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Appendix A: First Year Seminar Sample Topics and Readings

What follows here are some examples of possible seminar themes and texts. We stress that these are examples only and are not exhaustive or prescriptive. Any texts chosen would be supplemented by individual faculty members to suit their own interests and areas of expertise. Texts could be assigned *in toto* or by selected passages. Note that only 2-3 core texts would be chosen and the individual instructors would supplement with texts of their choice.

What's distinctive about living in the modern world and in the U.S.?

2010 U.S. Census Data
UN World Population Division Data sets (demographic projections, census, fertility rates, etc.)
UN Greenhouse Gas Inventory
Ellison, *Invisible Man*
Melville, *Moby Dick*
Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*

Living in the Age of Technology

Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*
Turkl, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*
Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology"
Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance.*
Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*
Sclove, *Democracy and Technology*

How natural are "natural" disasters?

Eggers, *Zeitoun*
Katz, *The Big Truck that Went By: How the World Came to Save Haiti and Leave Behind a Disaster*
Birmingham, *Strong in the Rain: Surviving Japan's Earthquake*
Alexander, *Confronting Catastrophe: New Perspectives on Natural Disasters*
U.N. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

What Makes for a Meaningful Life?

Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamozov*
Kurosawa, *Ikuru [To Live]*
Aurelius, *Meditations*
Gazzaniga, *The Ethical Brain: The Science of our Moral Dilemmas*
Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*
Sinnott-Armstrong (ed.) *Moral Psychology: The Cognitive Science of Morality: Intuition and Diversity*

Buber, *I and Thou*

How do we know?

Augustine, *Confessions*

Darwin, *On the Origin of the Species*, *The Voyage of the Beagle*

Descartes, *Discourse on Method*

Leonardo da Vinci's Notebooks

The Book of Documents

Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

Thriving within Limits Locally and Globally

Global Warming: The Complete Briefing, John Houghton (2009)

A Hudson River School painting which touches on the impact of industrialization on the environment

A Burroughs, Emerson, or Thoreau text

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment

SUNY New Paltz Sustainability Plan

Common "field trip" to a local site

Appendix B: Liberal Education Faculty Development Seminar

Objectives (*Faculty Learning Outcomes*):

- Faculty will gain an understanding of the goals and ideals of liberal education from readings, discussions, and presentations by experts
- Faculty will begin constructing a tool-chest of in-class exercises and graded assignments that reflect liberal education principles
- Faculty will revise at least one syllabus from an existing course so it qualifies for Liberal Education certification (either as a Communication-Enhanced or Stem-Enhanced course)

Day 1: What is Liberal Education? Liberal Education and You!

- Readings from AAC&U and other sources

Day 2: What are Active Student Learning & Creative Pedagogies?

- Readings on critical pedagogy and active student learning
- *In-class Group Activity*: Devise an exercise or classroom strategy that reflects active student learning for three different lessons

Day 3: What are Active Student Learning & Creative Pedagogies?

- Readings on critical pedagogy and active student learning continued
- Discuss exercises and classroom strategies

Day 4: Critical Thinking

- Readings on critical thinking: what is it, how do we teach it, how do we assess it
- *In-class Group Activity*: Devise one in-class exercise and one graded assignment that helps students develop critical thinking

Day 5: Written & Oral Communication

- Readings on oral and written communication: what is it, how do we teach it, how do we assess it
- *In-class Group Activity*: Devise one in-class exercise and one graded assignment each for oral and written communication

Day 6: Written & Oral Communication

- Readings on oral and written communication: what is it, how do we teach it, how do we assess it
- *In-class Group Activity*: Devise one in-class exercise and one graded assignment each for oral and written communication

Day 7: Personal and Social Responsibility & Civic Engagement

- Readings on personal and social responsibility (From AAC&U): Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global; Intercultural knowledge and competence; Ethical reasoning and action; Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- *In-class Group Activity*: Devise one in-class exercise and one graded assignment that addresses *one of these or some other aspect* of personal and social responsibility

Day 8: Syllabi Construction

- Work collaboratively in small groups to begin revising an existing syllabus to become LEAP certified
- *Take-Home Assignment*: Complete syllabus

Day 9: Faculty share and discuss their new Liberal Education courses

Day 10: Faculty share and discuss their new Liberal Education courses

Appendix C: Cost Projections

New component	Effect	Comments
Less required GE courses	Less demand for GE	More faculty available to teach FYS
FYS - staffing	55 faculty per year needed	Although this will be somewhat tempered by the above effect and some faculty may already have the freedom to teach a FYS section without affecting the quality of departmental course offerings, we expect that in certain cases faculty will only be able to participate in the FYS if their department receives extra teaching help.
FYS - oversight	Need a faculty coordinator	1 course release per semester + stipend
FYS – co-curricular components	Funding to bring speakers to campus	In some cases, this cost can be offset by dovetailing with currently offered lecture series at New Paltz.
FYS development funding	Some development funding may provide an incentive for faculty participation in FYS	This could follow a model like the development of online courses.
Language requirement	Still waiting on Institutional Research data	
Math requirement	One new tenure-track line; 2-3 more adjuncts per year	
2-week liberal education faculty development seminar	Faculty compensation required to get sufficient faculty participation	20 faculty * \$2000 = \$40K per year

Appendix D: Comparison of Proposed Liberal Education Competencies with GE-III Competencies

Board of Trustees Requirements:

1. [Critical Thinking](#)

Currently: General Education (GE) courses that were proposed to have the Systemic Inquiry (SI) competency.

Proposed: Critical thinking learning outcomes will be addressed in the First Year Seminar.

2. [Information Management](#)

Currently: Developed as Information Literacy at New Paltz, relatively few General Education courses include this competency, most notably our composition courses (ENG160, 280, 205, and 206).

Proposed: Information Management will continue as part of the required composition course(s)

SUNY New Paltz Competency Requirements:

Currently: Every course approved in GEIII had to have at least one competency, all under the umbrella designated “Critical Thinking”:
Systematic Inquiry
Information Literacy
Ethical Reflection
Effective Expression—written, oral, aesthetic

Students are not required to take a course in every competency, nor have we kept track of them in their progress reports.

Separate from GE, we also have the graduation requirement of one writing intensive (WI) course.

Proposed: Delete all competencies from GE courses and address only the required Board of Trustees competencies (Critical Thinking and Information Management in First Year Seminar and Composition respectively)

Delete the current Writing Intensive requirement. Adapt current and new courses as *Communication-Enhanced* (both oral and written skills) across majors. They will be offered at the 200, 300 and 400 level and build on the basic skills addressed in the First Year Seminar and Composition (Basic Communication Board of

Trustees learning outcomes). Students must take two, not including the capstone experience.

The *Capstone Experience* also will address writing and speaking at an advanced level.

Every competency that is required will be tracked in Degree Works as graduation requirements.

The only competencies that will be required are Critical Thinking, Information Management and Communication (oral and written). Only the latter will be required at both the beginning as well as intermediate and advanced levels, to be achieved primarily through majors as Communication Enhanced courses.

It will be up to individual departments to decide how and if they address Ethical Reflection as part of their majors, and if they want to require Critical Thinking and Information Management at intermediate and advanced levels.

Student Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking

Board of Trustees (beginning level):

Students will identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they appear in their own and others' work.

Students will develop well-reasoned arguments.

Information Management

Board of Trustees (beginning level):

Students will perform the basic operations of computer use.

Students will understand and use basic research techniques.

Students will locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

Communication Enhanced

Board of Trustees beginning level (Basic Communication):

Students will produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms

Students will demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts

Students will research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details

Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse

Students will evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria.

Intermediate (discipline-specific):

Students will be able to write in a variety of styles for different audiences.

Students will present information and/or make oral arguments in one or more of the following formats: small-group (team-based), full class discussion, debates, interviews, and individual presentation.

Advanced (discipline specific):

Students will write a significant paper or creative project that explores subject matter in depth and defends a position.

Students will present a research or creative work with a particular viewpoint and lead the group in discussion or critique OR present a teaching/learning module.

Addendum: Possible scaffolding of skills

Critical Thinking

Intermediate:

Students will develop a variety of rhetorical approaches to make arguments to various audiences in supporting their position and recognizing the strategies of others.

Advanced:

Students will write or present a thorough analysis of a particular topic relating it to pertinent theory and previous research in the discipline, critique it and develop/defend their own position.

Information Management

Intermediate:

Students will be able to use a variety of research tools and techniques specific to the discipline for research and creative activity.

Students will demonstrate techniques for managing (e.g., storing, curating or manipulating) information.

Students will demonstrate techniques for comparing and contrasting information sources, research objectives, and formats.

Advanced:

Students will use various tools and techniques for sophisticated research and creative works in capstone courses.

Students will demonstrate advanced techniques for managing information.

Students will demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of information sources, research objectives, and formats.

Ethical Reflection

Beginning:

Students will identify various positions of controversial issues and actions.

Intermediate: Students will analyze and evaluate various positions of controversial issues and support their own viewpoint.

Advanced: Students will be able to apply rhetorical strategies and theories to addressing controversial issues and actions.

Appendix E: Selected References

(We are currently working to compile all our cited references. This will be updated soon.)