

STATE OF THE CORE REPORT

August 2019
Associate Dean for the Core
Morrissey College of Arts & Sciences
Boston College

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I. Executive Summary

This is the fourth annual State of the Core Report generated by the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean for the Core¹ on behalf of the University Core Renewal Committee (UCRC). This report will focus on: (1) the activities of the Associate Dean for the Core, and the UCRC; (2) student and faculty experiences with Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses offered from 2015 to 2019, and; (3) issues and recommendations raised across the University Core Curriculum over the course of AY19. The year represents a renewed illustration of the importance of the Core Curriculum to Boston College's Mission with its position in *Strategic Direction I* of the strategic plan, *Ever to Excel: Advancing Boston College's Mission* (Appendix 1); as well as the integration of *The Vision Animating Boston College's University Core Curriculum* (Appendix 2) with this strategic plan. Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses are now an established and successful feature of the first-year experience at Boston College. With a full staff and renewed University Core Curriculum, our efforts more broadly support the entirety of the University Core Curriculum.

As a central component of a Jesuit, Catholic higher education at Boston College, the University Core Curriculum strives to integrate two distinctive goals: 1) *intellectual rigor in pursuit of truth and growth in knowledge of the whole reality* and 2) *the humanist formative ideal of developing the habits of mind, heart, and imagination that will equip students to contribute to the common good and live meaningful lives in service to others*. Boston College's University Core Curriculum has become a model for other universities seeking the guidance of the Associate Dean for the Core in developing and reshaping core curricula to attain these fundamental educational ideals.

The Associate Dean for the Core has gathered, analyzed, and narrated the information comprising this report. The Associate Dean and Assistant Director are particularly grateful to the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (IRPA) and Professor

¹ The Associate Dean for the Core is the umbrella term for the activities of the Associate Dean, Assistant Director, Program Assistant, and Graduate Assistant used throughout this document unless otherwise specified.

Mary Crane for their support, particularly with data gathering, analysis, and review of Core procedures throughout the academic year. We are also thankful to Student Services for their ongoing institutional support.

Highlighted activities in the report include the following:

1. The Associate Dean for the Core and the UCRC

- a. At the end of AY18, Professor Brian J. Gareau transitioned into the position of Associate Dean for the Core. Upon assuming his role, Associate Dean Gareau, in alignment with the UCRC, assessed the state of the Core, increased the staff, and worked with the new Assistant Director and new Program Assistant to standardize Core administrative processes. A primary goal of the Associate Dean and the Assistant Director is to promote consistent engagement with the Core Learning Goals across the University Core Curriculum (Appendix 3), and to ensure the success of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses.
- b. To keep pace with the growth and maintenance of standards in the University Core Curriculum, the Morrisey College of Arts and Sciences Dean's office staff has grown to a sustainable level in AY19. It now includes: a permanent Assistant Director, who is a historian, university administrator, and an Associate Professor of the Practice; a Program Assistant with experience in the Career Center and Student Services; and, a part-time Graduate Assistant who is a joint MBA/JD candidate. Hiring and training of new staff was a huge undertaking in AY19.
- c. The Core Fellows Program (CFP) likewise has grown to meet the needs of Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses. The current cohort includes six Core Fellows. Two additional fellows were added for AY20, bringing the total count to eight fellows, four of whom will be new to the cohort in AY20. The Core Fellows Program includes Orientation, ongoing professional development, logistical support, and formative education.

- d. In its fourth year, the process established by the UCRC to review all new Core courses as well as new Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses has become ingrained in the University community. Each time a new Core course is proposed, the UCRC and relevant subcommittees review it for explicit engagement with the Core Learning Goals.
- e. The University Core Curriculum is a hub of connections for departments and programs across the University— from Advancement to First-Year Experience, from Student Services to the Center for Teaching Excellence, and from Academic Advising to the Office of International Programs. The University Core Curriculum links all relevant departments throughout the year. The Core Curriculum forms the liberal arts foundation among faculty, students, administrators, alumni, and other friends of Boston College.
- f. The Associate Dean and Assistant Director dedicate significant efforts to thoughtful promotion of courses to faculty and students through brochures, presentations, social media, meetings, and formal and informal gatherings throughout the year.
- g. The success of the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses has generated a high level of interest across higher education. Associate Dean Gareau has given a number of presentations and talks at other universities about the success of the renewed University Core Curriculum. Boston College is recognized as a leader among our peer institutions around the country.

2. *Core Renewal: Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses & Beyond*

- a. Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses continue to be overwhelmingly positively received by students, faculty, and other constituents of Boston College.
- b. We have offered over 100 course pairs of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses since 2015.
- c. By AY20 over 130 faculty will have taught a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course. Of note are the impressive number of faculty who repeatedly teach

either the same Enduring Question course or enter into new partnerships and/or development new courses. Faculty support and participation have been critical to the success of “Core Renewal.”

- d. 36% of first-year students enrolled in a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course in AY19. For AY19 and AY20, approximately 1,000 undergraduates each year will take a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course.
- e. Core Renewal has had a positive impact on faculty, students, and staff across Boston College. There is evidence of the pervasive influence of Core Renewal across the University, including changes in Core course offerings, throughout this report.
- f. As Core Renewal emerged from the pilot phase, the first-year program nomenclature has shifted away from “Core Renewal” to “Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses” for clarity and precision in AY19.
- g. The Associate Dean and Assistant Director encourage students to, “Use the Core, to Explore” who they are and what they want to achieve through their liberal arts education at Boston College.

3. *AY2019 Initiatives*

a. “Who Will You Become?”

For AY19 “Who Will You Become?” as a dean’s initiative intentionally linked and promoted the suite of distinctive opportunities that the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences offers to first-year students. “Who Will You Become?” program directors met to create an accordion brochure listing all of the unique first-year program options at Boston College (Appendix 4). These programs include: Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, Perspectives, The Courage to Know, Freshman Topic Seminars, and the PULSE Program for Service Learning. The brochures were distributed at the Admissions Office, Admitted Eagle Days, Orientation Leaders’ Training, and all seven Orientations to introduce first-year students to the interdisciplinary programs that Boston College offers. The Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s letter informed incoming freshman of these offerings.

b. Difference, Justice, and the Common Good (DJCG)

The Difference, Justice, and the Common Good initiative represents a reimagining of the Cultural Diversity requirement. As discussed in the AY18 State of the Core Report, the Associate Dean for the Core proceeded with the gradual implementation approach similar to that of Core Renewal. During AY19, two calls for proposals were issued, and faculty were asked to submit courses meeting the requirements of Difference, Justice, and the Common Good. Applicants were required to explicitly engage with the Common Good from a Catholic social thought perspective (Appendices 5 and 6).

Recommended Initiatives for AY20 include the following:

1. Continue to support the integrity and high standards of all University Core Curriculum courses across departments on-site and abroad in AY20 by ensuring the primacy of the Core Learning Goals through rigorous engagement and review of new proposed Core courses. Review and engage in discussions with departments about their involvement in the University Core Curriculum in light of Core Renewal and the learning goals outlined in the *Vision Animating the Core* document. While several departments have made changes due to Core Renewal, and beyond, a campus-wide assessment of these and future revisions is in order.
2. DJCG currently functions as one avenue to fulfill the Cultural Diversity requirement. However, the UCRC and the Associate Dean for the Core envision that DJCG will eventually replace the CD requirement, as the University moves away from the two-track CD fulfillment system. This change would involve a carefully devised roll-out strategy preceded by town halls, campus-wide discussions, and multiple media projects. A call for proposals was opened in the Fall and Spring to solicit DJCG course proposals. Please see Appendix 6 for the call for proposals text. The Core received twenty-three proposals, nineteen were approved, and four were rejected.
3. Expand and support the undergraduate peer mentorship programs, the Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD) and POD Leadership Program, developed by Associate Dean Gareau and Professor Pisani Gareau in collaboration with the Center for Student Formation, which links upperclassmen to underclassmen through facilitated discussions in Reflection sessions of select Core courses. Currently, three Core courses use PODs: two Complex Problem courses, and one International Studies course, and other faculty have expressed interest. The Associate Dean for the Core recommends consideration of a new staff position, a Core Formation Liaison, to be filled by someone with experience in higher education and the Catholic intellectual tradition who will: 1) help train and mentor POD Leaders throughout the semester; 2) oversee the development of a Core Capstone Pilot course in the Spring of AY20, open to 30 POD Leaders and other seniors, if necessary to fill seats; 3) act as a liaison between the Associate Dean for the Core and the Mission and

Ministry, thus augmenting efforts around formation in the two areas; and, 4) allow for the expansion of PODs and other formative activities to other courses in the Core Curriculum (Appendix 7).

4. Continue to develop and support the Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses for the years ahead, including: faculty pairing, syllabi creation, logistical support (e.g. Reflection sessions, trips, catering, transportation, release forms, and budgets), promotion, and trouble-shooting with the support of the Center for Teaching Excellence (Appendix 8).
5. Continue to develop the Core Fellows Program to encourage excellent teaching in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition for undergraduates as well as an avenue of professional development for fellows on the academic job market. It is an opportunity for formation for both Fellows and students.
6. Use assessment engaged with the Core Learning Goals more effectively and attentively through direct assessment of student work, indirect assessment of faculty and course evaluations, and department-level self-assessment (E1As). The Assistant Director acts as the Core liaison with University Committee for Learning Outcomes Executive Committee.
7. Continue to support and develop Reflection Sessions in Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses as a key habit for intellectual rigor and student formation embedded in the course design. The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and Professor Mary Crane are great resources in this effort (Appendix 9), as would be the new Core Formation Liaison. As we have seen with adoption of the POD Leadership program in a non-CP course, there are opportunities to focus on a deeper understanding of Reflection and integration of Reflection throughout the Core, not just in EQ and CP Reflection sessions.

II. Administration

1. *The following are Major Tasks of the Associate Dean for the Core and the UCRC:*

- a. Support the integrity and high standards of all University Core Curriculum courses across departments, abroad, and online;
- b. Ensure the primacy of the Core Learning Goals in the University Core Curriculum courses through engagement and review;
- c. Further develop the Core Fellows Program to provide excellent teaching for undergraduates in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition as well as providing an avenue of professional development for Fellows. Manage the Core Fellows Program, including hiring four additional Core Fellows to replace two Core Fellows who received external job offers and two more who received offers during the hiring process. Additionally, the Assistant Director organizes training programs and group activities for the Core Fellows Program to encourage professional development and collaboration among the cohort;
- d. Promote the “Who Will You Become?” suite of distinctive first-year offerings in marketing and advising;
- e. Facilitate the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses and planning for upcoming years (**18-24 month lifecycle**);
- f. Develop and support the Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses for the years ahead, including: pairing, syllabi creation, logistical support, promotion, and trouble-shooting; and,
- g. Manage the Cultural Diversity Approval Request process, while also continuing the process of restructuring the existing Cultural Diversity requirement in the spirit of extant changes made through Difference, Justice and the Common Good using the new approach proposed in last year’s report. Consistent review of student requests for Cultural Diversity substitution credit remains a major activity of the Associate

Dean for the Core. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the Associate Dean for the Core processed 147 individual student requests. This process requires individual review of each submitted application and syllabus. The approval process has become extremely time intensive, but the proposed Cultural Diversity requirement revisions have potential to help cut down on the work involved in this process (Appendix 10).

2. *Staffing*

In AY19 the Associate Dean for the Core expanded to consist of the Associate Dean for the Core, the Assistant Director of the Core, and the Program Assistant. These positions are supported by a part-time Graduate Assistant. The team's expansion has allowed the Associate Dean and Assistant Director to standardize administrative tasks and to expand critical functions of oversight and promotion. They respond directly to, and work closely with, the Dean of the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, Greg Kalscheur, S.J.

Brian J. Gareau, Ph.D. and Associate Professor of Sociology and International Studies, transitioned into the position of Associate Dean for the Core in May 2018. Since taking over the position, Associate Dean Gareau has led the Core into a new phase, streamlining programs while expanding into new areas. Additionally, the Associate Dean for the Core remains concentrated on University Core Curriculum course planning and assessment, curriculum management, administration, and communication with various groups across and beyond campus. He also chairs the UCRC, sits on all UCRC committees, and attends the Deans' Meetings, the Board of Chairs meetings, among his other faculty committee assignments. He participates in Admissions and Advancement events outlined in detail below. He also teaches and remains an active member of his department and profession, working on publications, acting as editor for two journals, and attending conferences. He travels often for promotion and training in his new role. He works closely with Dean Kalscheur, S.J. and Assistant Director Shlala. They meet monthly as a group to discuss policies related to the University Core Curriculum.

Elizabeth H. Shlala, Ph.D. took up the Assistant Director position in September 2018. Holding a Bachelor of Science in the Foreign Service, two MAs, and a PhD in History from Georgetown University, Catholic, Jesuit education has formed her both personally and professionally. As Assistant Director and Associate Professor of the Practice, she works as a team with Associate Dean Gareau and Program Assistant Beard in providing academic leadership on the one hand, and day-to-day management of the activities of the University Core Curriculum on the other. She participates in course development, promotion, and registration-advising related to Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses. She networks with faculty to discuss new and ongoing courses. She also co-plans the course design workshops with Stacy Grooters, Interim Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. Professor Shlala is responsible for the Core Fellows Program. She mentors and advises the Core Fellows through orientation, monthly lunches, and other activities. She chairs the Curriculum subcommittee of the UCRC to assess and review Core curriculum courses. She participates in Advancement and Admissions events such as Admitted Eagle Day, Professors and Pastries, and Advancement's Parent Leadership Call. She was responsible for organizing the hiring processes for both the Graduate Assistant and the Core Fellows this year. She teaches and publishes in History with excellent student evaluations. She sits on all UCRC committees as well as on the Morrissey College Education Policy Committee (EPC) and the University Committee for Learning Outcomes (UCLO). She is responsible for the State of the Core Report. She maintains her professional affiliations in History through publications, conferences, and memberships. She and Associate Dean Gareau work closely together on "all things Core."

Assistant Director Shlala is a historian of the Middle East and North Africa. She is a Visiting Scholar at the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at the T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University. Her work explores the nexus of modern migration and law in the Middle East. Her main research areas are two-fold: legal imperialism and colonial hybridity in the late Ottoman period and the social and economic impact of contemporary global migration. Her most recent

book is entitled, *The Late Ottoman Empire and Egypt Hybridity, Law and Gender* (SOAS/Routledge Studies on the Middle East, 2018).

Samantha Beard was hired after a national search as the Program Assistant in November 2018. She has a B.A. in Sociology and Early Childhood Education. She began at Boston College in Student Services, before transitioning to the University Core Curriculum. The Program Assistant is the logistical point person for the faculty who teach Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, and she often liaises with faculty and administrators on other Core matters. Her major responsibilities include: creating and maintaining Complex Problem and Enduring Question course listings; budgeting for Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses; working with the Service Center; scheduling classes, labs, and Reflections with Student Services; creating content for the Academic Planning Guide and the Complex Problem and Enduring Question course brochures; organizing and taking minutes at UCRC meetings; and handling general administrative procedures and tasks. See Appendix 11 for a list of major job duties of the Program Assistant. She has been instrumental in establishing and standardizing smooth procedures this year. She maintains a consistent, on-site presence for the Core, providing assistance to all who stop by.

3. The University Core Renewal (UCRC) Committee

The UCRC met seven times during AY19 (minutes included in Appendix 12). Additionally, the UCRC subcommittees (Renewal, Curriculum, Assessment, Cultural Diversity, and the Difference, Justice and the Common Good Task Force met as needed. The UCRC is important 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 University Core Curriculum and are able to spread information to the broader University community. The bulk of the work, however, is conducted in subcommittees.

a. 2018-2019 UCRC Committee Members

1. Brian Gareau, Chair
2. Elizabeth Shlala
3. Patrick Byrne / Dan McKaughan
4. Mary Crane
5. Charles Gallagher, S.J.
6. William Keane
7. Gail Kineke
8. Elida Laski
9. Zachary Matus / Rob Savage
10. John Rakestraw
11. Brian Robinette / Jeff Cooley
12. Akua Sarr
13. Colleen Simonelli
14. Ethan Sullivan
15. Celeste Wells
16. Aiden Clarke, Student Representative

Table 1. UCRC Subcommittees

Committee	Members
Assessment	Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Dan McKaughan, John Rakestraw, Celeste Wells
Cultural Diversity/DJCG	Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Zachary Matus, Rob Savage, Akua Sarr
Curriculum	Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, William Keene, Elida Laski, Brian Robinette, Jeff Cooley, Charles Gallagher, S.J.
Renewal	Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Colleen Simonelli, Mary Crane, Gail Kineke, Ethan Sullivan
DJCG Rollout Task Force	Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Patrick Byrne, Colleen Simonelli, Mary Crane, Celeste Wells, Aiden Clarke

b. Subcommittees

There are four UCRC subcommittees: Renewal, Curriculum, Cultural Diversity (expanded to encompass DJCG), and Assessment. These subcommittees meet monthly to discuss various issues and review any course proposals that fall under their discretion. They carefully review courses to make sure that they visibly align with the Core Learning Goals.

1. Assessment and Renewal

The Assessment and Renewal Subcommittees jointly evaluated student work in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses submitted in Spring 2018. The process involved asking faculty to identify one learning outcome from the course- interdisciplinarity- and submit student work designed to measure that outcome. The Assessment Subcommittee selected the Core Learning Goal, “Demonstrate the ability to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same enduring question or complex contemporary problem.” The Assessment and Core Renewal subcommittee members reviewed ungraded student work, and provided faculty

with feedback on their reviews of the work, as requested. The meeting results proved unsuccessful so Associate Dean Gareau and the committee members decided to create a common rubric that could be used to assess interdisciplinary student work.

On December 3, 2018, CTE hosted an Assessment Workshop with participation from current faculty that produced an excellent assessment rubric. The initiative was spearheaded by Professor Celeste Wells, UCRC member. All faculty who were teaching a new Complex Problem or Enduring Question course in AY19 were asked to construct an assignment that would then be reviewed by the UCRC. At the workshop, faculty participated in drafting language of what work would constitute Superior, Milestone (above average), or benchmark (average or baseline) performance by students. Please see Appendix 13 for the rubric, which will be used to assess student work in AY19.

In AY19 the Renewal Subcommittee reviewed forty-six faculty members' proposed new Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, of which there were three Complex Problem courses and twenty pairs of Enduring Question courses.

2. Curriculum

The Curriculum subcommittee is responsible for reviewing courses submitted to fulfill any of the University's Core requirements, excluding Cultural Diversity and Difference, Justice, and the Common Good. The Curriculum Subcommittee reviewed thirty-two applications for Core credit, please see Table 2 for information on these applications.

Table 2. 2018-2019 Core Course Applications

Department	Number of Applications	Applications Requested for Revision and Resubmission	Applications Approved	Core Requirement
Art, Art History, and Film	5	1	5	Art
Economics	2	1	2	Social Science
History	6	5	6	History
Music	2	0	2	Art
Connell School of Nursing	1	0	1	Social Science
Psychology	1	0	1	Natural Science
Romance Languages and Literatures	2	0	2	Literature
Slavic and Eastern Languages and Literatures	1	0	1	Literature
Theology	4	0	4	Theology
Totals	32	7	32	

3. Cultural Diversity and Difference, Justice, and the Common Good

The Cultural Diversity subcommittee has expanded to include the Difference, Justice, and the Common Good Initiative. This change was made based on the AY18 proposal suggesting ways to move forward with a significant change to the Cultural Diversity Core requirement. The proposal advised leveraging the success of the Difference, Justice, and the Common Good Initiative, and recommended that all Cultural Diversity courses be resubmitted to the UCRC for approval along with the new guidelines. See Appendix 14 for this proposal.

The Associate Dean issued a call for proposals in the Fall and Spring of AY19. The subcommittee was responsible for reviewing the proposals and approving them for final submission. The subcommittee then reviewed the final syllabi for clear and visible engagement with the Core Learning Goals. See Appendix 15 for the past and present DJCG course offerings.

Table 3. DJCG Course Count by School

Department	Number of DJCG Courses
MCAS	35
Lynch	1
Carroll/CSOM	1
CSON	1
Social Work	1

Table 4. Cultural Diversity Approval Requests For Study Abroad and Transfer Courses

	Requests	More Info Needed	Approvals	Denials	Pending
Number of Applications	147	13	96	38	13*

*Follow up requests for information from students that go unanswered represent eight of these pending requests.

Table 5. CD/DJCG Course Submissions

School	Number of Applications	Applications Requested for Revision and Resubmission	Applications Approved (Requested Full Syllabus)	Applications Rejected
CSOM	1	0	1	0
CSON	1	0	1	0
Lynch	1	0	1	0
MCAS	15	2 (Neither were resubmitted)	12	3
Social Work	1	0	1	0

4. 2019-2020 UCRC Members

1. Brian Gareau, Chair
2. Elizabeth Shlala
3. Daniel Bowles (End Term: June 2022)
4. Mary Crane
5. Charles Gallagher, S.J. (on tertianship AY20)
6. Stacy Grooters
7. William Keane (End Term: June 2020)
8. Gail Kineke (on sabbatical in Fall 2019)
9. Elida Laski (End Term: June 2022)
10. Zachary Matus (End Term: June 2020)
11. Brian Robinette
12. Akua Sar
13. Colleen Simonelli (End Term: June 2022)
14. Ethan Sullivan (End Term: June 2022)
15. Celeste Wells (End Term: June 2021)
16. Emily Walker '21, Student Representative

AY20 Subcommittees

Curriculum Subcommittee

Elizabeth Shlala, Chair
Bill Keane
Brian Robinette

Assessment Subcommittee

Celeste Welles, Chair
Brian Gareau
Elizabeth Shlala
Stacy Grooters

Diversity Subcommittee

Brian Gareau, Chair
Elizabeth Shlala
Akua Sarr
Zach Matus
Daniel Bowels

Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses Subcommittee

Brian Gareau, Chair
Elizabeth Shlala
Colleen Simonelli
Mary Crane
Ethan Sullivan

UCRC Meeting Minutes

At each UCRC meeting, the Program Assistant or Graduate Assistant keeps minutes detailing the topics discussed, questions asked, and any votes taken. Starting in November 2018, Program Assistant Samantha Beard took meeting minutes and circulated them prior to official approval. For the AY19 UCRC meeting minutes, see Appendix 12.

c. Major Initiatives

1. Difference, Justice, and the Common Good (DJCG)

The Difference, Justice, and the Common Good initiative represents a reimagining of the Cultural Diversity requirement. During this gradual transition, the Cultural Diversity subcommittee took up the responsibility of reviewing both Cultural Diversity and Difference, Justice, and the Common Good course submissions. The subcommittee developed new Learning Goals for DJCG based on the existing Cultural Diversity Learning Goals, but with a greater focus on diversity within the United States. The language of these Learning Goals is in the process of being reviewed by Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala. The final draft of the Learning Goals was passed on to the Cultural Diversity subcommittee and was approved by the UCRC (Appendix 5).

DJCG currently functions as one avenue to fulfill the Cultural Diversity requirement. However, the UCRC recommends that DJCG will eventually replace the Cultural Diversity requirement, as the University is moving away from the two-track Cultural Diversity fulfillment system.

A DJCG task force consisting of Colleen Simonelli, Mary Crane, Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala and Celeste Wells proposes gradually reducing the Cultural Diversity requirement focus by no longer accepting new courses that are developed with the old language as well as educating the University including administration, faculty, staff, and students about the changes. Other actions to spread the word be to hold Town Hall meetings in collaboration with Joy Moore, Vice President of Student Affairs, and to publish information in *The Chronicle* and *The Heights*. Students will likely hear about the DJCG initiative through word-of-mouth and on social media.

2. Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD)

PODs are small groups of students from a Complex Problem course who meet weekly under the supervision of an upperclassman who also took a Complex Problem course. The hallmark of PODs are the intimate setting and small class size that allow students to connect with the material that they are learning while bonding with their peers. Students enjoy having an upper classman function as a source of guidance and mentorship. Students remain in touch with their POD leaders even after their course has ended.

AY19 was the first year of an undergraduate class cohort who had the opportunity as freshmen to take Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses. IRPA and the Associate Dean for the Core conducted two qualitative focus group sessions of seniors who participated in the first year of the pilot phase. These students had excellent feedback about POD groups. Overall, they formed strong relationships with their peers and their POD leaders, and developed a deeper understanding of the course material through experiential learning.

PODs are difficult to schedule with the current allocation of space on campus. PODs are small groups that each require a separate meeting space. It is logistically difficult to secure enough rooms to accommodate these sessions. The space issue will only increase as more courses implement PODs.

One possible solution developed with Student Services is to hold the PODs later in the evening when the classroom congestion on campus is less severe.

3. Re-engagement with the Core Curriculum:

History Core Changes

The History department is in the process of shifting the composition of their introductory level courses. This coming year, the department will not offer large lectures with over 100 seats. Instead, the History department will offer smaller, thematic classes. The change is partially the result of the popularity of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, which feature small class sizes and are built around contemplative questions.

Theology Core Changes

The Theology department has changed their core requirement from one year long course to two semester long courses. The new requirement includes one Christian Theology class and one Sacred Texts and Traditions class. This change provides flexibility for students to take advantage of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. It also makes it easier for faculty to teach a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course. See Appendix 16.

Economics Core Changes

The Economics department has combined its introductory level microeconomics and macroeconomics courses into a single course. This consolidation opens up three credits, which students can use to explore other aspects of the Core Curriculum and the Humanities. The change will also allow Economics majors to explore other closely related disciplines including Sociology, Psychology, and History, in order to gain a wider perspective, earlier in their educational careers.

International Studies Core Changes

The International Studies department is now offering a new foundational course built on the Complex Problem and Enduring Question course model. This course, entitled “Where on Earth” counts for six credits, includes Reflection sessions, labs, and PODs, and has a VAP attached to it. These are all aspects modeled after Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, but the course is only offered to International Studies majors. The popularity and success of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses has laid the foundation for this course and more like it in the future.

Connell School of Nursing Core Changes (CSON)

Recent course submissions have been reviewed by the UCRC after CSON more fully engaged with the Core Learning Goals as a part of Core Renewal.

Carroll School of Management (CSOM)

CSOM has developed a handful of new minors that Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences students are able to take part in. Additionally, CSOM encourages their students to participate in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses as evidenced by their enrollment in upcoming Fall courses.

4. The Core Fellows Program (CFP)

The Core Fellows Program is a major component of the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. Core Fellows teach Complex Problem labs, Enduring Question courses, and departmental electives. A cohort of six Core Fellows was first hired for AY18 to replace part-time faculty and Teaching Assistants in response to student evaluations and instructor feedback. Of the first cohort, three Core Fellows received offers for external positions. The Associate Dean and Assistant Director conducted an extensive national search to replace them in AY19, which brought the Core Fellows cohort to a total of six for AY20. Prior to the program, part-time faculty were in charge of Complex Problem lab instruction; Core Fellows now have this responsibility. Students have expressed satisfaction with this change and with the overall improvement in lab instruction. Additionally, Core Fellows spread the national reputation of Boston College for intellectual rigor and the benefits of a formative Jesuit, Catholic education when they achieve academic appointments elsewhere. See Appendix 17 for information about the impressive qualifications and achievements of past and present Core Fellows.

In AY20 two additional Core Fellow positions were added, bringing the total number of Core Fellows to eight. As a result, the budget necessary to support the program is expected to increase in the coming year. Core Fellows are compensated competitively and receive a research stipend. Therefore, the program represents a substantial portion of the Core Curriculum budget. Core Fellows also participate in a number of activities that require University Core Curriculum resources to facilitate. Once hired, the Core Fellows attend a faculty orientation to build instructional skills and to familiarize the cohort with Jesuit, Catholic educational principles. In AY19 one Core Fellow was able to take maternity leave. Core Fellows find faculty mentorship in Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala. Feedback is an important part of the CFP with the Assistant Director holding monthly meetings to gain insight into the experiences of the Core Fellows and to provide advice and guidance.

The Assistant Director took the lead in the hiring process of the Core Fellows this year. For AY20 a national search was undertaken to fill two openings in Environmental Studies and the Humanities. For the Environmental Studies position, the search received forty-two applications. The hiring committee was comprised of Associate Dean Gareau, Assistant Director Shlala, Professor Tara Pisani Gareau, Professor Juliet Schor, and Professor Robin Fleming. For the Humanities position, the search received ninety applications. The hiring committee was comprised of Associate Dean Gareau, Assistant Direct Shlala, Professor Gabrielle Oliveira, and Professor Andres Samayoa

The nationwide search was conducted using a number of job search tools, including: LinkedIn, professional listservs (including the American Sociological Association), the Academic Job Board, AJCU network, networking efforts on the part of Boston College faculty, particularly the UCRC, and the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC). The hiring committee reviewed each applicant and selected a subset to interview in person or via Zoom. These interviews took place over the course of several weeks. During the search, two more Core Fellows positions opened up due to job offers received by existing Core Fellows. Candidates for these newly available positions were drawn from the existing pool of applicants. The total number of positions that were filled was four. For AY20 the final number of Core Fellows will be eight. The four new Core Fellows for AY20 are: Dr. Jessica Worl (University of Michigan), Dr. Carlos Zúñiga Nieto (Columbia University), Dr. Yasmin Zaerpoor (MIT), and Dr. Daniel Millan (UC-Irvine).

Position	Humanities	Environmental Studies
Applicants	90	42
Ultimate Hires	2	2

a. Biographies on the New Core Fellows

Jessica Worl received her Ph.D. in Resource Policy and Behavior from The University of Michigan in 2019. Her education also includes a Master of Public Policy from the University of Michigan and an A.B. in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology from Harvard University. Her research draws from the environmental humanities, science studies, African studies, and the natural and social sciences to examine the politics and perceptions of environmental health knowledge and regulation of mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining communities in East Africa. Her research interests include the spatial and temporal politics of waste, exposure, and resource management as it tracks mercury and gold into the homes, mineshafts, and processing sites of miners to ask broader questions about the possibilities for a global environmental justice movement and processes of knowledge production and application that take seriously both the lives and livelihoods of miners, who depend on mercury to produce gold for world markets.

Carlos Zúñiga Nieto has a Ph.D., M.Phil., and M.A. from the Columbia University Department of History. He also earned his B.A. in History from Sonoma State University. He is currently working on a manuscript entitled “Violent Passions: Childhood and Emotions in the Making of Modern Mexico, 1870-1910” which tells the story of the crucial role played by emotions in the meaning and process of attaining childhood and adolescence in modern Mexico, in the cities of Mexico City and Merida, located on the greater Caribbean region. His research areas include colonial and modern Latin America with a focus on the greater Caribbean region, childhood and adolescence, and the history of emotions. For the past two years, Carlos has been a postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for the History of Emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, Germany.

Yasmin Zaerpoor earned a Ph.D. in Environmental Policy and Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in June 2019. In addition, she has a M.S. in Urban Planning from Columbia and a B.S. in Animal Physiology and Neuroscience from the University of California, San Diego. Her research interests

include Transboundary Water Governance, Environmental Policy and Planning, Sustainable Urban Development (Global Context), Negotiation and Mediation. Yasmin has teaching experience as a graduate teaching assistant for Introduction to Environmental Policy and Planning and for Environmental Justice, an “inside-out” class taught at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution – Norfolk. She led an annual two-week urban planning practicum on sustainable development in Malaysia for three years; and was the Instructor of Record for a graduate-level Water Diplomacy course. She has also helped teach Negotiation and Mediation classes.

Daniel Millan has a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California, Irvine with an emphasis in Chicano/Latino Studies. His education also includes a M.A. in Sociology from the University of California, Irvine and a B.A. in Chicano Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research includes the Undocumented Student Equity Project, where he conducted focus groups and interviews with over 180 undocumented students at all nine University of California undergraduate campuses and surveyed over 500 undocumented students. Additionally, Daniel’s research also involves an exploration of how immigration laws and policies produce legal status as consequential across contexts. See Appendix 18 for the CVs of the new Core Fellows.

b. Core Fellows Program Activities and Resources

1. Orientation Workshop and Welcome - August 20, 2018

The Core Fellows Orientation and pedagogical workshop took place on August 20, 2018. The three new Core Fellows for AY19 gathered to hear from Associate Dean Gareau, Brian Regan, Dean Greg Kalscheur, S.J., Stacey Grooters and Professor Mary Crane.

2. Core Fellows’ Monthly Meetings

The Associate Dean for the Core and the Assistant Director hosted monthly lunches and talks to provide the Core Fellow cohort with an opportunity to

come together and share their experiences. These lunches served as a chance for the cohort to network, as well as an opportunity for the Associate Dean and Assistant Director to receive feedback on the Core Fellows Program. The meetings sometimes featured guest speakers with advice about the academic job market or research presentations from the Core Fellows.

3. Faculty Mentorship

Core Fellows find faculty mentorship from Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala. Additionally, faculty members, particularly department chairs, are a valuable source of both professional mentorship and teaching development. Core Fellows are embedded in departments and attend their workshops and talks. Core Fellows also have access to the Center for Teaching Excellence and the entirety of its resources.

4. Core Fellows Program in AY20

The Core Fellows Program (CFP) has evolved substantially since its inception in 2017. Developing the program has been a major task of the Associate Dean and the Assistant Director. Since assuming the role, Assistant Director Shlala has spearheaded the program's development. Going forward, the program will have more structure built into the Core Fellow job description with activities on campus outside of teaching and office hours being more regularly scheduled. A formal document that sets expectations for Core Fellows and lays out mandatory events is in the process of being drafted. The monthly lunches and coffee meetings have been a success and will continue for AY20. In the upcoming year, the Core Fellows are encouraged to take advantage of the CTE's faculty cohorts. This will be an expectation for new hires. The CFP will continue to partner with CTE for programming purposes. Finally, the Assistant Director plans to survey the Core Fellow cohort to collect feedback to assist in the planning of further programming in AY20.

5. Core Curriculum Promotion and Outreach

The Associate Dean and Assistant Director for the Core engage in a number of outreach events and activities to educate students, faculty, administrators, and alumni on Boston College's University Core Curriculum. An important initiative of the Associate Dean and Assistant Director is promoting Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses as well as ensuring that students and faculty are engaging with the Core Learning Goals in all Core courses. They do this in their various committees' work; updating the website and digital media with University Core Curriculum news and developments; participating in Admissions and Advancement activities throughout the year, such as Admitted Eagle Days and Parent Leadership Conference calls; communicating in person and via email with administrators, staff, and faculty; and attending faculty events, chair meetings, and other activities such as Intersections' *Civitas* lunches.

In addition, the Boston College Core Curriculum is notable in higher education among our peer institutions. Other universities are now looking to Boston College to improve upon their own core curricula. As a result, the Associate Dean devotes time and resources to external promotion. He has traveled to Missouri, Georgia, Virginia, and Indiana among other place this academic year promoting the Core and leadership development.

a. Student-Level Networking

The Associate Dean and Assistant Director participate in many events and promotional activities to spread the word about Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses to incoming freshman students. These classes are offered almost exclusively to freshman. Therefore, it is critical that first year students are fully informed and able to take advantage of the opportunity. Student promotional events represent a good portion of the Associate Dean and Assistant Director's time.

1. Academic Advising

The Assistant Director provides academic advisors across the schools with information on Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. See Appendix 19 for the Power Point presentation provided to advisors.

2. Admitted Eagle Day

Admitted Eagle Day is an opportunity for the Associate Dean and Assistant Director to present key information to prospective students and their families about Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, and the University Core Curriculum as a whole, and introduce them to some of our best faculty instructors. The dates AY19 Admitted Eagle Days were: January 27, 2019; April 7, 2019; and April 14, 2019. They delivered a presentation with current faculty and students at each of these events and prospective students showed great interest in the program. Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses have become an integral part of the Boston College freshman experience and a selling point for prospective students. See Appendix 20 for a copy of the presentations given.

3. Brochures

The Complex Problem and Enduring Question course brochure is sent to admitted freshman in a separate mailing before the first orientation. This brochure includes the upcoming academic year listings for both Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, including dates, class times, course descriptions, and registration information. This brochure functions as a tool for freshman to use during registration and, in the past, many students have brought the brochure with them to

Orientation. See Appendix 21 for a copy of this brochure for both the Fall and Spring semesters.

In AY19 under the direction and management of the Associate Dean for the Core, the directors of the first-year programs developed an accordion brochure entitled, “Who will you become?” to promote the suite of distinctive, interdisciplinary programs that Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences offers to first-year students in addition to Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses. These programs include: Perspectives, PULSE, Freshman Topic Seminars, and The Courage to Know.

4. Campus-Wide Collaborations

The Associate Dean for the Core has become an established, well-recognized position designed to connect the University Core Curriculum to others facets of the University.

5. Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Letter

The Dean’s Letter is a mailing that goes out to the entirety of the incoming freshman class. The letter addresses a number of topics, including the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. This year, the Dean’s Letter also included the “Who Will You Become?” initiative. Next year, we recommend that the catalogue, brochure, and letter are sent in a single mailing before Orientation to each incoming freshman for clarity of purpose, logistics, and cost-saving. Each professional school sent their own dean’s letter highlighting Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses to their incoming freshmen.

6. Orientation

Orientation is the key event at which the majority of students enroll in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. Due to the

popularity of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, the Program Assistant only opens a portion of the seats for each course during each Orientation session. This is done to maintain fairness and to allow students at each Orientation to have the opportunity to register for a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course. This is the same method employed by the other first-year programs such as Courage to Know and other department-specific courses such as First Year Writing Seminar.

b. Internal Networking

At Boston College, the Associate Dean and Assistant Director collaborate with the professional schools beyond the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences. Freshman from all professional schools are encouraged to participate in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, within and outside of their chosen field as they, “Use the Core to explore.”

1. Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Luncheon- Sept. 25, 2018

Associate Dean Gareau spoke at the Dean’s Luncheon, presented by the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, about Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses as well as the University Core Curriculum as a whole.

2. Coffee with a Professor- Oct. 29, 2018

Coffee with a Professor is an Advancement meeting that the Associate Dean and Assistant Director attended to introduce the group to new developments in the Core. They also highlighted the Core Fellows Program and the contributions that Core Fellows make to the Core.

3. Pastries with a Professor- Recurrent

Pastries with a Professor occurs periodically throughout the academic year and is an opportunity for Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences students to meet with faculty in an informal setting to discuss the Core. Both Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala attended these events this academic year.

4. Advising Meetings- Recurrent

The Assistant Director communicated with the administration and faculty of each professional school outside of Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences to talk about Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses and the registration process for these courses. Registration can be confusing for students due to the paired course model, and it is key to develop a comprehensive understanding at the administrative level, so that the administration can serve as a resource for first year students. She also met with Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences advisors to present in both semesters.

5. Board of Regents Annual Meeting- Nov. 16, 2018

Associate Dean Gareau spoke at the Annual Board of Regents Meeting. The presentation entitled, “Core Curriculum Immersion: Our Experience” was given with Professor Tara Pisani Gareau, PhD who teaches the Complex Problem course, “Global Implications of Climate Change” together. The talk outlined the composition of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, as well as how these courses prepare our students for the world. Professor Pisani Gareau also spoke about the specific Complex Problem course she teaches and how she utilizes Reflections and lab sessions to enrich student learning. Finally, past students presented testimonials.

6. Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Subcommittee Meeting-
Dec. 7, 2018

Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Direct Shlala attended the Board of Trustees Meeting of the Academic Affairs Subcommittee. Associate Dean Gareau and Dean Kalscheur, S.J. spoke to the subcommittee about the Reflection and Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD) components of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses.

7. Senior Leadership Retreat- Jan. 10, 2019

Associate Dean Gareau attended a retreat of senior leadership, and he discussed revitalizing the University Core Curriculum and the role of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses.

8. Parents' Leadership Council (PLC) Advancement Conference
Call- Jan. 15, 2019

Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala participated in a conference call with the PLC to discuss changes in the University Core Curriculum and the Core Fellows Program.

9. Center for International Higher Education (CIHE)- March 13,
2019

The CIHE hosted a luncheon at the CTE with Assistant Director Shlala to discuss with invited faculty from Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses "Internationalize the Core." Betty Leask led the discussion about existing courses that are already doing this and about the Core Learning Goals, specifically Goal #8: *Be prepared and disposed to use their talents and education as engaged global citizen and responsible leaders in service of the common good.*

10. Board of Regents Formation Committee Meeting- March 27, 2019

Associate Dean Gareau attended the Board of Regents Formation Committee Meeting to give a presentation entitled, “Formative Experiences in the Core Curriculum” outlining Reflection and formation in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. In this talk, Associate Dean Gareau detailed formation exercises and activities as well as students’ thoughts and experiences regarding formation. This lecture was co-presented with the Vice President of Mission John Butler, S.J. and the Dean of Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, Greg Kalscheur, S.J. See Appendix 22 for a copy of this presentation.

11. Excellence in Teaching Day- May 6, 2019

Excellence in Teaching Day took place on May 6, 2019 hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence. The Associate Dean and Assistant Director attended Excellence in Teaching Day. The conference paralleled many of the values and goals of the Core Curriculum. The schedule included two breakout sessions and a teaching innovation poster session. A specific breakout session was developed in collaboration with CTE, Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Director Shlala entitled, *Making Learning Visible to Students Crafting Assignments that Center Core Curriculum Learning Goals*. “The University Core Curriculum seeks to invite students to consider how and why the liberal arts matter, both for themselves and for the world. However, even when students are deeply engaged in their Core courses, they don’t always recognize those bigger questions at work. In this session with plenary speaker Claire Major, faculty will explore ways to design assignments that make learning visible not only to the instructor but also to the students, with a particular emphasis on the Core Curriculum Learning Goals. While this session is particularly relevant to faculty

teaching Core courses, it could also be helpful to anyone interested in making learning more visible to their students.” Major who is a Professor of Higher Education at the University of Alabama led the keynote discussion.

c. External Networking

Associate Dean Gareau has been invited to speak on the Boston College University Core Curriculum at a number of universities. The Associate Dean also participates in teleconferences and meetings to have in-depth discussions on these developments.

1. Fairfield University “Rendering the Boston College Core Curriculum: Reflections from the Front Lines”

On November 26, 2018, Associate Dean Gareau gave the presentation entitled, “Renewing the Boston College Core Curriculum: Reflections from the Front Lines” at the *Magis* Core Kickoff at Fairfield University. The presentation outlined the Boston College University Core Curriculum, and explained the structure and makeup of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. Dean Gareau discussed the challenges of implementing Core Renewal at Boston College. He also highlighted student reactions and experiences.

2. St. Louis University “The Core Curriculum at Boston College: Changes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned”

On February 1, 2019, Associate Dean Gareau gave the presentation entitled, “The Core Curriculum at Boston College: Changes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned” at St. Louis University. The presentation explained the structure of the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. Dean Gareau also demonstrated how the Boston College University Core Curriculum prepares students

for the world, as well as the challenges and the areas to improve and grow, going forward.

3. Atlantic Coast Conference/Academic Leadership Network

Associate Dean Gareau has also visited Georgia Tech, Virginia Tech, and Notre Dame. These conferences provide an opportunity for networking and developing management and leadership skills.

4. Additional Phone Calls/Meetings of Note

In addition to talks and presentations, Associate Dean Gareau also conducts periodic phone calls with administrators from universities around the globe to discuss the revitalization of the Boston College University Core Curriculum. He had a series of three phone calls with President James Burns of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, and the provost, on the process of revitalizing the Boston College University Core Curriculum. He had series of phone calls with a member of the Justice, Equity, and Inclusion committee of the College of William and Mary. In conjunction with the Institute for Liberal Arts (ILA), discussions with a professor in the Higher School of Economics in St. Petersburg about the University Core Curriculum on March 28, 2019.

III. Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

1. 2018-2019 Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses have been a part of the Boston College Core Curriculum for five years. The Associate Dean for the Core managed these course offerings as well as the preparation for AY20 courses. See Appendix 23 for course listings. As in years past, management of existing courses includes promotion, registration, procurements of course-related items and services, reimbursements, assessment, and responding to faculty and student requests. Planning for next year's courses requires facilitation of faculty pairs, review of faculty applications, coordination with department chairs, revising titles and descriptions, course creation, organizing pedagogical workshops, hiring Core Fellows, marketing and promotion, co-curricular logistical planning, registration, and assessment. The people, policies, and procedures are now in place for the smooth implementation of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses in AY20 and beyond.

a. Enrollment Statistics

Enrollments rose for the 2018-2019 year to 85% of full capacity. This is a growth of 2% from the previous year. This statistic is encouraging and the Associate Dean and Assistant Director are focused on maintaining current enrollment levels in the coming years.

Table 6: Enrollments for Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses through AY20

Year	Students Enrolled in Complex Problem Courses	Students Enrolled in Enduring Question Courses	Total Students Enrolled in CP/EQ courses	Total CP/EQ Seats Available	Percentage of CP/EQ Seats Filled
AY16	226 students	100 students	326 students	341 seats	326 students / 341 seats = 95%
AY17	351 students	184 students	535 students	743 seats	535 students / 743 seats = 72%
AY18	490 students	361 students	851 students	1,022 seats	851 students / 1,022 seats = 83%
AY19	618 students	248 students	866 students	1,024 seats	866 students / 1,024 seats = 85%
AY20	256 students	201 students	460 students	971 seats	47% as of Orientation 6

b. Complex Problem and Enduring Question 2-Year Life Cycle:

1. Matchmaking in May
2. Submitting applications in October
3. Core Renewal Faculty Orientation Meeting in December
4. Scheduling and marketing courses in February
5. Pedagogical Workshops in March
6. Finalize syllabi and pay stipends in May (12 months after matchmaking)
7. Promotion and Registration for Fall CR courses during Summer months (7 sessions)
8. Courses are Live in Fall
9. Assessment of Fall Courses Initiated in December
10. Promotion of Spring Courses in the Fall
11. Courses are Live in Spring
12. Assessment of Spring Courses Initiated in May/June
13. Faculty Development (Course Design Workshops)

c. Faculty Pair Matchmaking

Developing faculty pairs has been a difficult task in the past but seems less challenging now that there is a large group of repeat faculty teaching Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. Associate Dean Gareau, Assistant Director Shlala, and Professor Mary Crane sent out a call to past faculty and then networked with various faculty to create pairs. The faculty stipend for first-time course creation is indispensable for attracting faculty to teach Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. However, once they participate, faculty come to appreciate the innovative learning opportunity and oftentimes continue teaching these courses.

d. Faculty Development and Course Design Workshops

Course Design workshops build a new cohort of the Complex Problem and Enduring Question faculty and give them the opportunity to work together to create new courses and syllabi. The Assistant Director planned the workshops with Stacy Grooters and the support of CTE. The Associate Dean and the Assistant Director of the Core attended all meetings of these workshops. The Assistant Director attended as a participant for the development her own Enduring Question course paired with Professor Natana DeLong-Bas in Theology for Fall 2019. Core Fellows presented at relevant sessions and Professor Mary Crane gave a presentation on Reflection.

Table 7. Course Design Workshop Schedule

AY20 EQ & CP Course Design Workshops	CP Faculty: Samayoa, Oliveira, Schor & Fleming	EQ Faculty: Yen, Straubing, McGill, Sanzenbacher, Smith, Kim, DeLong-Bas & Shlala
Workshop 1 (January) Engagement, Mission & Veteran Faculty	When: Friday January 25 Where: Gasson 105 Who: Greg, Brian, Elizabeth, & Samantha	Same
Workshop 2 (March) Team Teaching, Threshold Concepts & Learning Goals	When: Thursday March 14 Where: CTE Who: Stacy, Brian, & Elizabeth	Same
Workshop 3 (March) Labs, PODS & Reflection	When: Tuesday March 26 Where: CTE Who: Stacy, Brian, Elizabeth, & Mary	When: Thursday March 28 Where: CTE Who: Stacy, Brian, Elizabeth, & Mary
Workshop 4 (April) Assessment & Assignment Design	When: Tuesday April 30 Where: CTE Who: Stacy, Brian, & Elizabeth	Same

After the Course Design Workshops, we distributed a survey to all faculty who participated in the workshops for the year. The surveys helps prepare the Assistant Director and the CTE for future workshops, and it shows how faculty perceive the effectiveness of the process. It is useful to compare results from faculty who are about to teach a course in the upcoming year with those who taught one the year before. This year, the survey was edited and expanded to gain further insight into the efficacy of the workshops. The questions for the previous three surveys can be found in Table 8.

Table 8. Percentage of Responses stating “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to Questions About their Experiences with the Course Design Workshops

	AY18	AY19
<i>I believe the workshops were effective in preparing me to teach my CR course</i>	77%	N/A
<i>My attendance at these workshops was time well spent</i>		100%
<i>The Facilitators effectively organized and led the sessions</i>		98%
<i>After attending these workshops, I feel more prepared to teach my Core Renewal class next year</i>		100%
<i>After attending, I left thinking about teaching in at least one new way</i>		76%

Table 9. Average Score of Responses stating “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to Questions About their Experiences with the Course Design Workshops

	Average Score (out of 5)
<i>I believe that the Course Design Workshops were useful in developing my course syllabus in conjunction with my partner.</i>	4.25
<i>The facilitators effectively organized and led the sessions.</i>	4.25
<i>Through my participation in these workshops, I feel more prepared to teach my Complex Problem or Enduring Question courses next year.</i>	4.25
<i>After participating, my approach to teaching this class has changed in at least one new way.</i>	3.5
<i>After participating, I have a better understanding of how to better utilize Reflection sessions.</i>	4.125
<i>After participating, I have a wider understanding of how I will use assessment in this class.</i>	4.375

Feedback suggests that the workshops have an immediate impact on the faculty. Faculty noted that getting together in the same room was very useful, as was learning more about BC student life, and planning for course objectives and common assignments, which were among the most helpful aspects. Faculty also reported that planning for syllabi development was important, and that engaging in discussions with colleagues and being given time to work together was helpful. Least helpful aspects were uncommon in the survey, yet there is a general feeling that abstract discussions of teaching are less helpful than hands-on time with specific courses. Faculty listed more items as being “helpful” ranging from basic topics (clarifying the Core Learning Goals were helpful) to complex ones (discussing their experiences with learning outcomes with veteran faculty). Topics the faculty identified as “least helpful” point to the desire to have more hands-on

experiences with teaching partners, wishing for more targeted (personal) feedback on course design, and more CTE sessions.

2. Direct Assessment of Core Learning Goals

The Associate Dean made assessment a priority for AY19 and the Associate Dean and Assistant Director plan to continue with this trend in the coming years. AY19 was the second year that the Associate Dean for the Core assembled a subcommittee to review student work. Direct assessment is a new process at Boston College. The point of direct assessment is not to evaluate faculty teaching, but instead to assess the degree to which students learned what they were asked to learn. Examining student work is intended to provide a much richer and more rigorous understanding of student learning than is possible through student evaluations. The goal of this exercise is to evaluate evidence. The committee's goal is to learn what is working well in these classes (finding models to replicate) as well as areas for improvement.

The committee was given samples of student work as well as a statement by the faculty member that included: (1) A short description of the final assignment designed for assessment (e.g., essay, video, presentation, etc., and (2) a brief paragraph identifying the learning goal(s) connected to the final assignment and explaining how the assignment is intended to track student progress on the learning goal. Faculty were asked to explain to the subcommittee the rationale behind the assignment and how it should be evaluated. The subcommittee members reviewed the work individually and then reported to the subcommittee their findings, which enabled the group to have brief conversations on each class, clarifying what worked well or less well in the learning outcomes/student work relationship. Through the process, the committee determined that they needed to develop a common rubric and language for interdisciplinary assessment.

3. Indirect Assessment of Core Learning Goals

Course evaluations lend insight into how courses are meeting the Core Learning Goals. A good example is how German Studies recently changed their Core course offering, a Literature Core, in order to offer it as part of an Enduring Question pairing. The EQ pair is Constructing

Deviance: Madmen, Hysterics, Criminals (GERM1701), and Constructing Deviance: Power, Control, Resistance (SOCY1701). After the new Literature Core course was launched in Spring 2016 and Fall 2017 (GERM2221/FREN3315/ENGL2210), the instructor redesigned the course with Prof. Stephen Pfohl of the Sociology Department in order to offer an Enduring Questions seminar as part of Core Renewal. That new course, GERM1701 was offered in Spring 19; data are still under evaluation by the department and with the Core. This change is a result of an evaluation of German Studies' contribution to the Core, and Core Renewal in general, in an interesting and tangible way. Core Learning Goals have been articulated more concretely and precisely through Core Renewal so that departments, instructors, and students can engage with them more clearly and effectively.

4. E1A Forms

Dean Kalscheur, S.J. called for E1A forms to be submitted by each Morrissey Department Chair at the end of the spring semester. The E1A form is distributed by the Associate Dean and addresses assessment in each department. Please see Appendix 24 for a blank version of the form. Each department filled out this form and submitted it back to the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean and the Assistant Director reviewed the forms and submitted recommendations to Dean Kalscheur, S.J. based on a selected sample. The sample for AY19 included Economics, Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics. Once every three years, Dean Kalscheur, S.J. will meet with selected department to discuss the E1A.

5. Faculty Compensation

In AY19 Associate Dean Gareau adjusted the faculty stipend in order to: 1) attract more faculty to the Complex Problem courses: \$12,500, and 2) obtain a better representation of the workload involved in teaching Complex Problem versus Enduring Question courses: \$7,500 stipend for EQs. Evaluations from students and faculty make clear the Complex Problem courses are worth the financial cost, and that attracting further faculty to this option is desirable. Additionally, the Core Fellow Program and other improvements will enhance the experience of faculty and students of these courses.

For AY20 completed syllabi were due May 15, 2019 and stipends were paid in June for all syllabi completed by the due date. Repeat faculty teaching the same course with the same partner neither attend workshops nor receive the stipend. Faculty with new partners do attend the workshops in order to coordinate their new pairing and gain new insights from the Course Design Workshop. Several faculty have proposed new courses with new partners and have thus far been allowed to attend workshops and some receive a reduced stipend a second time. Stipends do not need to be repeated for faculty teaching the same course, however, we recommend that for new courses and new pairings, faculty should receive a stipend to encourage and compensate the development of new and exciting Core courses.

6. Faculty and Department Representation

In AY19 Complex Problem and Enduring Question faculty represented a wide range of academic departments across campus. See Figure 1. Faculty from 31 departments across five schools participated in teaching Complex Problem or Enduring Question courses. Eleven departments had four or more faculty teaching a Complex Problem or Enduring Question course, with the History and English departments both having 25 faculty members participating during AY19, the most of any department. These encouraging statistics demonstrate the campus-wide support and involvement in Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. We expect the range of departments to increase in the coming years.

Figure 1: Department Representation: Departments with four or more faculty teaching a Complex Problem or Enduring Question Course Historically

Top Departments: Total Faculty/Department

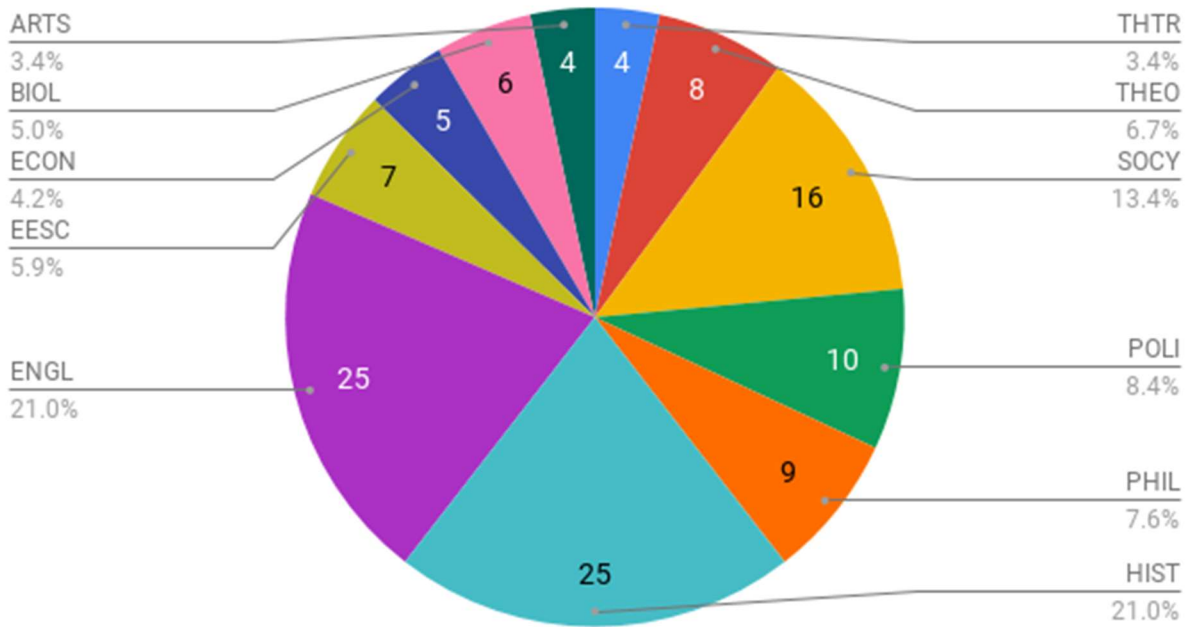


Table 10. Faculty Participation in Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

AY19		Faculty
Number of course pairs developed:	93 course pairs	
Number of times those pairs offered:	186 sections total	
Number of faculty teaching courses:	83 faculty taught 1 course 1x each	83
	22 faculty taught 1 course 2x each	22
	9 faculty taught 1 course 3x each	9
	0 faculty taught 1 course 4x each	0
	4 faculty taught 1 course 1x and 1 course 1x	4
	1 faculty taught 1 course 1x and 1 course 2x	1
	1 faculty taught 2 course 2x and 1 course 1x	1
	1 faculty taught 1 course 3x and 1 course 1x	1
	3 faculty taught 2 courses 1x and 1 course 2x	3
Total Faculty		124
AY20		
Number of course pairs developed:	121 course pairs	
Number of times those pairs offered:	242 sections total	
Number of faculty teaching courses:	60 faculty taught 1 course 1x each	60
	46 faculty taught 1 course 2x each	46
	12 faculty taught 1 course 3x each	12
	2 faculty taught 1 course 4x each	2
	1 faculty taught 1 course 1x and 1 course 1x	1
	2 faculty taught 1 course 4x and 1 course 2x	2
	5 faculty taught 1 course 1x and 1 course 2x	5
	1 faculty taught 2 course 2x and 1 course 1x	1
	2 faculty taught 1 course 3x and 1 course 1x	2
	1 faculty taught 2 courses 1x and 1 course 2x	1
Total Faculty		132

7. Student Feedback

In the Spring of AY19, two Senior Focus Groups were held to collect feedback from graduating seniors about their experience with Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. The students who participated in the focus groups took part in the first year that Core Pilot courses were offered at Boston College. The purpose of these sessions was to gather qualitative data about the impact of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses from seniors who completed a Core Renewal pilot course in their first year at Boston College. This was a valuable opportunity to gain insight into student experiences with Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, and the impact that these courses has on their time at Boston College, their career path, and their formation as individuals. At the focus group sessions, the students were provided lunch and asked a series of questions pertaining to their experience. The sessions were framed as a conversational experience where the participants were encouraged to converse about their experience in an open and honest manner. Any topics that students wanted to bring up on their own were encouraged. Student responses were recorded and synthesized into a separate report for each session. See Appendix 25 for the Senior Focus Group reports from each session.

8. Formative Education

A hallmark of a Boston College education is the focus on the Jesuit, Catholic pedagogical approach to educating the whole person. *The Vision Animating the Boston College University Core Curriculum* states that, “Individual Core courses work together to contribute to the Core’s shared goals of opening the mind and heart, encouraging character formation, deepening human sympathy, inspiring creativity, enriching understanding of human diversity, and stimulating clear thought and persuasive expression.” The design of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses includes formative activities such as Reflection Sessions and Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD) groups.

a. Reflection Sessions

Reflection Sessions occur weekly for Complex Problem courses and four times per semester for Enduring Question courses. In the past, there has been unequal engagement with Reflection Sessions. In AY19 and AY20, we will continue to work with faculty to improve Reflection Sessions to enrich student experiences and to align with the Jesuit educational philosophy. The following are examples from past Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses:

Jesuit Examen: Students become aware of God's presence. Review the day with gratitude. Pay attention to their emotions. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it. Look toward tomorrow.

Meditation Workshops: Students learn meditation techniques and practice using them in daily life. Students practice mindfulness - becoming "fully aware."

Turning the Tables on Fear and Silence: Students read part of Martin Laird's *Into the Silent Land*. They spend 3-10 minutes in silence. They identify a fear, then practice meditation by naming and seeing through that fear. Students then journal about the experience.

E-Media Fast: Students abstain from use of all e-media for 24 hours, including all Internet, cell phones, TV, social media, radio. Students then journal and reflect on their experience.

b. Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (POD)

PODs are small groups of students from a Complex Problem course who meet weekly under the supervision of an upperclassman who also took a Complex Problem course. The hallmark of PODs are the intimate setting and small class size that allow students to connect with the material that they are learning while bonding with their peers. Students enjoy having an older student function as a source of guidance and mentorship. Students remain in touch with their POD leaders even after their course has ended.

c. Course-specific Examples of Formative Exercises and Activities

Samples of formation exercises or activities from existing Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses include:

Roots and Routes Course Activity: Creative writing exercise where students were given timeworn objects with instructions for writing three about them. The pieces focused on the experience of leaving one's home and moving far away.

Revolutionary Media Course Activity: bookmaking activity, where a conservator from Burns Library led students in a book-binding exercise. Students were treated as sixteenth-century apprentices and learned about the experiences of people their age in apprenticeships in an earlier period.

Living on the Water Course Activity: field trip to Cape Cod, where students traveled to Cape Cod to compare developed and undeveloped coastlines. This trip allowed students to observe signs of sea level rise in different environments and was also a bonding experience.

IV. Support and Praise for the University Core Curriculum at Boston College

1. The Cahill Family has been instrumental in providing funding for the University Core Curriculum through their generous donation to Boston College specifically for the University Core Curriculum.
2. Complex Problem course guest speaker, Paul Henry Nadeau from the University of Stavanger:

“My impression is that the Powering America course concept of combining Earth Sciences and History is extremely valuable. The lectures clearly demonstrate that a more complete understand of history and geopolitics requires an understanding of the main energy resources powering nations. The same could also be said for economics, human development and environmental studies. We are now looking into similar course synergies more closely here at UiS (University of Stavanger).”

3. Praise from faculty who participated in Course Design Workshops:

“The joint teaching itself provided an opportunity to measure one’s own skills against, and learn from, another’s teaching practices is probably not surprising, but the lessons began earlier. Skeptical though I was about fairly extensive initial training, I learned, I now see, a lot there. Truth is, it’s not difficult after a good few years teaching to become somewhat pleased with one’s own well-honed approach. To be encouraged to (obliged to) rethink it all was for me fully of valuable lessons. What I am saying is that the problems encountered and the solutions found in preparing for this course altered the shape of my teaching in all others. Core Renewal training has encouraged me to look afresh at, and redesign, my entire teaching practice. I’m very thankful for that.”

4. Praise from students who participated in a Core course in AY19:

“I mentioned to one of my friends how much I enjoyed my Philosophy of the Person classes this year. I took Philosophy with Professor James Oldfield and really felt he was one of my best core professors thus far at BC.”

“Courses that combine disciplines to tackle real-world issues have convinced me I made the right choice in attending Boston College, and because of the education I received in this course, I will be taking on New Scientific Visions, another 6-credit, Philosophy-Science course next semester.”

Senior focus group of the first graduating class of the CP and EQ Courses:

“It should be emphasized to freshmen that ‘liberal arts’ isn’t just this buzzword where you have to take all these Cores... it can be a very positive experience and not just something that you have to fill.”

“I think that reflection is something we talk a lot about at BC and I think that as a freshman, this class is where I learned what reflection means in terms of a Jesuit education.”

5. From AY19 student evaluations from Complex Problems and Enduring Questions:

“The course did an outstanding job of helping students see the bigger picture of our role on Earth and why it’s imperative that humanity engages in discussions similar to those of this course”

- *Building a Habitable Planet*

“I felt so challenged to push my thinking and learn not only and team not only about neuroscience but challenge myself to apply what I learned to greater concepts in life. The interdisciplinary aspect of this course really stretched my understanding of the human brain and the complexity that goes into human development.”

- *Modern Science and Ancient Faith: Neuroscientific Perspectives*