and to implement more courses that also fulfill CD through DJCG and EDJ. With support from the Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning, Mara Hermano, in April 2021 the Core were able to provide guidance to History based on data. The History Department was made aware that its contributions to CP/EQ courses has the effect of adding to overall HIST Core seats, not reducing them, and we reported that an average of just over 1,800 seats are offered each semester (Figure below).



Also, the data show that more HIST II Core seats are offered than HIST I Core seats, which might inform future hiring decisions. While it is not the place of the Core to tell departments what to do with these data, the analysis will help the department have an informed discussion with the MCAS dean about future changes to their Core (see Figure below).



VIII. Student Evaluations

CP/EQ evaluations continue to outperform other Core courses in general (although the CP/EQ course data are conflated with the full set of Core surveys, meaning CPs/EQs are included, pushing those results higher), yet evaluations across the board are quite good. The following four questions were asked: 1) After taking the Core course, I understand the basic concepts, methods, and/or content of the course’s discipline; 2) This Core course helped me think differently about other disciplines; 3) This course helped me make connections and integrate what I have learn elsewhere; 4) My main reason for taking this course was to fulfill a Core requirement. As an example, for the Fall 2020, CP/EQ courses score higher on the first three and lower on the fourth question (Figures below, but see Appendices I and XVIII for full-year evaluation data).

Figure: Student Evaluations for CP/EQ Core Courses: Fall 2020

Core: Select your agreement level with the following statements about this course.

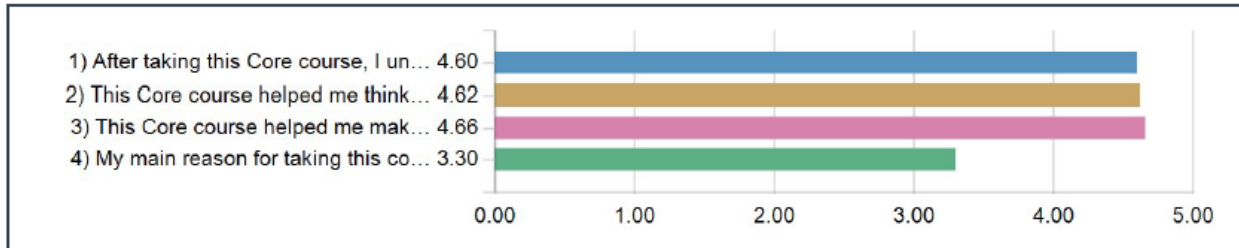
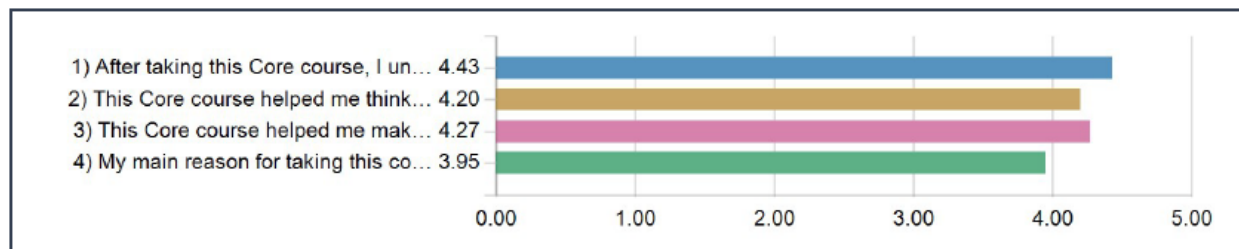


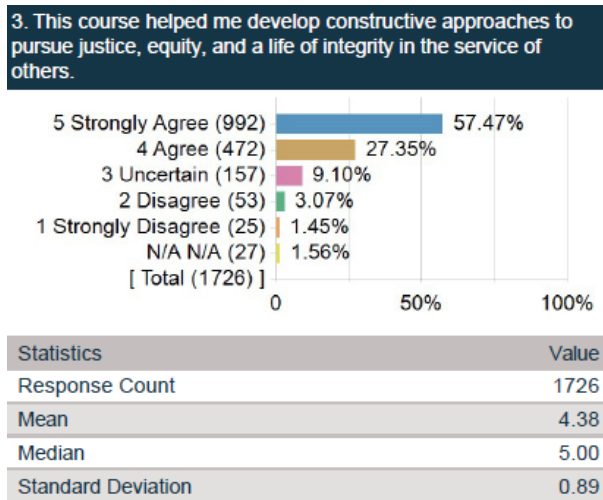
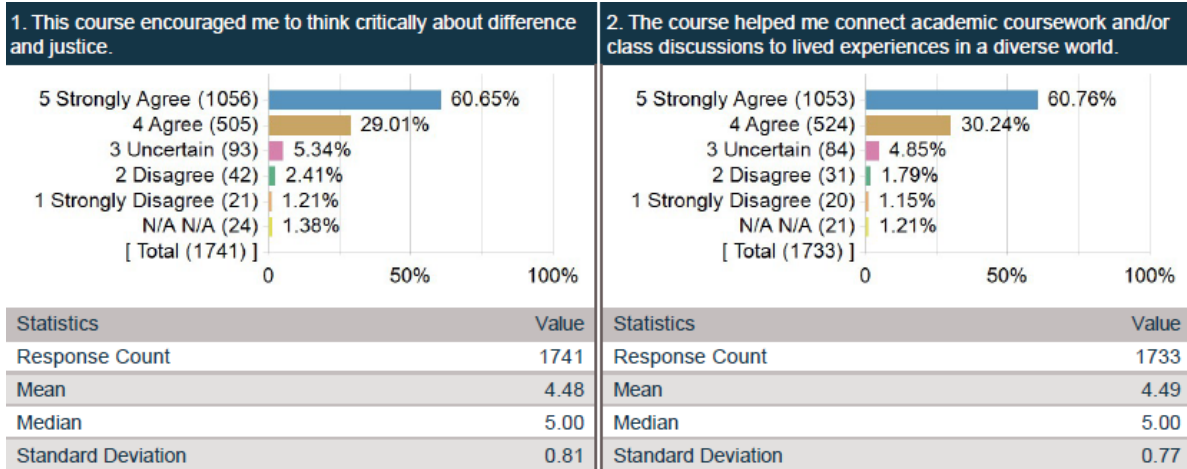
Figure: Student Evaluations for All Core Courses: Fall 2020

Core: Select your agreement level with the following statements about this course.



Assessing Renewal of Cultural Diversity Learning Goals in Student Evaluations

With the creation of/revision to over one hundred courses that fulfill CD through EDJ or DJCG, it was important to assess whether students self-report engaging with the goals in these courses. In student surveys, the following supplemental questions were asked: 1) This course encouraged me to thinking critically about difference and justice; 2) The course helped me connect academic coursework and/or class discussions to lived experiences in a diverse world; 3) This course helped me develop constructive approaches to pursue justice, equity, and a life of integrity in the service of others. Responses from fall and spring suggest the learning goals are being met, at least from the students' perspective (Fall Tables below, full year evaluations in Appendix XVIII).



IX. E1As

As in years past, the Deans collected E1As from all departments, which helps the MCAS dean have informed conversations about steps departments have taken to improve their participation in the Core. This past year, a Summary E1A report was provided to the MCAS Dean for Sociology, Physics, Music, and Theology (See Appendix XIX).

X. AY2022 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to guide our work in the academic year ahead:

1. *Administrative Assistant, not Program Assistant*
 - a. We recommend working with Human Resources to verify that the work of the Core Program Assistant is indeed that of an Administrative Assistant, a title and position that we feel more closely matches the responsibilities that the position contains.
2. *Update the UCRC Charge to reflect its contemporary makeup, and maintain leadership*
 - a. The UCRC charge is out of date. We would recommend amending it: adding the Assistant Dean to the list of appointed members; we also recommend that the Associate Deans for Undergraduate Programs of CSOM, LSEHD, and CSON be revised as appointed positions, not elected ones. The continuity of these administrators is important for the general operations of the committee.
3. *Complete OIP transition of Cultural Diversity to EDJ/DJCG for study abroad (w/ website changes)*
 - a. This work has begun via conversations with Interim Director of OIP, Larry Pickener, Shannon Williams, Bryan Fleming, and James Keenan, S.J., Vice Provost of Global Engagement. As with University courses, we recommend allowing for Cultural Diversity Core credit when taken abroad *only* if the courses are approved by the UCRC, and meet either EDJ or DJCG learning goals. Additionally, we recommend that *all* BC summer courses be approved by the UCRC for *all* Core credit continuing on our work this year.
4. *Pursue a CP on “Faith in the 21st Century”*
 - a. Conversations between Father President Leahy, S.J. and Associate Dean for the Core led to the early pursuit of this CP. The Core Deans will explore this opportunity in the months ahead.

5. *Make POD an option for graded credit (3-credits) Spring 2022 POD Leaders (currently only offered pass/fail)*
 - a. While no new Core Capstone experience has been created, the POD Leadership Program is quite similar. Given the amount of class time and mentorship time POD Leader work entails, giving the option of graded credit seems practical. Not all POD Leaders will elect the graded option, but it might make sense in certain situations. Spring 2022 could be a pilot semester that is assessed for effectiveness.
6. *Renew of the Math Core/ Quantitative Reasoning*
 - a. Per the report provided by the Ad Hoc Committee of the UCRC on the Math Core requirement, the UCRC recommends continuing the conversation with BC stakeholders in the Fall 2021 (Appendix XX)
7. *New call for EDJ/DJCG Core Courses*
 - a. A new Call for participation, with a \$1,000 stipend for new or revised courses is recommended.
8. *A Step Towards a University Core Curriculum*
 - a. Continue the conversation with Dean Muncaster and Associate Dean Michelle Elias Bloomer of the Woods College on rationalizing the Woods and University Cores. The different Cores are confusing to students and faculty. We recommend further conversation (initiated by the Provost) on moving in the direction of having the UCRC review all Core courses and establishing a singular Core Curriculum for the University. This is likely a multi-year process.
9. *Justice and the Common Good: Living and Learning Community*

This residential community is being designed for students interested in deepening their interests in social justice, cultural diversity, and the common good. Students will gain new tools for reflecting on and leading social transformation in pursuit of justice, equity, and universal flourishing. The LLC will be: (1) Open to all incoming first-year students to apply; (2) Located in Gonzaga Hall (Upper Campus); (3) Students enroll in a Fall Enduring Question (EQ) course pair in the University Core Curriculum that fulfills Cultural Diversity through an Engaging Difference and Justice (EDJ) and/or Difference,

Justice, and the Common Good (DJCG) pathway; (4) Students undertake a semester-long Reflection program led by near-to-peer student mentors (PODS) and a series of workshops, faculty lectures, and community meals providing training in some skills required for social change throughout the year. Linked EQ courses this pilot year will be:

Geographies of Imperialism: History of Colonization HIST1716 (History I)

Geographies of Imperialism: Theology of Colonization THEO1707 (Theology- Sacred Texts)

Grief and Resistance: Theological Responses to Climate Change THEO1713

Grief and Resistance: Social Responses to American Gun Violence SOCY1726

Truth Telling in Literature: ENGL1701 (Literature)

Truth Telling in History: HIST1701 (History I)

The Rule of Law and the Complex Meaning of Justice: UNAS1716 (Social Science)

The Role of Literature in Understanding the Complex Meaning of Justice: ENGL1729 (Literature)

In this pilot year, we will have 24 first-year students selected through an application process. There will be six upper-class POD leaders, mentored by a faculty mentor through a weekly POD Leader Seminar. We will carefully survey these students to gauge their experience in the LLC and the goal of achieving continuity between their intellectual coursework and their lived experience on campus through the themes of justice and the common good (see Appendix XXI).

Appendices Below