STATE OF THE CORE REPORT
(the long) AY20

October 2020
University Core Curriculum
Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Boston College

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I. Executive Summary

This is the fifth annual State of the Core Report generated on behalf of the University Core Renewal Committee (UCRC). This report focuses on issues and recommendations raised across the University Core Curriculum over the course of Academic Year 2019-2020 (AY20), an academic year most notably impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic on our University community and across the globe. Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses are an established and successful feature of the first-year experience at Boston College, and that success continues amid the uncertainty created by the pandemic. Our efforts continue to support the entirety of the University Core Curriculum across all of the relevant departments and colleges.

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.* In the second half of AY20, as we found our Community in Dispersion, we sought more than ever to engage and reinforce the importance of these two distinctive goals with faculty, staff, and students. In countless ways, the history of Jesuit education brought us even closer to Boston College's mission in these challenging times.

Highlighted activities in the annual report include the following:

1. The continued success of the Complex Problem (CP) and Enduring Question (EQ) courses in AY20. Notably, there was one new CP combining Natural Science (Biology), Social Science (Environmental Studies Core Fellow), and cultural studies (English Core Fellow) and another new CP combining Natural Science (School of Social Work), Christian Theology (School of Theology and Ministry), and Environmental Theology (Theology Core Fellow). They both use Purposeful Ongoing Discussion (PODs) for Reflection sessions;
2. The sustained growth of programming for the Core Fellows Program (CFP) currently comprised of eight Core Fellows drawn from competitive, international searches. The Core Fellows programming is supportive, instructive, and responsive. It includes: New Fellows Orientation; ongoing professional development including Core Fellows' participation in the faculty Course Design Workshops; logistical teaching support; academic job market training; competitive research funding; mentoring by the Core deans; and, formative education in Jesuit pedagogy;

3. The renewal of the Cultural Diversity Core requirement through two new pathways: *Engaging Difference and Justice* (EDJ) and *Difference, Justice, and the Common Good in the United States* (DJCG);
4. The intentional and careful shepherding of Enduring Question and Complex Problem courses during the Covid-19 pivot and Summer 2020; and,
5. The involvement of the University Core Curriculum team in supportive, and innovative, activities across the University throughout Summer 2020 to support the mission of Boston College in AY21 and beyond.

Recommended Initiatives for AY21 include the following:

1. Continue to invite submissions for new CP and EQ courses, with special attention to CPs with links to the Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society;
2. Continue to renew and update Cultural Diversity course offerings through the two pathways of *Engaging Difference and Justice* and *Difference, Justice, and the Common Good in the United States*;
3. Establish competitive Core Fellow Research Grants to replace Individual Research Budgets;
4. Limit non-Boston College Cultural Diversity courses, and inform Office of International Programs (OIP) that new courses must fit either DJCG or EDJ learning goals;
5. Continue to explore alignment of the OIP and Woods with the MCAS Core approval process;
6. Explore the addition of a Woods representative on the University Core Renewal Committee;
7. Enhance focus on Jesuit Formation through the development of a POD syllabus template to share with faculty by the Theology Core fellow;
8. Continue to explore in AY21 and AY22 Core-themed Living and Learning Communities for first-years only;
9. Continue collaborating with Distinctive Core programs- Perspectives, PULSE, and all departmental Core courses;
10. Hold meetings in AY21 with PULSE, and the History and Sociology departments;
11. Continue to integrate the professional schools into the University Core Curriculum.

II. Administration

1. The following are Major Tasks associated with the University Core Curriculum and the UCRC in AY20:

   ~Support the integrity and high standards of all University Core Curriculum courses across the University on campus, abroad, and online;

   ~Ensure the primacy of the Core Learning Goals in the University Core Curriculum courses through engagement and assessment;

   ~Direct 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. Management of the Core Fellows Program in AY20 led to successfully hiring three new Core Fellows to replace two Core Fellows who received external job offers. Luckily, all offers were made before the Covid-19 pivot. The Assistant Dean met weekly with the Core Fellows during the spring semester and over much of the summer to think through online, on campus, and hybrid teaching in AY21;

   ~Facilitate the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses and planning for upcoming years (18-24 month lifecycle). This included significant support and outreach over the Summer of 2020 spearheaded by the Associated Dean in many forms and venues;

   ~Develop and support the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses for the years ahead, including: outreach to "veteran" CP/EQ faculty, faculty pairing, syllabi creation, logistical support, promotion, and trouble-shooting; and,

   ~Ongoing participation, collaboration, outreach, and presentations by the Core deans for various BC constituencies included, but not limited to: MCAS Board of Chairs meetings, MCAS Education Policy Committee meetings, MCAS Dean's meetings, Woods College of Advancing Studies EPC meetings, Advancement (talk given on the Core to leadership group hosted by Jim Husson, Senior Vice President for University Advancement, discussion with Executive Director of Campaign Planning), University Council on Learning Outcomes, Division of Student Affairs (annual division meeting, DiversityEdu module meetings, dinner discussion with Vice President Joy Moore and

student leaders on the Common Good),[1] Academic Advising, University Communications, Admissions (Admitted Eagle Day and Summer webinar series), Office of Health Promotion, Residential Life (Living and Learning Communities), UGBC and Tom Mogan, Associate Vice President of Student Engagement & Formation (Office of Student Affairs), Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society, First-Year Experience (Center for Student Formation), participation in AJCU visiting team sessions, Harvard Higher Education Leaders Forum, Board of Regents Formation Committee, Provost's Academic Officer's Committee, Institute for the Liberal Arts, Engineering Department Chair Search Advisory Committee, Schiller Institute Executive Director Search meetings, MCAS Parents' Weekend, Formative Education Conference Steering Committee, various department visits and discussions (including an invited presentation in the Philosophy Department.), monthly Seminar on Catholicism and the University (Jesuit Institute), Professors of the Practice Seminar (Jesuit Institute), Our Common Home Working Group (Jesuit Institute), The Intersections Table luncheons (hosted by Fr. Leahy, Fr. Jack Butler, and Burt Howell), Institutional Research & Planning, Civitas Faculty luncheons (hosted by Burt Howell and Jenny Purnell), Intersections Forefront Socials, Carroll School of Management Dean and Associate Deans (phone conversations and sessions on hopscotching and innovative hybrid teaching), the Lynch School of Education and Human Development on Core Formative Education, and the President's Office.

2. The University Core Renewal (UCRC) Committee:

The UCRC met seven times during AY20 (Appendix 1). We did not miss any meetings due to Covid-19 and, in fact, transitioned smoothly to virtual meetings and held an extraordinary meeting to discuss and approve of *Engaging Difference & Justice* learning goals language.

Additionally, the UCRC subcommittees of CP/EQ, Core Curriculum, Assessment, and Diversity met regularly. The UCRC is critical for several reasons. First, as stated in the UCRC charge, the committee reviews Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses, new and existing Core courses, and changes to curriculum. Second, members of the UCRC learn more about the

[1] The Core deans presented at the Student Affairs Division Meeting on Tuesday, October 22 in the Heights Room. The University Core Curriculum was first on the agenda after V.P. Joy Moore's introduction. The presentation included: changes to the Core over time; recent developments within the Core; how students have responded to recent initiatives; and, future plans and changes. There was a robust question and answer period.

University Core Curriculum and are able to spread information to the broader University community. The bulk of the work, however, is conducted in subcommittees and then evaluated by the full committee.

2019-2020 UCRC Committee Members

1. Brian Gareau, Chair
2. Elizabeth Shlala
3. Daniel Bowles (End Term: June 2022)
4. Mary Crane
5. Gustavo Morello, S.J. for Charles Gallagher, S.J. (on tertianship AY20)
6. Stacy Grooters
7. William Keane (End Term: June 2020)
8. Sarah McMenamin for 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

Subcommittees

There are four UCRC subcommittees: Assessment, Diversity, Curriculum, and Renewal. These subcommittees meet regularly to carefully review courses and requirements to make sure that University’s Core Curriculum aligns with the Core Learning Goals and the spirit of Core Renewal.

Table 1. UCRC Subcommittees

Committee	Members
Assessment	Celeste Wells (chair), Brian Gareau, Elizabeth Shlala, Stacy Grooters
Diversity	Brian Gareau (chair), Elizabeth Shlala, Zachary Matus, Daniel Bowles, Akua Sarr
Curriculum	Elizabeth Shlala (chair), Brian Gareau, Elida Laski, Brian Robinette
Renewal	Brian Gareau (chair), Mary Crane, Elizabeth Shlala, Colleen Simonelli, Gail Kineke, Ethan Sullivan

Assessment

As chair of the Assessment subcommittee, Celeste Wells, Ph.D., Associate Professor of the Practice in Communications, has done an exemplary job of creating a process and procedure to streamline the assessment of student work in CP and EQ courses. In AY20 the committee was impressed by the quality of student work as well as the questions that faculty are encouraging students to think through and address in their courses. It is very much in the spirit of the Jesuit tradition of education.

The learning goal that the committee assessed in Fall 2019 focused on whether student submissions *demonstrated the ability to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same enduring question or complex problem.* 85.5% of submissions demonstrated this ability. The result is a strong statement about the work faculty are doing in the Core to connect disciplines meaningfully at Boston College (Appendix 2).

It is the committee's goal to continue to improve the assessment process as well as provide faculty clear information about the established Core learning goals and ideas about how to engage with those goals in their course curriculum. To that end, Professor Celeste Wells was invited to participate in the Course Design Workshops for new CP and EQ courses. She created an instructional video and presented a session with the Core deans on Assessment to the new faculty. All materials were added to the new

Course Design Workshop Assessment module that exists on the Canvas platform. For more information see Direct Assessment below.

Diversity

The renewal of the Cultural Diversity (CD) Core requirement received focused attention throughout AY20. The Associate Dean, the Assistant Dean, Diversity subcommittee and full UCRC participated in research, analysis, discussion, and debate on the best ways to move forward. We produced three reports on CD in AY20. Less than 130 courses have been taught in the last three years that satisfy Cultural Diversity, although over 300 remain in the Course Management system. The UCRC approved 39 Difference, Justice, and Common Good (DJCG) courses over a three year period, and with some promotion the UCRC thinks this initiative could become a central feature of CD Core offerings (Appendix 3). The analysis suggests that many courses that currently count for CD could be converted to DJCG with some meaningful discussion and engagement between the UCRC and the faculty. Some courses, though, will need to be reimagined if they are to fit the new learning goals (again, we propose that the course can remain CD if the faculty/department is not interested in making the transition). We believe that the new pathway of Engaging Difference and Justice (EDJ) will serve to provide a renewed focus on important aspects of Boston College's mission in the University Core Curriculum, and will serve to further renew the 1991 Cultural Diversity learning goals. The Core deans met with Dean Kalscheur, S.J., Provost Quiqley, and Professor Mary Crane in February 2020 to present a 20-page report of our findings created with the help of the Core team and Diversity subcommittee (Appendix 4).

After a successful meeting, we returned to the Diversity subcommittee and held an extraordinary session of the UCRC to approve new and finalized language that resulted in a call for EDJ through the Provost's office in Spring 2020 (Appendix 5). There were 20 submissions for the new EDJ call in the Summer of 2020.

Further efforts were made to promote the Core's engagement with issues related to diversity, belonging, and the common good. During the summer, Associate Dean Gareau met with members of the UGBC and Tom Mogan, Associate Vice President, Student Engagement & Formation, Office of Student Affairs, to discuss DJCG, EDJ, and the role of the Core in providing a foundation upon which discussions can occur in our community.

Additionally, the University President, Father Leahy, reached out directly to Associate Dean Gareau to task him with a report to discover how students are engaging with the Cultural Diversity Core requirement. The report suggests that discussions with History and Sociology in particular could help future students engage with issues of race, diversity, inclusion, and the common good in meaningful ways with renewal of certain Core courses offered through these departments (Appendix 6).

Curriculum

The Curriculum subcommittee is responsible for reviewing courses submitted to fulfill any of the University's Core requirements. We streamlined the process for doing so in AY19, which led to better archiving of decisions and clearer feedback to faculty. *In toto*, the chair and the committee almost always believes it is best to work with faculty to revise and resubmit their syllabi in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes rather than to reject or refuse the important work that faculty do to align their syllabi with the Core learning goals. Overall, the process and communication loop were successful this year. The committee reviewed 20 proposals in AY20.

Renewal

Due to the high number of quality applications, it may have been the first time in the history of Core renewal that not all courses were approved for AY21. Courses not yet ready to begin the work of the Course Design Workshops in Spring 2020 were asked to revise and resubmit for AY22 (Appendix 7).

3. Core Fellows Program

The Core Fellows Program at Boston College attracts top junior faculty talent from across the U.S. and beyond to teach in Boston College's University Core Curriculum while providing them with a program directed by Assistant Dean Shlala dedicated to their professional and personal growth. There are currently eight Core Fellows with three new hires out of a pool of 71 candidates. They are specialized in English, Theology, and Sociology with additional expertise in environmental studies and cultural studies. Each fellow has an appointment in a department, and the Associate Dean coordinates their hiring with the relevant faculty and department chairs for full integration in University life. It is the first time a Core Fellow has been hired in conjunction with Theology; it is an exciting development for the Core.

Biographies of New Core Fellows

John Brooks is a Core Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor in English. Before coming to Boston College, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry at Emory University, having received his Ph.D. in English and American Studies from Indiana University. He also holds a M.A. in American Literature from the University of South Carolina and a B.S. in English, History, and Philosophy from Central Michigan University. John's research examines the role of experimental aesthetics in denaturalizing racial discourse. In his book manuscript, *The Racial Unfamiliar: Encountering Illegibility in Contemporary African American Literature and Culture*, he argues that a cohort of twenty-first-century African American visual artists and writers have turned to abstractionism to query historically entrenched ideas about black identity and black experience, and that doing so can complicate and confuse audiences' assumptions about race.

Nora Gross is a 2020-2021 Core Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor in Sociology. She received her PhD in 2020 from the University of Pennsylvania in Sociology and Education, where she was a Harry Frank Guggenheim Dissertation Fellow. Nora's research examines educational inequality with a focus on race, gender, and emotion in secondary school contexts. She is currently working on a book manuscript from her dissertation research: an ethnographic study of the role of grief in the school lives of Black adolescent boys who lose friends to neighborhood gun violence, and the school practices and policies that shape their emotional and educational recovery. A secondary project explores the way white students in elite private high schools experience their schools' diversity and inclusion efforts. Nora is also a documentary filmmaker and recently completed her first feature-length film – about Black gay men in the South and role of performance in sharing others' stories – as well as a short film related to her research on gun violence and grief. Before her PhD, Nora was a high school teacher in Chicago and earned a Graduate Certificate in Documentary Media Studies from the New School, an M.A. in Sociology of Education from NYU, and a B.A. in Art History and African American Studies from Princeton University.

Russell Powell is the 2020-21 Core Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor in Environmental Theology and Ethics. Before earning his PhD from Princeton Theological Seminary in 2019, Russell earned his B.A. in Religious Studies from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and his M.Div from the Yale Divinity School. Russell's research is in contemporary environmental issues and their religious,

ethical, and political resonances, and particularly the religious dimension of American environmental thought. He is currently at work on a manuscript focused on John Muir, the famed nineteenth-century American conservationist and founder of the Sierra Club, and Muir's influence on conceptions of the sacred in modern American religious consciousness. Russell's research also examines the intersection of race, religion, and environment. He is currently editing a special issue of the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* that reappraises cornerstone American environmental thinkers in light of contemporary justice concerns over race, gender, and class. For the last two years Russell has worked as Visiting Assistant Professor at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and as Visiting Lecturer in the Religion Department of Amherst College.

Core Fellows' Orientation

In order to welcome the new Core Fellows to Boston College, the Assistant Dean organized and facilitated an Orientation for them with Associate Dean Gareau on July 17, 2020 via Zoom (Appendix 8). Speakers from around the University included: MCAS Dean Greg Kalscheur, S.J.; Samantha Beard, Program Assistant for the Core; Brittany Lehman, Ph.D., Senior Liaison Librarian for History; Cecilie Reid Joyner, Ph.D. Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center; and Andrés Castro Samayoa, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Higher Education. The Assistant Dean created modules on the Course Design Workshop Canvas site specifically geared for the new fellows to acclimate to a Catholic, Jesuit teaching environment, learn more about these innovative courses, and access the logistical support they need while teaching (Appendix 9). Program Assistant Samantha Beard arranged for their computers, offices, mailboxes, and other necessities during a time of challenging transitions.

In AY20 the Core Deans decided to track the placement of all fellows during the history Core renewal. The findings are reflected in the chart below.

Post-Boston College Placements of Core Fellows

Name	Department	Academic Years as Fellow	Employment Post BC Fellowship
Amanda Demmer	History	AY18	Assistant Professor (tenure track), Virginia Tech, 2018-Present
Lauren Diamond-Brown	Sociology	AY18	Assistant Professor (tenure track), Sociology, State University of New York Potsdam, 2018-Present
Lucy McAllister	Earth and Environmental Sciences	AY18	Visiting Assistant Professor and Lewis Institute Fellow, Babson College, 2018-Present
Matthew Berry	Political Science	AY18-19	Unknown
Jenna Tonn	History	AY18-21	Current
Jesse Tumblin	History	AY18-20	Unknown
William Attwood-Charles	Sociology	AY18-20	Assistant Professor (tenure track) Miami University (Ohio)
Evan Hepler-Smith	History	AY19	Assistant Professor (tenure track), Duke University, 2019-Present
Jonathan Krones	Environmental Studies	AY18	Current
Jessica Worl	Earth and Environmental Sciences	2019	Assistant Professor (tenure track) Davidson College
Daniel Millan	Sociology	2019, 2020	Current
Carlos Zúñiga Nieto	History	2019, 2020	Current
Yasmin Zaerpoor	Environmental Studies	2019, 2020	Current

4. Lessons from the Covid-19 pivot in Spring 2020

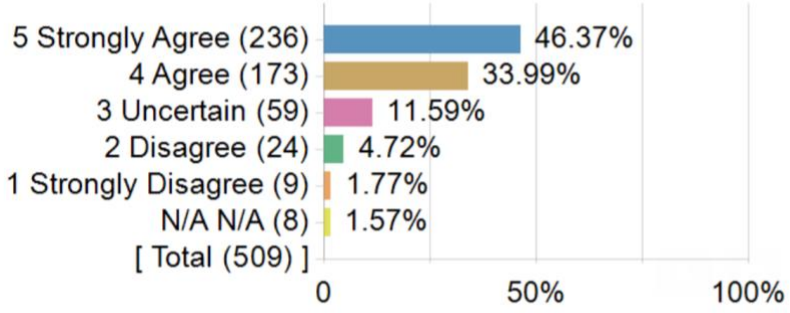
Course Design Workshops

In response to the Covid-19 pivot, the Course Design Workshops in Spring 2020 were held almost entirely online. For the first time, Core Fellows designing new CP and EQ courses attended the sessions. Associate Dean Gareau, assisted by Assistant Dean Shlala, facilitated all of the Course Design Workshops. To enhance not only accessibility and ongoing faculty support, but also to create a more permanent archive, the Assistant Dean spent more than 20 hours constructing a Canvas site for the Course Design Workshops (Appendix 10). Dean Greg Kalscheur, S.J. shared his new piece entitled, "Creative Fidelity" (Appendix 11) with the faculty. Andrés Castro Samayoa, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Higher Education and Lisa Goodman, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Counseling and Developmental Psychology in the Lynch School presented their experiences teaching CP and EQ courses and took questions from the new faculty and fellows. Celeste Wells, Ph.D., Associate Professor of the Practice in Communications helped facilitate the Assessment session. Faculty feedback was positive despite the disruption. We recommend that the Course Design Workshops continue to be run by the Core in this way in the years ahead.

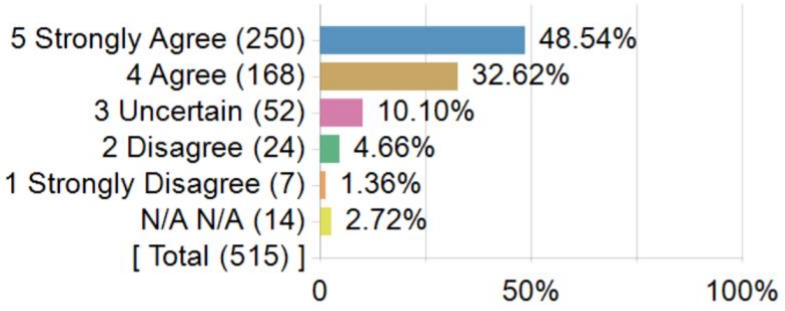
Success of Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

To assess the impact of student satisfaction during the Covid-19 pivot, the Core deans added two questions to the Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses' Spring 2020 student evaluations. These are responses from just over 500 students in a CP/EQ. Evaluations indicate that our faculty did a fine job with the transition.

1. **Compared to my other courses this semester, my Complex Problem or Enduring Question course made an exemplary transition from on-campus to on-line.**



2. **The reflection sessions gave me the opportunity to evaluate and connect course material to my entire life and broader community.**



Core Fellows' Support

As part of the comprehensive Core Fellows program, Assistant Dean Shlala with Associate Dean Gareau led weekly meetings with the Core Fellows in March and April to make sure that they had their teaching and logistical questions answered; felt that they had regular access to us as resources; and, to guide them in handling challenging student situations. Assistant Dean Shlala sent regular updates targeted to the fellows and created a Resource guide for them (Appendix 12). She also provided them with an online survey instrument to use with their students during the transition (Appendix 13). Meetings and communication with the fellows continued regularly throughout Summer 2020 with the Core deans. They were given additional resources during and after each meeting.

5. Core Team Activities during Summer 2020

Registration, Advising, and Orientation

When summer Orientation and Registration moved fully online, the University Core Curriculum team created a "Community" on the Wisr platform (a.k.a. "My BC Orientation"), which is the web interface for First-Year Experience and Academic Advising used to communicate with first-year students over Summer 2020. The Core Community contained: a new professional video of the Core organized by, and featuring, Associate Dean Gareau; an explanation of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses; links to the Core website; and the schedules for live information webinars and discussion groups. The Core Community intentionally promoted the other distinctive programs open to first-year students, including PULSE, Perspectives, and Cornerstone. Content was generated in group meetings led by the Core. It was a good exercise and a great success. Program Assistant Samantha Beard contributed to building out the contact, monitoring, and advising FAQ page on WISR and she was available for all of the Core drop-in hours to answer students' questions throughout the summer.

The Core team participated in weekly Registration, Advising, and Orientation meetings led by Vice Provost Akua Sarr. It was a wonderful experience of working across schools and administrative units throughout the summer preparing to welcome new and returning students safely in the fall. It was an excellent way to strengthen systems, create collaborations, and build lasting relationships. We are always grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Program Assistant Samantha Beard volunteered to manually enroll new students in their academic programs for the year for the MCAS Academic Advising Center and student services. She created the CP/EQ dropdown menu to ensure that all course were paired correctly. She also troubleshooted numerous registration issues with MCAS, CSOM, CSON, and LSOEHD during the four weeks of registration and over the following weeks, in particular monitoring that all CP students were enrolled in labs and creating new POD groups with the possibility of meeting both on campus and remotely.

We were able to track first-year demand for our CP and EQ courses because of the unique registration process in Summer 2020. The Class of ’24 had 311 classes from which to choose. Students had to rank their 10-12 top choices. The top five courses consistently included: First-Year Writing, Principles of Economics, Perspectives, Portico, Calculus, Chemistry, and Philosophy of the Person.

Of all 311 courses open to first-year students, here is how CP and EQ requests were ranked:

12. Beyond Price (CP) 231 requests
13. Life Money and Health (EQ) 182 requests
17. Social Norms and Value: Disney (EQ) 156 requests
19. Feeling Like Ourselves (EQ) 141 requests
21. Living on the Water (EQ) 131 requests
26. Making the Modern World (CP) 109 requests
29. From #BlackLivesMatter to #MeToo (CP) 99 requests
34. Planet in Peril (CP) 84 requests
36. Geographies of Imperialism (EQ) 73 requests
37. Flawed Founders (EQ) 71 requests
56. Spiritual Exercises (EQ) 47 requests
61. Growing Up Gendered (EQ) 40 requests
77. Environmental Migration (EQ) 24 requests

Class Name	Number of Students Who Listed in Top 5	Number of Seats in Course
Beyond Price: Markets, Cultures, Values (Level: Core)	231	76
Life, Money and Health: The Economics of Healthcare (Level: Core)	182	19
American Social Norms and Values: The Case of Disney (Level: Core)	156	19
Feeling Like Ourselves: How and Why Literature Moves Us (Level: Core)	141	19
Living on the Water: Coasts, Development, and Sea Level Change from Venice to Boston (Level: Core)	131	19
Making the Modern World: Design, Ethics & Engineering (Level: Core)	109	76
From #BlackLivesMatter to #MeToo: Violence and Representation in the African Diaspora (Level: Core)	99	76
Planet in Peril: The History and Future of Human Impacts on the Planet (Level: Core)	84	76
Geographies of Imperialism: History of Colonization (Level: Core)	73	19
Flawed Founders: George Washington and the Mythology of a Heroic President (Level: Core)	71	19
Spiritual Exercises:Engagement, Empathy,Ethics (Level: Core)	47	19
Growing Up Gendered: Contemporary Media Representations (Level: Core)	40	19
Environmental Migration: Asylum Seekers (Level: Core)	24	19

Show@6

In order to accompany the Boston College community through the pandemic over the summer, Associate Dean Brian Gareau spent the summer planning, producing, and participating in the Show@6. It was a virtual "talk show" available via Zoom developed by Vice Provost for Global Engagement, Fr. Jim Keenan, SJ, Vice Provost for Research and Academic Planning, Tom Chiles, Vice Provost for Faculties, Billy Soo, Intersections Program Executive Director, Burt Howell, and Brian Gareau, Associate Dean for the Core. The series had no fewer than 26 one-hour episodes of online “fireside chats” hosted by Boston College administrators, faculty, and students and focused on a wide range of critical contemporary topics and issues, discussed through the lens of the common good. (See

https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/sites/global-engagement/expand-your-world/Show-at-6.html). Each show brought in at least thirty viewers, and some brought in several hundred. The model has been used for subsequent events such as the Formative Education panel discussions mentioned in this report. The Core was proud to be a sponsor of this endeavor.

Admissions Collaboration with the University Core Curriculum

Associate Dean Gareau collaborated with John Mahoney, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management on virtual programming over Summer 2020 in lieu of campus visits for prospective students. The Liberal Arts Advantage series was moderated by the Vice Provost and Associate Dean with an emphasis on the distinctiveness of Boston College's University Core Curriculum. A Boston College liberal arts education compels students to think and learn across disciplines, prepares graduates for a range of rewarding careers, and helps them discern who they want to be—and why. By exploring enduring questions and complex problems, like human nature and climate change, liberal arts students acquire the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind and heart they will need to thrive as well-rounded, reflective people in a diverse, global society.

Three courses were featured in each of the one-hour webinars still available online: Tracy Regan, Associate Professor of the Practice in Economics and Mary Ann Chirba, Boston College Law School's EQ course, *Life, Liberty and Health*; Gabriela Oliviera, Assistant Professor, and Andrés Castro Samayoa, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Higher Education, CP course, *Citizenship, Immigration, and Belonging in the U.S.*; and, Elizabeth Shlala, Assistant Dean and Associate Professor of the Practice, and Natana Delong-Bas, Associate Professor of the Practice in Theology's EQ course, *Geographies of Imperialism* were each featured. The Liberal Arts Advantage webinars reached more than 1,000 prospective students in Summer 2020. From the Q&A comments during the webinars, students found these sessions to be of great value and they appreciated having the opportunity to observe BC faculty and student interactions. The viewing totals for each session:

June 17: The Liberal Arts Advantage: **Life, Liberty & Health/Life, Money and Health**

804 registered and **542** in attendance

134 YouTube views since broadcast

July 15: The Liberal Arts Advantage: **Citizenship, Immigration & Belonging in the US - Can Education Save Us?**

343 registered and **247** in attendance

31 YouTube views since broadcast

August 12: The Liberal Arts Advantage: **Geographies of Imperialism: History of Colonization/Geographies of Imperialism: Theology of Colonization**

676 registered and **362** in attendance

17 YouTube views since broadcast

Please note that by early August the communication team was able to embed the videos within the admission visit page (www.bc.edu/visit), so the on-demand/YouTube counts may not be an accurate reflection and the number of viewings is likely to be higher.

In response to a concern that there may not be enough seats for international freshmen unable to attend in person, both Associate Dean Gareau and Assistant Dean Shlala volunteered to teach their fall courses online at early morning and late evening times most likely to be accessible to students abroad. Other faculty teaching CP/EQ courses also made accommodations for international students.

In order to teach with excellence in her online courses in Fall 2020, and to share her knowledge with interested Core Fellows and faculty, Assistant Dean Shlala attended a six-week summer course training in online course design and pedagogy with the Online Learning Toolkit group. Camp Operation Online Learning (COOL) is a course design program that guides educators through the process of developing online courses. Led by dynamic facilitators such as Karen Costa and Judith Dutill, COOL is dedicated to making the course design process accessible and enjoyable for higher educators at every level of experience and technology fluency. She also took advantage of CTE and CDIL offerings at Boston College. She continues her membership in the Fall-On-Call to have community and guidance from experts across the country as they work on their online pedagogy together.

The Associate Dean collaborated with Mary French, University Registrar, and colleagues in the Academic Advising Center to discover where Core seats were lacking for incoming student cohorts. Associate Dean Gareau then reached out to appropriate department chairs and asked for more seats.

The process is far from ideal, and all involved in this process feel we need a more cogent way to anticipate summer Core seat needs, and meet those needs before Summer registration.

Listening and Preparatory Sessions for Fall 2020

The Core worked with the Spring Complex Problem and Enduring Question faculty to collect best practices used and learned through teaching lectures, labs, and Reflection sessions during the transition to online education. The following key points came out of our listening and prep sessions held in June addressed by all CP/EQ faculty:

1. Whether you are teaching in-person, or remotely, we feel it is important that all faculty prepare their courses so all students can take them with equal access to material. More than ever, the chance that a student will be unable to attend class, for whatever reason, for any amount of time, is highly probable. All of our students deserve an equal opportunity to receive course material, take exams, etc. This means:

   a. Build out your Canvas site;

   b. Plan to use Canvas (or other online tools) for storing assignments, course readings, exams, quizzes, attendance, recorded lectures, etc. CTE and CDIL are here to help you, as is the library;

   c. Be prepared to record your lectures (either before the semester begins for flipped classroom teaching, or in real time in the fall), and have them accessible to students in real time;

   d. Work out Reflection sessions that will be accessible to ALL students (we are here to help);

   e. For CPs, labs must be accessible to all students. Perhaps online labs will be a good solution for you, perhaps reconfiguring your lab plans to allow for social distancing is necessary. Whatever you choose, please let us know so we can advocate for the lab space you need.

   f. Such preparations will assure that many of our CP/EQs are available to BC students, whether they are on campus, or at home due to visa or other issues.

2. If you plan on seeking accommodation to be able to teach remotely, among other campus activities, do so ASAP. Seeking accommodations takes about five minutes, but without it the University will not know that you are asking to teach remotely. Please know that the accommodation process is for anyone to use (full-time faculty, part-time faculty, graduate students, etc.), and it is up to you to decide whether you should request it. Faculty members who are at higher risk for COVID-19 infections, who live with at-risk people, and who do not wish to return to campus for live teaching in the Fall should apply for a

special Reasonable Accommodation through the University's Office for Institutional Diversity (Appendix 14).

We had ten courses offered online and two courses offered as hybrid. Hybrid in these cases involved some aspects of a CP being offered in person (e.g. lecture) and others online (i.e. labs or Reflections). In some cases, one side of an EQ in a pair was offered online, while the other was offered in person. In short, CP/EQ faculty had to be innovative and collaborative, and more was asked of these faculty perhaps than any other group at the University. The Core team worked all summer to make sure that faculty felt comfortable and supported in their Fall 2020 teaching arrangements.

Associate Dean Gareau collaborated with the CSOM Dean Andy Boynton and Associate Dean Ethan Sullivan to instruct all CP and EQ faculty on the "Hopscotch Zoom" method of teaching on July 29, 2020. Faculty were able to ask questions at the session. Everyone was impressed with the clarity of sound in the classroom thanks to the external microphone. While CP/EQ faculty were not teaching with the hopscotch method *per se*, the technology allowed for some faculty to invite international students to take their course remotely, and others have used it for students in isolation or quarantine.

The Core deans attended the Board of Chairs and Associate Dean meetings held by Dean Greg Kalscheur, S.J. during Summer 2020.

III. Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

1. 2019-2020 Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses

Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses continue to form a meaningful and mission-driven component of Boston College's University Core Curriculum. As in years past, the Core team's responsibilities include: promotion, registration, budgeting, procurement, reimbursement, and responding to faculty and student queries. Planning for next year's courses requires consistent attention to faculty pairing, renewing core requirements, aligning numbers of core seats, communicating Core needs with school deans, reviewing faculty applications, coordinating with department chairs, revising course titles and descriptions, creating courses in Catalog Management, facilitating Course Design Workshops, hiring and programming for Core Fellows, marketing and promotion, co-curricular logistical planning, advising, registration, and assessment. Program Assistant Samantha Beard worked with Admissions to get the Deans' letters and brochures to all the incoming freshmen, including emails

PDF versions to the international students. Even in the face of disruption and challenges, we are confident that as a team we have the processes and procedures in place for the smooth implementation of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses in AY21 and beyond.

CP and EQ courses AY20

FALL 2019

Complex Problems

Planet in Peril: The History and Future of Human Impacts on the Planet (Schor and Parthasarathi) (SS + HIST)
HIST150501 + SOCY150901

Beyond Price: Markets, Cultures, Values (Seshadri and Erbil) (SS + LIT) ECON150101 + ENGL150301

Citizenship, Immigration & Belonging in the United States: Can Education Save Us? (Samayoa and Oliveira) (HIST + SS) HIST171501 + SOCY171301*****

Global Implications of Climate Change (Gareau and Pisani Gareau) (NAT SCI + SS) SOCY150101 + EESC150101

Enduring Questions

Revolutionary Media: How Books Changed History (Reinburg) (HIST) HIST170501
Revolutionary Media: How Reading Changes Us (Crane) (LIT) ENGL171501

Writing in/ Justice: The Power of Response (Donovan-Kranz) (WRIT) ENGL171901
Reading in/ Justice: Literature as Activism from Abolition to #BlackLivesMatter (Harrison-Kahan) (LIT) ENGL171801

Fictions of Development: Adolescence in Historical Context (McAleavey) (LIT) ENGL171701
Passion, Power, and Purpose: Adolescence in a Digital Age (Liang) (SS) SOCY170701

Oppression & Change in US: Sociocultural & Psych (Goodman) (SS) UNAS170101

Oppression & Change in US: Writing (Mathieu) (WRIT) ENGL172201

Roots & Routes: Writing Identity (Anderson) (WRIT) ENGL171301
Roots & Routes: Reading Identity (Graver) (LIT) ENGL171201

Worlds of Moby-Dick: What Historical Forces Shape a Book's Greatness? (Quigley) (HIST)
HIST170401
Reading Man, God, and the Whale in Melville's Moby-Dick (Martin) (LIT) ENGL171401

Life, Money & Health: The Economics of Healthcare (Regan) (SS) ECON170201
Life, Liberty & Health: Policy, Politics & Law (Chirba) (HIST) UNAS170201

Privacy, Fairness, and Law (Yen) (SS) UNAS171001*****
Privacy, Fairness, and the Digital World (Straubing) (MATH) CSCI170101*****

When Life Happens: Psychology Views Disability (Hauser-Cram) (SS) UNAS170501
When Life Happens: Disability and the Stories We Tell (Dunsford) (LIT) UNAS170401

Geographies of Imperialism: History of Colonization (Shlala) (HIST) HIST171601*****
Geographies of Imperialism: Theology of Colonization (DeLong-Bas) (THEO) THEO170701*****

How Democracies Die: The Politicization (Nieto) (UNAS) UNAS154201(02)
How Democracies Die: A Historical Postmortem (Tumblin) (HIST) HIST170601(02)

Trash Talking: Political Ecology of Waste & Resources (Worl) (SS) UNAS15400
Talking Trash: Industrial Ecology of Waste & Resources
(Krones) (NS) UNAS154101

SPRING 2020

Complex Problems

Powering America: The Past and Future of Energy, Technology, and the Environment (Ebel and Conevery) (NAT SCI + HIST) EESC150701 + HIST151301

#Shop-Apocalypse: Consumer Culture and the Fate of the Planet (Schor and Fleming) (SS + HIST)
SOCY171401 + HIST171701*****

Science and Technology in American Society (Jewett and Kenaley) (HIST + NAT SCI)
HIST151101 + BIOl150301

Enduring Questions

Being Human: Secular-Humanist Perspective (Breen) (SS) COMM170201
Being Human: Theological Perspective (Petillo) (THEO) THEO170601

Nature and Power: Reading the American Place (Matson) (LIT) ENGL172401
Nature and Power: Making the Modern World (Zhang) (HIST) HIST171001

The American Divide: The Philosophy of Inequality (McGill) (PHIL) PHIL171101*****
The American Divide: The Economics of Inequality (Sanzenbacher) (SS) ECON170301*****

Coming of Age: Film (J. Michalczyk) (ARTS) FILM170101
Coming of Age: Literature (S. Michalczyk) (LIT)
UNAS170801

Family Matters: Stories of Adoption and Kinship (Smith) (LIT) ENGL171001*****
Family Matters: Psychology and Adoption (Kim) (SS) SOCY171501*****

In the Beginning: Scientific Explorations of Our Origins (Meyer) (NAT SCI) BIOL170501
In the Beginning: Biblical Explorations of Our Origins (Cooley) (THEO) THEO170401

Finding the Animal: Beasts & Boundaries in Lit (Stanton) (LIT) ENGL172101
Humans and Other Animals: The Mental Life of Animals (Lamoureux) (SS) PSYCH109201

Rhetoric of Social Inequality in America (Wells) (LIT) COMM170301
Social Inequality in America (Spangler) (SS) SOCY171101

*denotes new courses for AY20

POD (Purposeful Ongoing Discussion) Update

This Reflection model involves upper-class students acting as near-peer mentors (POD leaders) in small groups to discuss course material, adjusting to life at BC, and begin to discern an intellectual path. The POD mentors are trained and closely mentored by course instructors. Student feedback illustrates that strong relationships formed among peers and POD leaders, and between POD Leaders and faculty, PODs help students develop a deeper understanding of the course material, and transition to life at BC, and POD Leaders develop important leadership skills they report being helpful on the job market and in making life choices. The POD Leadership Program (advertised as a student leadership opportunity on the Center for Student Formation website) is now scheduled to be used in six separate courses. Courses using PODs include:

1. Global Implications of Climate Change (CP)
2. Making the Modern World (CP)
3. Understanding and Protecting Our Oceans (CP)
4. Neuroscience & Religion (CP)
5. Where on Earth (International Studies foundational course)
6. Citizenship, Immigration, and Belonging in the US (CP)

Representative quotes regarding PODs:

"*My POD group became an important community in my life as a freshman*."

"*This part of the course helped my transition into Boston College in ways I probably didn't even realize at the time*."

"*It introduced me to reflection and the importance of mentorship, as I found amazing mentors through both of my senior POD leaders*."

Enrollment Statistics

Enrollments rose for AY20 to 89% of full capacity. This is a growth of 4% from the previous year. This is unprecedented and a clear sign of success when compared beside student evaluation and direct assessment data also found in this report.

Table 6: Enrollments for Complex Problem and Enduring Question Courses through AY21

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	95%
AY17	351 students	184 students	535 students	743 seats	72%
AY18	490 students	361 students	851 students	1,022 seats	83%
AY19	618 students	248 students	866 students	1,024 seats	85%
AY20	466 students	395 students	861 students	971 seats	89%
F21	294 students	166 students	460 students	474 seats	97%

2. Direct and Indirect Assessment of Core Learning Goals

Indirect assessment as measured through student evaluations shows that CP/EQ courses continue to perform well (Appendix 15). It is helpful to note that we submitted a set of questions related to Cultural Diversity, which on the whole show that students report engaging with questions of diversity, inclusion, and justice in their Core courses.

Direct assessment is still a relatively 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 Assessment subcommittee's goal under the leadership of the chair of the committee, Celeste Wells, Associate Professor of the Practice in Communications, is to learn what is working well in these courses (finding models to replicate) as well as areas for improvement.

In order to streamline the submission and adjudication process this year, Professor Wells partnered with CTE and the Core team to create an Assessment Canvas site that has been well received by all. It also allows for consistent archiving of materials. Student work is added anonymously to the site and it is much easier to access the student work than in past years. Faculty were reminded to upload the student work, strip it of identifying information, and eliminate password protections. Faculty were also reminded to be attentive that student work available on public websites may pose a privacy issue.

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 the common rubric works and language for interdisciplinary assessment is clear.

3. Accreditation: AJCU Visit, UCLO Report, & E1A Forms

In February 2020, Dean Kalscheur, S.J. and Assistant Dean Shlala met with members of the visiting team for the Mission Priority Examen (MPE), a process of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU). Jesuit colleges and universities in the Northeast Province were asked to address a set of questions, derived from the document "Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument," to develop the institution's self-study report. Our meeting

with the visiting team focused on the presence of the University's Jesuit, Catholic mission in the University Core Curriculum.

The Core deans also attended the visit by Randall Bass, Vice Provost for Education at Georgetown University on September 29, 2019. The topic of the day was assessment and we appreciated his approach to assessment built upon a culture of inquiry tied to institutional aspirations in partnership with students and faculty.

As a member of Boston College's University Council of Learning Outcomes, Assistant Dean Shlala contributed to the report produced by UCLO in reference to the assessment work done by the University Core Curriculum (Appendix 16).

Dean Kalscheur, S.J. called for E1A forms to be submitted by each Morrissey Department Chair at the end of the spring semester. Each department filled out this form in a timely manner and submitted it back to the Core. The forms are available on the Core website: https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/undergraduate/core-curriculum/assessment.html

4. Senior Student Feedback

Annually, seniors are surveyed on the impact that EQ/CP courses had on their undergraduate education and experience at BC. Select quotes include:

"*These courses open you to new perspectives that you didn't even know you needed, and they give you a great introduction to a liberal arts, Jesuit education*."

"*The course overall made me feel excited to be learning about things that were much bigger than myself*."

"*I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in a program that opened me up to new ways of thinking and introduced me to a warm and inclusive community in my very first semester*."

Theology Core Renewal

It seems clear that the renewal of Theology Core has been successful from a student perspective. Students must now take one course that counts towards in Christian Theology and one course that counts towards Sacred Texts and Traditions (Appendix 17). We will also note here that the Core has worked hard to involve Theology in CP/EQ course development, as well as the Core Fellows Program. Faculty in Theology have expressed interest in teaching a CP/EQ, and the inclusion of the Theology Core Fellow is an exciting development.

5. Formative Education

Although it is not the only formative element of CP and EQ courses, Reflection sessions are a fundamental component of the design of Complex Problem and Enduring Question courses. In Reflection sessions, students are provided time outside of lecture to connect course material to their whole selves. In Reflection sessions, students connect the content of the course materials with their lives beyond the classroom, and to the larger University community. In this way, Reflection is intimately tied to the Core learning goal designed to teach students how to "examine their values and experiences and integrate what they learn with the principles that guide their lives." Reflection sessions can provide a space for discussion for the ethical implications of material covered in the course and may help students process their reactions to difficult course materials. Additionally, Reflection provides opportunities for ideas and practices associated with formative experiences at Boston College to emerge. Faculty and student creativity flourish in Reflection sessions. Here are some examples of Reflection.

Practices:

A session on the Jesuit Examen led by someone from Mission and Ministry

A workshop teaching students about different meditative practices

A yoga workshop

A workshop on reflective journaling

An e-media fast, students abstain from all electronic devices and media for 24 hours

Students practiced silence for increasingly long periods of time

Exercises:

Course on migration, students were shown an array of timeworn objects and asked to write narratives about the journey of a chosen object. Students then shared their narratives and discussed their own experiences of migration.

Course on gender, students divided into groups to create collages from magazine images illustrating the role of mass media in reinforcing or challenging traditional gender stereotypes.

Course on books and media, Conservator from Burns library led a session in which students played the role of 16th-century apprentices in a print shop and used bookbinding tools to create a vellum pamphlet.

Course on climate change, student participation in a World Food Banquet to reflect on world food issues.

Field trips:

Museum of Fine Arts to visit the new Islamic Arts exhibition to study maps

Mount Auburn Cemetery to consider the meaning of life and death

Cape Cod beaches to observe and compare signs of sea level change on a pristine and developed coast. Dinner at a faculty member's home

Walden Pond to reflect on the live experiences of Henry David Thoreau

Guest Speakers:

BC Career Center speaker discussing career opportunities related to the course

Boston Marathon bombing survivors

Panel of veterans discussing the experience of war

Kwame Appiah lecturing on cosmopolitanism and the legacy of empires

Students attended talks in the Environmental Studies lecture series on climate change

PODs:

Courses using PODs incorporate a range of reflection practices and exercises designed to help students: Critically engage with the content of the course; Intelligently discern the evidence of course content; Respectfully debate, deliberate, and reflect on what the material means to them as a person.

Some examples include:

"Three Pillars of my Life" activity; "Tree of Life" activity; "Studying the Past to Understand the Present" Reflection; "Climate Change" debate and discussion; "High-Lows"; "Personal Academic Review"; Participation in a "Oxfam World Hunger Banquet";"Reflection on university event, and how it relates to course material"; "BaFa BaFa Cultural Simulation Game" followed by POD discussions; Weekly journal reflections (example: Opinion piece on the role of consumption of resources in relationship to climate change); Participation in the Global Engagement Portal, preceded by journal reflection, and followed by POD discussion; Assignment: Thanksgiving discussion about course content, preceded by POD Leader presentation on "emotional triggers' and

conversational skills in Advocacy: Being Inquisitive, and Acknowledging, followed by journaling and discussion; Final POD discussions on: Formation Activity: How has your perspective changed throughout the semester? How have you grown intellectually and personally?; What are your goals for next semester and the rest of college?; and, What is one piece of advice you would give yourself coming into BC just a few months ago?

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Reflection Surveys

Margaret Laurence, Director of Initiatives for Formative Education in the Provost's office approached the Core deans in Spring 2020 to inquire about changes or adaptations made in the delivery of formative education during the Covid-19 pivot. With that inspiration, the Assistant Dean conducted a survey of all EQ/CP faculty teaching in the Spring. We received useful feedback of what did, and did not, work. Our report gives more detailed information (Appendix 18).

Here are some specific examples from the survey:

Enduring Question, The American Divide (Geoff Sanzenbacher, Social Science and Cherie McGill, Philosophy) "We did an online trip to the Isabella Gardner Museum. We toured various rooms through their online virtual tour on Zoom, and then looked at eight paintings in detail. We discussed each painting during the Zoom meeting, and then students filled out Canvas discussion board questions to further discuss the experience. I think that the event was solid overall, and reading the discussion results suggest they saw many of the things we hoped they would see in person. They picked up on issues related to the accumulation of wealth, to privilege and inequality of opportunity, and to how wealth is depicted (e.g., pale because not working outside, clothing/jewelry, etc.)."

Enduring Question, Being Human (Marcus Breen, Social Science and Matt Petillo, Theo) Students were asked to engage with other students on Zoom about the way Artificial Intelligence innovations may be regulated. This seemed to be an effective way to encourage the investigation of new approaches to Reflection. Much more time is needed to engage students in Reflection about Jesuit principles and BC Mission, such as peace and the Common Good.

Complex Problem, #Shop-apocalypse (Julie Schor, Social Science and Robin Fleming, Hist II) Film showing including with filmmaker via Zoom leading to discussions of how COVID is affecting students and consumption patterns.

Enduring Question, Law and Adolescence (Carlos Zuniga-Nieto, Hist II and Danny Ovado-Milan, Social Science, Core Fellows) "First-year students submitted reflective journals where they narrated their reactions to readings in class. The journals allowed them to connect the readings in course but also to make intellectual connections across the social sciences. Before the pandemic, these were physical journals, but after the pandemic, these journals were digital. After the pandemic, students shared their reflections in class during discussions and received feedback from their colleagues. Reflective journaling also allowed students to record their own anxieties and worries during such difficult times. Reflection in digital journals during remote learning enabled students to reflect on the readings but also to integrate contemporary news related to the crisis at the local level. In their hand-written journals, students highlighted noteworthy articles while relating the course material to historical examples from class. The students also shared these journals with colleagues during Zoom meetings and received feedback from each other. The reflective journaling was a central component in the intellectual development during the course as students had the opportunity to further explain how their notions of childhood and youth had changed during the ongoing crisis.

Formative Education Panels and Webinar

The Core deans collaborated with Director Laurence on November 19, 2019 when they presented on the University Core Curriculum for a luncheon with Dean Stanton Warthom. Associate Dean Gareau highlighted the PODs component of Complex Problem courses.

In Summer 2020, Director Laurence organized a group of faculty members involved in formative education to organize a webinar series. The Core deans were invited to participate on the committee. The webinars were sponsored by Perspectives, PULSE, The Core Curriculum, Office of the Provost, CDIL and CTE.

The first webinar was held on Tuesday, August 18, 2020. Faculty gathered lessons learned this past spring and summer on integrating formative education in online settings. Faculty shared their experiences and thoughts on what worked and what did not work, plus added some surprising discoveries as they prepared for the upcoming semester whether it be in a synchronous, asynchronous or hybrid classroom. It was hosted by Billy Soo, Vice Provost for Faculties and moderated by Associate Dean Gareau and Meghan Sweeney, Associate Professor of the Practice, Cooney Family Director, PULSE. The panelists were: Andrés Castro Samayoa, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and

Higher Education, Jerry Kane, Professor, Information Systems, CSOM and Celeste Wells, Associate Professor of the Practice, Communication, MCAS.

We continued with the webinar series on Formative Education in Fall 2020. In the second webinar, faculty shared their experiences and thoughts on what has worked and what has not worked as well as shared some thoughts on formative education within the sciences. The webinar was held on Thursday, September 17, 2020. It was hosted by Margaret Laurence, Director, Initiatives for Formative Education. The moderators were Assistant Dean Shlala and Rafael Luna, Associate Dean, Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, Director, Pre-Health Program, Director, Gateways Scholars Program in STEM. The panelists were: Michael Naughton, Evelyn J. and Robert A. Ferris Professor and Chair, Physics Department, Heather Olins, Assistant Professor of the Practice, Biology Department, and Holly VandeWall, Associate Professor of the Practice, Philosophy Department.

Some highlights of the program included Heather speaking about her experience teaching in middle school because that is the age that students decide if they are future scientists or not. She noted that de-formative educational practices include putting up walls that exclude certain identities and shut down the natural curiosity of learners. Mike starts his freshmen classes by telling them that he is lying to them (approximation) and opening their minds up to think for themselves, challenge their assumptions, and take responsibility for their own education. Rafael concluded that all the colors of nature and its diversity really opens the door for students to be inspired to study science and to learn more about our world and their place in it.

6. Core Website

The Core deans and Program Assistant spent a good deal of time revising and updating the Core website during AY20. They tried to make the site more intuitive and clearer for each separate audience it serves. They wish to thank Joe Cella for all of his hard work. Please note that each semester it is difficult to update the departmental Core offerings on the University Core Curriculum website despite it being a key resource for students and advisors. The communication between departments and the Core must become more systematic in the years to come.
https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/undergraduate/core-curriculum.html

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

EQs and CPs

Dear Deans Gareau and Shlala,
I want to express what a pleasure it has been to take Enduring Questions courses this year. In both the fall and spring semesters, I registered for these Core classes and my experience could not have been better. I sincerely hope that Boston College continues to support this program for future first-year students. Both the ***Geographies of Imperialism*** *and the* ***Coming of Age*** *courses were fantastic. Furthermore, through their courses, Professors DeLong-Bas and Shlala as well as Professors John and Susan Michalczyk allowed me to explore different topics and methods of inquiry in new and exciting ways that have provided me with a solid foundation for my studies in the future.*

Thank you again for a great year.

Hello Professor Shlala,
I would like to thank you for a very fun semester. I can say that this class was one of the most enjoyable classes I took this semester. I had the chance to engage in new and in-depth ways with history that have made me love it even more. Thank you for a great semester!

Dear Professor Gareau,
I am not sure if you remember me, but I just wanted to email you and say a quick thank you!
I took your complex problems course on climate change during the first semester of my freshman year. I honestly didn't know what I was signing up for during orientation, but I am really thankful that I ended up in your class. You were the first professor that I really felt embodied the true Jesuit nature at BC. I was learning academically through the readings and assignments, and I was connecting at such a deep level with the people in the class. I always felt like your class was a place I could be myself and connect with others.
Next year (class of 2024) I am heading to law school and I am nervous but also really excited. I know that I will learn a lot in the classroom, but learning is always more than that — and you helped me realize that.
Although I had to leave campus suddenly and will not be able to hand deliver this note, I just wanted to say thank you for making an impact in my life during my time at BC. I hope that you are staying safe and healthy during this time!!
Thank you again.
Best, Shae Heitz
Boston College '20

Dear Elizabeth and Natana,
I just wanted to send you both a brief email to thank you for allowing me to sit in on your Enduring Questions course presentations a few weeks ago. It was such a great experience and I was very impressed with the students' presentations and the questions & conversations that followed. Thank you for the opportunity to get a sneak peek into your course!

Wishing you both a wonderful end to the semester and a restful winter break,
Helen Ha, MCAS Advising Center

Prospective Students

Hello,
I just wanted to thank you all and the college for the commitment to prospective students, especially during the pandemic. I am a rising junior in Washington DC and I have not been able to visit campus before, so I am very excited for the college to reopen. However, I have been fortunate enough to take part in a virtual information session, a live virtual tour, and the Liberal Arts Advantage Program webinar. All of which were extremely informative and enchanted me all the more. One of the few positives during this unprecedented time has been BC's consistently engaging events. I really look forward to visiting soon and applying in 2022!

Core Fellows

Hi Elizabeth and Brian,
I just got back from my Hopkins visit — and during the teaching conversation with the entire faculty I talked a lot about my recent teaching in the Core. They were SO INTO IT. Super interested in the CP and EQ models and really into the fact that they are first year courses. Hopkins has a new initiative to develop similar experimental courses for freshmen but hasn't created any models/guidelines like at BC. Anyhow, I feel very lucky to be part of the Core since it has (indeed) transformed my teaching.
Jenna Tonn

But I wanted to thank you again for all of the support you offered through the Core Fellows program and for a wonderful year. I really was fortunate to be a part of the program.
Jessica Worl, former fellow

Reflections on the Core Mission

Dear Brian, Elizabeth, Samantha, and Kerry,
Our lunch yesterday was very special. I was touched by your warm words. I have enjoyed our contact and the experience of working with each of you. Thank you for the opportunity.

Congratulations for all you have done to fix the place of the Core firmly at the center of what Boston College is all about. You are making a significant and lasting contribution to the University as an institution as well as to the students who come here.

Best of luck in all you do,
Dan Soyer

Dear Brian and Elizabeth,
Many thanks for your kind reminder about teaching in the Core next year. I will be retiring from teaching at the end of the current academic year--becoming a so-called "research professor." I am delighted to see and read about the success and popularity of the Core Renewal Program. I still maintain contact with several students in my Enduring Questions course on "Human Rights and the Refugee Crisis" that I taught jointly with Devin Pendas. It was one of the best teaching experiences that I have had at BC over the past many, many years.
With warmest best wishes,
Ali Banuazizi

V. Appendices