Toward a Renewed Core

August 1, 2013
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROLOGUE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECOMMENDATION FOR A RENEWED CORE</strong></td>
<td>pp. 4-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE RENEWED CORE, AT A GLANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENDURING QUESTIONS</strong></td>
<td>p. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPLEX PROBLEMS</strong></td>
<td>p. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPLORATION</strong></td>
<td>p. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFLECTION</strong></td>
<td>p. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADERSHIP AND ONGOING INNOVATION</strong></td>
<td>pp. 9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOVING FORWARD</strong></td>
<td>pp. 12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td>p. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEARNING OUTCOMES</strong></td>
<td>p. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>p. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDIX</strong></td>
<td>pp. 16-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY COURSE CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td>p. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPLORATION COURSE CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td>p. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THE RENEWED CORE</strong></td>
<td>p. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HYPOTHETICAL STUDENT SCHEDULE</strong></td>
<td>p. 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY EXAMPLES</strong></td>
<td>p. 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROLOGUE

A RENEWED CORE CURRICULUM AT BOSTON COLLEGE

At Boston College, a major research institution in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition, our overall goal for undergraduate education is the intellectual, social, and religious formation of students.

A Boston College liberal education has four key components: a core curriculum that establishes a common intellectual foundation for all undergraduates, a major that provides a curricular sequence for intense exploration of a particular discipline, electives that allow the pursuit of special interests outside of the core and the major, and campus community life that offers opportunities for religious, emotional, and social growth outside the classroom setting.

The renewed Core reaffirms our belief that the foundation of our students’ education is based on the disciplines that constitute a broad liberal arts education. The Core has a special responsibility to educate students to make sure they receive the content and skills that will enable them to grow into adults who lead lives of meaningful consequence in the world.

The renewed Core places special emphasis on creating an intensive, rigorous, interdisciplinary learning experience in the first year. Interdisciplinary courses based on Enduring Questions and Complex Problems, respectively, will help students develop effective habits of mind, acquire necessary content, and reflect on important issues.

Beyond the Enduring Questions and Complex Problem courses, students will complete their Core requirements by taking discipline-based Exploration courses throughout their four years. There are two types of Exploration courses: Foundation and Immersion. Students will gain foundational knowledge of the disciplines with grounding in time, in relationship to other disciplines, or in relation to perennial questions. Students will also take Immersion courses that go into depth within the disciplines and build on foundational knowledge.

Throughout four years of the Core, we will create opportunities for Reflection that will help students integrate the various strands of their education and draw personal meaning from their Core courses and other elements of their lives.

The renewed Core has been developed through an intensive process of collaborative innovation, developing and then building on ideas contributed by faculty from throughout the university. The renewed Core also contains a new leadership structure that will ensure ongoing collaborative improvement and innovation into the future. The Core Renewal Committee will use the frameworks contained in this document and the spirit of collaboration that has emerged over the past six months to continue working with faculty and departments to foster ideas and experiments that will keep the Core vital, grounded in Boston College’s Jesuit, Catholic tradition.
Communities of Inquiry (12 credits during the first year)

Communities of Inquiry are courses taken in the first year, where students come together to engage in intensive multidisciplinary study of fundamental questions and global challenges. Each Community of Inquiry is a group of roughly 225 students. One of these is called Enduring Questions, the other Complex Problems. Through Communities of Inquiry, students are immersed in a shared intellectual undertaking.

Enduring Questions:
Enduring Questions is a six-credit program consisting of two linked courses from different disciplines connected by content, theme, and syllabi. Each pair of courses focuses on perennial questions united by a common topic. Students also participate in shared learning experiences outside of class, and end-of-term presentations.

Complex Problems:
Each Complex Problem is a six-credit interdisciplinary course focusing on one contemporary, global challenge. Students learn about the problem through three weekly team-taught lectures, experiential, problem-based labs, shared learning experiences outside of class, and end-of-term presentations.

Exploration (30 credits over the course of four years)
During their four years at Boston College, students take 10 Exploration courses across the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. Exploration courses satisfy a renewed set of characteristics, which ensure students gain a rigorous education in the liberal arts while enabling intellectual engagement and exploration. Characterized as Foundations or Immersions, these courses range in level of breadth or depth, class size, and pedagogical approach.

Reflection (over the course of four years)
The Core invites each student to take knowledge gained about the world and turn with that knowledge back to oneself. New opportunities for reflection inside and outside the classroom will help students discern the meaning, significance, and value of the work taking place in their disciplinary studies and lives outside of class. The Core program in Reflection will involve Mission & Ministry, Student Affairs, and interested faculty.
Enduring Questions | Community of Inquiry (6 credits)

In Enduring Questions, first-year students critically examine and reflect upon fundamental human concerns through a pair of linked courses. These courses provide students with a foundation in the influential thinkers, writers, and artists who have wrestled with perennial questions across discipline, space, and time. As students grapple with the approaches they encounter, they reflect upon their own perspective, strive to articulate their own opinions and beliefs, and continue to define a core set of values.

Each Enduring Questions Community of Inquiry focuses on one overarching topic, such as “Self and Society,” “Humanity and Nature,” or “Understanding the Past” and is comprised of a cohort of roughly 225 freshman. This cohort is subdivided into pairs of linked courses, each taught by faculty from different departments. Within each topic, faculty agree on three enduring questions to examine in their courses. In addition to the linked courses, the 225 students participate in shared learning experiences and end-of-term presentations.

NOTE: First-year students who enroll in Perspectives or PULSE will satisfy their Enduring Questions requirement. See appendix for further detail.

Linked Courses
Faculty from two disciplines co-develop and teach a pair of linked courses. Each instructor teaches his or her own course individually, with the two courses connected through content, theme, and syllabi.

Each pair of linked courses has an average size of ~32 students. Larger sections may be necessary based on departmental and course needs, and linked sections of First-Year Writing Seminar (FWS) will be capped at 16 students.

Writing Fellows will be available to assist faculty as desired.

Shared Learning Experiences
Over the course of the semester, all 225 students participate in regular lectures, presentations, screenings, excursions (e.g., museum trips, walking tours, musical and theatrical performances, etc.), and/or opportunities for reflection related to their Enduring Questions. One faculty member will serve as chair of each Enduring Questions Community, and will oversee the shared learning experiences.

Community Academy: A Festival of Ideas
The 1599 Jesuit Ratio Studiorum requires that students be grouped into “Academies” to give public presentations of what they have learned, including disputations, lectures, recitations of poetry, and other exercises. Working individually or in small teams, BC students will prepare projects related to their Enduring Questions course, that they present to a larger audience during the final week of the semester. Projects may include research presentations, debates, performances, exhibits, films, or other creative works.

*The Associate Dean for the Core, and the Director of Academic Advising will be present at summer orientation sessions in order to make accommodations for students whose freshman schedule would be too crowded if they took the Communities of Inquiry courses.
The Renewed Core

Complex Problems | Community of Inquiry (6 credits)

In a Complex Problem Community of Inquiry, students examine an issue of contemporary urgency and global significance. Through a team-taught lecture, students gain an understanding of the problem from multiple viewpoints, considering historical context, various interpretations, and attempted solutions. A complementary lab engages students to learn by doing, working in small teams to apply knowledge to real-world issues. By studying cultural, economic, historical, political, religious, scientific, and/or social currents in relation to their own experience, students foster habits of mind that are alert to global connections, differences, or comparisons.

Each Complex Problem Community of Inquiry focuses on one global challenge. This Community is made up of ~225 freshmen, who come together for weekly lectures, and are subdivided into 12 lab sections of ~19 students each. The semester culminates in a week of student presentations. Each Complex Problem counts as a double course for each faculty member, with six credits per student credited to each instructor.

NOTE: First-year students enrolled in PULSE satisfy their Complex Problem requirement. Students enrolled in Perspectives as freshmen may take their Complex Problem in the sophomore year. See appendix for further detail.

2 Examples of Complex Problems

Migration & Immigration

Hypothetical Lab assignment:
Students conduct archival research on immigrant narratives from an earlier period of US history. The class curates an annotated compilation, comparing and contrasting the historical and contemporary immigrant narratives across groups.

Access to Water

Hypothetical Lab assignment:
Students conduct research and calculations on their hometown watersheds in order to draw conclusions about their hometown water use. Students gain experience documenting and analyzing research methods and results.

Team-Taught Lectures

Lectures are developed and team-taught by two faculty from different disciplines. Three times per week, the entire cohort of 225 students comes together for these lectures.

Complex Problem Labs

Once per week, the cohort breaks into smaller groups of ~19 students for a 90-minute lab. These may include research, discussion, case studies, problem-based learning modules, projects, and/or off-campus experiences. Faculty teaching Complex Problems will also be responsible for designing and directing the labs, which will be run by post-docs or graduate students, with assistance from two upperclass students.

Shared Learning Experiences

Over the course of the semester, students participate in periodic lectures, presentations, screenings, excursions, and/or opportunities for reflection related to their Complex Problem.

Community Academy: A Festival of Ideas

The 1599 Jesuit Ratio Studiorum requires that students be grouped into “Academies,” to give public presentations of what they have learned, including disputations, lectures, recitations of poetry, and other exercises. In the final week of the semester, BC students will present projects related to their Complex Problem to a larger audience. Working in small teams, they select and work on these presentations during the final month of the Complex Problem Lab. Projects may include research presentations, debates, performances, exhibits, films, or other creative works.

Examples of Complex Problems

Migration & Immigration

Hypothetical Lab assignment:
Students conduct archival research on immigrant narratives from an earlier period of US history. The class curates an annotated compilation, comparing and contrasting the historical and contemporary immigrant narratives across groups.

Access to Water

Hypothetical Lab assignment:
Students conduct research and calculations on their hometown watersheds in order to draw conclusions about their hometown water use. Students gain experience documenting and analyzing research methods and results.
THE RENEWED CORE

Exploration (30 credits)

What are Exploration courses?
In addition to the courses within Communities of Inquiry, students take 30 credits of Exploration courses to fulfill Core requirements. Through Exploration, students gain a foundation in a wide range of liberal arts disciplines.

How do Exploration courses work?
Each department will offer a portfolio of Exploration courses, including foundational courses in the discipline (Foundations) and more topic-based courses (Immersions). Departmental Exploration offerings will range in class size, pedagogical approach, and course level. All Exploration courses share a set of four characteristics, and incorporate at least two additional characteristics. Departments may choose to offer Foundations, Immersions, or both. NOTE: further detail on characteristics can be found in the appendix.

Foundations
Foundation courses provide students with the necessary foundation in a discipline, and will address methodology, content, or both, depending on the discipline. Foundation courses will help students understand how the discipline approaches significant issues, texts, or artifacts, and will introduce students to discipline-specific modes and genres of communication.

Immersions
Immersion courses build on an established foundation of disciplinary knowledge, and address more focused questions, themes, content, or topics. These courses lead students to a deep engagement with critical questions in the field, and continue to develop discipline-specific communication and writing skills.
Reflection on the meaning, significance, and value of the work of the disciplines is an important component of Core courses. In addition, we are committed to developing and piloting new programs and experiences that encourage faculty and students to reflect on the purposes of a liberal arts education at a Jesuit, Catholic university. As an integral part of the renewed Core, students will be invited to develop skills for effective and purposeful reflection, and to employ those skills in exploring their relation to God and faith, developing as “men and women for others” through service, integrating the varied intellectual experiences of their Core courses and major, and furthering their vocational goals. Through Reflection, the Core aims to build habits of discernment that enable each student to chart a purposeful journey during their time at Boston College and throughout their lives. The Core Renewal Committee will work with faculty, Mission and Ministry, and Student Affairs to develop enhanced opportunities for reflection in three primary ways:

- Boston College already provides many opportunities for students to learn about and practice reflection, especially through programs offered by Mission and Ministry and Student Affairs. The CRC will work with these offices to develop ways to ensure all students are aware of these opportunities and encouraged to participate in them. Faculty participating in each Community of Inquiry will be partnered with colleagues from Mission & Ministry and Student Affairs who will help introduce all students to the concept, usefulness, and purpose of reflection.

- Advising enables opportunities for sustained reflection. The Core Renewal Committee will work to strengthen advising, especially during the first year. The Director of the Academic Advising Center, as a member of the Core Renewal Committee, will help develop relationships with Student Affairs and Mission and Ministry to foster more robust reflection in advising.

- Beginning with the Communities of Inquiry courses, new opportunities for reflection will be made available to students inside and outside the classroom. Working with Mission and Ministry, Student Affairs, the AHANA office, the Career Center, and other groups, Boston College will develop programs related to the enduring questions and complex problems being discussed. For example, some students might attend a retreat in Dover to reflect on the personal implications of their enduring questions or complex problem, or on the career possibilities afforded by it. Presentations by alumni, faculty, and administrators to the Communities of Inquiry can encourage a reflective approach to life.
Leadership and Ongoing Innovation
THE RENEWED CORE

LEADERSHIP AND ONGOING INNOVATION

We recommend the creation of a new Core Renewal Committee (CRC) to spearhead ongoing innovation and oversight of the renewed Core. Housed within the ILA, the CRC will receive funding from the university to support Core course development and administration. The CRC will consult twice a year with the Core Steering Committee and the Student Advisory Council. The Core Steering Committee will be responsible for providing oversight, guidance and funding advocacy. They will also be responsible for overseeing an external Program Review every 8-10 years to assess the Core and recommend improvements. The following diagram illustrates the leadership structure of the renewed Core.
THE RENEWED CORE

LEADERSHIP AND ONGOING INNOVATION

To support excellence and creativity in Core teaching, the CRC will bring faculty from across the university together based on shared interests and research foci to develop and teach courses in the Core. Through this effort, the CRC will be committed to open dialogue, transparency, and collaboration with faculty and departments. The CRC will be responsible for the following:

**Course Development & Portfolio Management***
- Establish a process and tools for developing and approving Core Courses
- Oversee and enable new course development including funding and faculty development
- Maintain a balanced offering of courses that reflect the commitments of the renewed Core
- Work with departments and undergraduate schools to manage supply and demand
- Hold final authority to review courses for inclusion in the renewed Core

**Management & Operations**
- Manage day-to-day operations of the Core
- Liaise with schools and departments

**Advocacy & Promotion**
- Champion and communicate the value of the Core to incoming freshmen, students, faculty and alumni
- Recognize faculty for outstanding contribution to the Core
- Ensure that the Core is involved in annual university budget processes

**Ongoing Innovation & Assessment**
- Establish (and evolve) characteristics of Communities of Inquiry and Exploration courses
- Facilitate interdisciplinary engagement and awareness
- Establish and maintain a process for individual Core course renewal
- Provide faculty with tools, support and training to encourage experimentation with new technologies and methods (e.g. experiential learning)
- Provide a forum for inspiring continuous improvement through broad-based sharing of best practices and new ideas
- Maintain awareness of successful developments in liberal arts learning around the country
- Oversee outcomes-based assessment of the Core curriculum
- Establish ongoing course feedback and assessment process
- Monitor the review of grading practices

*See appendix for further description of course development process*
Moving Forward
The following additional resources will enable the successful implementation of the proposed renewed Core:

**Human Resources**
- Associate Dean
- Post-doctoral fellows
- Appropriate administrative support

**Innovation Funds (focused on developing faculty, content & pedagogy)**
- Summer Renewal Workshops
- Core Renewal Grants (summer salary)
- Support for co-curricular initiatives (e.g., labs, shared experiences, retreats)

**Training & Development (focused on those who support faculty)**
- Graduate students and post-docs
- Expansion of Writing Fellows Program
- Undergraduate peer mentors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enduring Questions</th>
<th>Complex Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Enduring Questions</td>
<td>10 Complex Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~140 sections</td>
<td>10 sections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 sections covered by Perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 sections covered by PULSE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 sections to be developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**One Possible Staffing Plan for Communities of Inquiry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enduring Questions</th>
<th>Complex Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing for 100 sections</td>
<td>Staffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 full time faculty</td>
<td>20 faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 teaching fellows</td>
<td>(i.e. 4 humanities, 7 social sciences, 7 natural sciences, 2 other undergraduate schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 post-docs</td>
<td>55 lab instructors, 10 of whom act as lab leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (i.e. 10 post-doc, 45 graduate students) | }
THE RENEWED CORE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As the university prepares for reaccreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, a renewed Core will be among a number of new initiatives that we will be required to assess. It will be important that we build in clearly defined Core learning objectives from the outset. The Core Renewal Committee will work with departments to articulate discipline-specific learning outcomes for individual requirements and the CRC will have responsibility to ensure that departments and faculty measure and assess student work against these learning outcomes. The following six learning outcomes align with the vision and structure of the renewed Core:

1. Understand the major approaches and ideas of the disciplines that comprise the university and be able to use the methods of inquiry of these disciplines as beginning practitioners

2. Be able to discuss how the principal disciplines are related to one another and be able to apply more than one disciplinary perspective to the same issue or problem

3. Recognize the ways in which different disciplines approach the enduring questions that have shaped the traditions from which the university has emerged

4. Understand from a scholarly perspective the ways in which faith and reason are related in the search for truth

5. Demonstrate the critical, mathematical, and expressive skills that are essential tools of the educated person

6. Be practiced, as a result of the core, in examining their values and integrating what they learn with the principles that guide their lives

We have promised the following to NEASC by 2017:
1. Translation of the broader goals of the core into more specific and measurable outcome statements
2. Approval of core courses based not only on syllabi but on a statement of learning outcomes for the course and explication of how the outcomes of the course support/implement the overall outcomes of the core
3. Assessment of the success of courses in achieving stated outcomes as well as improvements made to be included in departments’ annual reports to the dean
We believe that this proposed renewal of the Core represents a significant advance in undergraduate liberal arts education, at once rooted in this university's Jesuit, Catholic tradition and enlivened by a critical engagement with our contemporary world. This proposal represents the culmination of our intensive collective work on Core renewal during this academic year. Approval of the proposal means approving the proposed framework for innovation and not a detailed blueprint that will remain unchanged for 20 years. Approval of the plan will put a basic structure in place: the 42-credit Core spread across the specified disciplines, a commitment to developing Communities of Inquiry that address Enduring Questions and Complex Problems, a commitment to multi-disciplinary teaching and learning, a commitment to using the new course characteristics to develop discipline-specific guidelines and outcomes. The structure also provides for a commitment to working with Mission and Ministry and Student Affairs and with faculty who develop courses to create enhanced opportunities for reflection and to the creation of a new Core Renewal Committee dedicated to fostering innovation and experimentation within the Core. These basic structural principles would be subject to periodic external reviews and will be reassessed at least every ten years.

The logistics of the Communities of Inquiry, the exact configuration of the Enduring Questions and Complex Problem courses, the means of fostering reflection, the means of encouraging innovation and facilitating course development, and many other aspects of the renewed Core will be worked out collaboratively with faculty, departments, and groups of departments. We will phase in new courses and guidelines gradually, making sure that there are not any unintended consequences for existing departments or programs. Most of all the renewed Core will need the enthusiasm, the ideas, the energy, and the ongoing involvement of faculty to ensure we continue to build on our Jesuit, Catholic tradition and offer our students the best possible education for the twenty-first century.

Thank you for your sustained engagement throughout this process. We ask for your continued support and we invite you to join us as we begin the hard work of Core renewal, moving beyond envisioning to dive deep into implementation. This work will require university resources, not least the passion and expertise of our faculty. We look forward to working as a community over the next few years to deliver a truly transformative Core.

**The Boston College Core Team**

- Andy Boynton *(Co-Chair)*
- Tom Chiles
- Richard Cobb-Stevens
- Mary Crane *(Co-Chair)*
- Gail Kineke
- David Quigley *(Co-Chair)*
- Akua Sarr
- Juliet Schor

**The Continuum Core Team**

- Chad Callaghan
- Naomi Korn Gold
- Anthony Pannozzo *(Project Manager)*
- Kristin Sjo-Gaber
- Daniel Sobol
Appendix
APPENDIX

Course Characteristics, Communities of Inquiry

The Core Renewal Committee will work with each department to develop a portfolio of Core offerings. The balance of Enduring Questions, Complex Problem, Foundation, and Immersion courses will differ for each department, depending on the nature of the discipline and the most appropriate pedagogies for each course. The CRC will work with departments to create discipline-specific guidelines for each type of course based on the general templates listed below and on the following page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enduring Questions Courses:</th>
<th>Complex Problem Courses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask students to reflect upon issues and values related to fundamental concerns of human life</td>
<td>Examine an issue of contemporary urgency and global significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce students to influential thinkers, writers, or artists who have wrestled with the question across discipline, time, and space</td>
<td>Consider its historical context, various interpretations, and attempted solutions in a rigorous way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce the methods your discipline uses to approach a question, text, or object cultivating analytical and creative thinking.</td>
<td>Address global connections, differences, or comparisons; consider ethical implications and issues of justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in a dialogue with the methods of the disciplinary approach of the other instructor</td>
<td>Develop an attached lab that provides hands-on problem-solving activities for students involving multiple media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer some common readings or assignments across the paired sections</td>
<td>Introduce students to various disciplinary approaches to the problem, and to the ways in which they might intersect, cultivating appropriate analytical and creative skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Foundation Courses:
- Provide students with the necessary foundation in the discipline, addressing either methodology, or content, or both
- Help students understand how the discipline approaches significant issues, texts, or artifacts
- Cultivate student interest in and excitement about the field
- Introduce students to discipline-specific modes and genres of communication

## Immersion Courses:
- Build on an established foundation of disciplinary knowledge, addressing more focused questions, themes, content, or topics
- Lead students to a deep engagement with critical questions in the field
- Cultivate student interest in and excitement about the field
- Continue to develop discipline-specific communication and writing skills

## In addition, all Exploration courses will choose at least 3 of the following 6:
- Make explicit connections between traditional or historical materials and contemporary questions or issues
- Make explicit connections between the topic of the course and enduring questions of human life
- Incorporate the perspective or method of another discipline
- Global Differences or Social Justice: Foster an ethical awareness of global connections and inequities; consider impact on society and on different groups of people
- Address the role of the discipline in the human search for truth, including the relationship between faith and reason in that search
- Incorporate active, participatory learning experiences or focus on writing or quantitative reasoning in an intensive way
Ensure academic rigor

All Core courses will be academically rigorous. They will ask students to engage with complex concepts and challenging texts. Each Core course will require students to take on a significant workload (~6 hours per week of work outside of class on average over the semester). Core courses should require regular assignments and/or problems sets and should include mid-semester and final graded work. Core courses should aim for a median grade no higher than B+.

Develop communication skills for the 21st century, building towards written, oral, and/or visual eloquence.

Communication, especially through writing, is by nature an active effort to organize and express ideas. Effective writing requires critical thinking skills as well as knowledge about the writing process, awareness of rhetorical situations and audience, and knowledge of the conventions of grammar, rhetoric, syntax, documentation, and genre. Courses will inevitably differ in the ways they incorporate different forms of communication. While many Core courses should contain a strong writing component, faculty may choose to incorporate other communication skills, considering written and oral eloquence and visual presentation across a variety of print and digital media.

Courses should incorporate multiple opportunities for students to practice and get feedback in the chosen form(s) of communication. There are many possibilities for incorporating writing: Written exams, term papers and shorter papers (especially if students are expected to revise them), journals, overnight position papers based on class discussion or reading assignments, in-class reflections designed to feed into discussion, free-writing exercises in class, even question-box submissions. Examples for other forms of communication include presentations, posters, talks, debates, wiki articles, and videos.

Enduring Question courses should incorporate multiple opportunities for students to practice and get feedback in the chosen form(s) of communication. To build writing skills, students will be required to write at least 2 papers in each of the linked Question courses, comprising ~25 pages total over the course of the semester. Students should receive ample feedback on their writing and have opportunity to revise. Writing fellows will be available to assist if faculty choose to work with them.

Global Differences/Social Justice: Foster an ethical awareness of global connections and inequities; consider impact on society and on different groups of people

21st century society is both extremely diverse, at home and abroad, and more tightly connected as a global world. Preparing students to work and live collaboratively with people of different backgrounds and beliefs is crucial for their future success. To this end, students must develop an awareness of global connections and inequities, in order to understand their own place in relation to cultural, economic, historical, political, religious and social currents. Students should also consider the ways in which different groups – defined by region, nation, culture, religion, race, class and/or gender – might perceive, interpret and feel the impact of the same topic differently based on their values, customs, and circumstances.
## Hypothetical Student Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshman Fall</th>
<th>Freshman Spring</th>
<th>Sophomore Fall</th>
<th>Sophomore Spring</th>
<th>Junior Fall</th>
<th>Junior Spring</th>
<th>Senior Fall</th>
<th>Senior Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Enduring Questions</strong> 6 credits</td>
<td><strong>Complex Problem</strong> 6 credits</td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Major Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foreign Language or Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Foreign Language or Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foreign Language or Exploration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Exploration FWS 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foreign Language or Exploration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploration 3 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students may study abroad in their Junior year.*
Community of Inquiry Examples

Listed below are hypothetical examples of Enduring Questions and Complex Problem courses. These ideas were suggested on the Wiki and by individual departments. Beginning in fall 2013, the CRC will invite proposals from faculty and departments to develop new Enduring Questions and Complex Problem courses.

**Enduring Questions**
- Self and Society
- Being Human
- Man and Nature
- Justice and the Good Society
- Faith and Doubt

**Complex Problems**
- Terrorism
- Human Rights
- US and the World
- Health Disparities
- Global Wealth and Poverty
- Aging and Society
- Climate Change
- Cities and Urban Life
- Where will Energy Come From?