John Jay College of Criminal Justice
The Task Force on General Education

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The Task Force would like to thank the following for their time, expertise, and advice: Professor Schevaletta Alford, Chair of SEEK; Gail Hauss, Director of Institutional Research; and Professor Karen Kaplowitz, English and President of the Faculty Senate. For assistance with preparation of this report, we would are also grateful to Professor Nancy Egan of the Library and Justine Ganz of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching. We would especially like to express our thanks to Sandrine Dikambi and the staff of the Office of Undergraduate Studies for handling everything else with grace and good sense.
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Executive Summary

The Task Force on General Education was convened in the Spring of 2007 by Jane Bowers, who was then Dean of Undergraduate Studies and is now Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Bowers charged the group to study General Education at John Jay, at our sister CUNY campuses, and at colleges and universities around the country and to produce a report to the community that would help us to assess the status of our nearly four-decades-old General Education program in the contexts of a national General Education reform movement and a parallel CUNY-wide initiative. This report is the result of the Task Force’s research and deliberations. It does not propose a new or modified curriculum but rather lays out an array of issues and options that may guide curricular development.

“General Education is so important to our students that institutions should always be seeking to improve the program,” says a leader in the field.¹ John Jay’s General Education program was first developed in the 1960s and underwent revision in 1975 and 1989 when requirements in ethnic studies, philosophy and physical education were added. In the 1990s, the General Education program requirements were reduced slightly because CUNY mandated a cap of 120 credits for the baccalaureate degree at all campuses. Beyond these minor modifications, however, the structure of the program has remained essentially unchanged for more than thirty years.

The Task Force found that the original design, intent, and coherence of our General Education program have eroded over the years, due in large part to fiscal constraints and a lack of program oversight, and that today’s students and faculty are neither aware of its pedigree nor excited about teaching or taking the courses. By examining both traditional and innovative General Education programs at institutions from the Ivy League to urban community colleges, the Task Force discovered a wide variety of designs and strategies that might serve as models for revitalizing our own program. For example, while our current program is foundational—all of the courses are at the 100 and 200 levels—many campuses have General Education programs that scaffold the undergraduate experience from first semester to senior year.

In June 2008, six members of our Task Force attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Institute on General Education, a selective, annual program that brings together campus representatives and national and international experts in establishing goals and devising General Education programs tailored to the specific needs of individual institutions. One of the most important ideas the team brought back from the experience was the value of adopting a set of transparent learning objectives, not just for the General Education program, but across all aspects of the undergraduate curriculum, including majors and co-curricular activities (e.g., internships, study abroad, service learning, club activity, student governance, etc.).

The report offers two sets of goals and objectives gleaned from the Task Force’s multi-faceted study of best practices in General Education. First are the Proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College. Second are Guiding Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College (see pages 3 and 5). The Task Force invites the College community to participate in a campus-wide conversation about the Learning Objectives and

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Guiding Principles so that they can be revised and presented for adoption by the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards and, ultimately, by the College Council in Spring 2009.

The report is organized into seven chapters on

- Rethinking General Education at John Jay College
- The Process and Methodology used by the Task Force on General Education at John Jay College
- The History and Status of the General Education program at John Jay College
- Proposed Institutional Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College
- Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College
- Models of General Education
- The Future of General Education at John Jay College

John Jay’s General Education program is poised at the confluence of sweeping transformations. We are witnessing the rapid emergence of what President Jeremy Travis calls “the New John Jay.” Among the many changes underway, we are in the process of phasing out associate degree programs and transitioning to senior college status; raising admissions standards; reintroducing liberal arts majors; reorganizing academic departments; and assimilating more than 145 additional tenure-track faculty hired since 2005. We are also stepping up our emphasis on global study, implementing educational partnerships with the six CUNY community colleges, and preparing to welcome the additional transfer students those partnerships will channel to the College in the next couple of years.

In this context, the Task Force offers its findings and is excited to welcome the rest of the faculty, as well as students, staff, and administrators into the conversation about the purpose, goals, and strategies that will re-shape our General Education program. Over the coming months, members of the Task Force will meet with the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards, the Council of Chairs, the Faculty Senate, the Council of Coordinators of Majors and Programs, the Student Council, and individual departments when invited, to hear feedback on the report and its recommendations.

We understand that discussions about changes to John Jay’s General Education program have been difficult in the past and that caring and well-intentioned people may hold widely divergent views about what will best serve the College and our students. The Task Force intends the process of sharing our findings and collecting reactions to be positive, transparent, and inclusive. We are confident that the mutual commitment to student success that has always distinguished the John Jay College community will keep our purpose, our discourse, and our aspirations high.
Proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Reasoning and Analysis: the ability to
- observe, sort, prioritize, and structure evidence;
- analyze different kinds of data;
- understand the distinction between evaluative and factual statements;
- solve problems through evidence-based inquiry (i.e., recognizing, using, and evaluating evidence in support of a hypothesis, theory, or principle);
- employ mathematical methods in the service of inquiry and quantitative and comparative analysis.

Communication Literacy: the ability to
- communicate clearly in standard written and spoken English;
- understand and target an audience;
- comprehend and discuss complex material, including texts, media, and numerical data;
- comprehend not only the broad or general points, but also the small details and nuances that contribute to (or complicate) the larger meanings of texts and other sources of information and knowledge;
- maintain self-awareness and critical distance as a reader/viewer/listener or as a producer of texts and other sources of information.

Information Literacy: the ability to
- understand how information in various formats is generated and organized;
- find and navigate appropriate resources in print and electronic formats;
- critically evaluate information for usefulness, currency, authenticity, objectivity and bias;
- recognize the importance of point of view in understanding, interpreting, and evaluating sources of information;
- understand issues surrounding plagiarism, copyright, and intellectual property and cite sources appropriately;
- use information in an effective and responsible manner.

Technological and Computer Literacy: the ability to
- conduct complex and dynamic Internet and database searches;
- use technologies to construct and disseminate their own knowledge and opinions;
- use common workplace software applications.
**Ethical Practice:** the ability to
- cultivate self-understanding by situating one’s own experiences and perceptions in historical, cultural, and psychological contexts;
- use cross-cultural knowledge to explore multiple perspectives and ways of understanding;
- articulate the ethical dimensions of personal, academic, social, and political issues and choices;
- be an informed and responsible citizen of the world.

**Creativity:** the ability to
- understand artistic expression as a form of inquiry and problem solving, and problem-solving as a form of creativity;
- recognize and experience some of the methods and forms of artistic and imaginative expression.

**Intellectual Maturity:** the ability to
- be curious, tolerate ambiguity and disagreement, persist in the face of obstacles, and achieve critical distance;
- live a “good life” by developing the habits of introspection, personal and civic responsibility, and communication necessary for effective interaction with others;
- understand and embrace learning as a life-long process that enriches and gives meaning to daily experience.

**Essential Knowledge:** some familiarity with
- world history and the historical contexts of world languages, religions, and cultures;
- science and scientific methodologies and approaches to knowledge;
- the ideas of major thinkers and the works of major writers and artists;
- the nature and operations of various economic and political systems;
- the grammar, vocabulary, and syntax of another language;
- the social, political, and economic institutions of the United States;
- global interdependence; the impact on other parts of the world of seemingly disparate social, political, economic, cultural and environmental phenomena;
- the ways that technologies, information, and culture interact.
Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College

To provide a framework for decision-making and the design of a revised General Education program at John Jay, the Task Force on General Education distilled its findings of best practices into a set of nine guiding principles. They are presented below and followed by extended discussions of Principles 1, 3, 5 and 9. We also provide examples of those principles in action at other institutions. As with the Learning Objectives, our goal is to achieve campus-wide consensus and have the principles ratified by the College Council in Spring 2009.

An Effective General Education Program at John Jay will:

1. **Have a clear purpose** that can be succinctly stated and explained and has a distinct identity at and beyond our campus. The purpose can relate directly or indirectly to the mission of the college.

2. **Foster, assess, and certify an agreed-upon set of learning objectives**, including skills and/or areas of knowledge.

3. **Scaffold undergraduate education at all stages and include cornerstone, milestone, and capstone experiences**. Learning objectives should be embedded across the curriculum at developmentally appropriate stages throughout the student’s career. The General Education program should include upper-level courses that provide opportunities to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge acquired in lower-level courses and to demonstrate progress toward meeting the learning objectives. There should also be a reciprocal relationship between General Education and the majors, so that the learning objectives are reinforced consistently across all facets of the student’s academic program. Co-curricular activities might also be incorporated into the overall structure of the General Education program.

4. **Enjoy high institutional priority**. The college could demonstrate this by: 1) establishing a faculty committee to oversee General Education; 2) creating the position of a faculty coordinator or dean for General Education; 3) funding faculty development programs and providing incentives for faculty to create, teach, and assess the General Education program and courses; 4) recognizing the scholarship of teaching and learning as equal to traditional disciplinary scholarship (thus the Office for the Advancement of Research would value and reward both, as would the faculty personnel process); and 5) recognizing faculty participation in pre-major advising.

5. **Focus on pedagogy**. An integrated General Education program considers not only what is to be taught but how. A variety of learning-centered teaching strategies should be marshaled to meet the Learning Objectives. The college should provide significant support for teaching faculty through formal training and informal curricular and pedagogical exchange. The new Center for the Advancement of Teaching provides a faculty-centered venue for these development activities.
6. **Be deliberately and explicitly student-centered.** The General Education program should be tailored to the particular needs and interests of the John Jay student body and responsive to changes over time in those needs and interests. This student-centered approach might be achieved by some or all of the following: 1) availability of pre-major academic advisement for students; 2) acknowledgement and accommodation of different perspectives, learning styles, and “ways of knowing”; 3) development of interactive pedagogies; and 4) engagement with Student Development staff to develop a holistic approach to supporting student achievement.

7. **Provide one or more common experiences for ALL students.** General Education puts its “signature” on all graduates. All students would share one or more common academic experience(s): these might be one or more core courses, a research project, a service-learning experience, or something else yet to be imagined.

8. **Build community among all JJC constituencies** by: 1) building on a shared commitment to the Learning Objectives; 2) encouraging cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary communication and collaboration among faculty; 3) developing a sense of “JJC citizenship” in students; and 4) creating and strengthening connections among students, faculty, administrators, staff, and alumni/ae through research projects, discussions, mentoring and advisement, internships, and other activities.

9. **Be Flexible and Accountable.** Assessment, review, and revision should: 1) be built into the General Education program; 2) occur regularly and systematically; and 3) involve alumni, potential employers, and graduate programs, as well as current students and faculty.
I. Introduction: Rethinking General Education at John Jay College

John Jay and the National General Education Reform Movement

General Education reform is a national movement. Led in large part by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), campuses across the country, from community colleges to the Ivy League, are rethinking the purposes, goals, structures, pedagogies, and means of assessing their General Education programs. Even the venerable Columbia College Core is being revamped—at a cost of $50 million—to include multicultural perspectives.

It was in the context of this national movement that in the Fall of 2006 Jane Bowers, then Dean of Undergraduate Studies at John Jay, initiated a multi-year review of our own General Education program with the goal of identifying ways to improve our offerings. Campus-wide, exploratory faculty workshops were held between September 2006 and February 2007, and in March 2007, with consultation from the Faculty Senate, Dean Bowers convened and charged a Task Force to study General Education at John Jay, at our sister CUNY campuses, and at colleges and universities around the country. The Task Force, comprised mainly of faculty whose interest in taking a closer look at General Education emerged out of their participation in the initial workshops, eventually expanded to include thirteen faculty members and four members of the administration. They met throughout the 2007-2008 academic year to share research and deliberate on which practices in General Education would best meet the needs of our unique institution. The Task Force on General Education includes:

- C. Jama Adams, Assistant Professor and Chair of African American Studies
- Valerie Allen, Professor and Deputy Chair of English
- Andrea Balis, Lecturer in History
- Rosemary Barberet, Associate Professor in Sociology
- Dara Byrne, Assistant Professor of Communication and Theater Arts
- Anthony Carpi, Associate Professor of Science
- Meghan Duffy, Interim Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) and Adjunct Faculty in Interdisciplinary Studies Program
- Katie Gentile, Associate Professor of Counseling and Director of the Women’s Center
- Lior Gideon, Assistant Professor of Law, Police Science, and Criminal Justice Administration
- Elisabeth Gitter, Professor Emerita of English and Interdisciplinary Studies
- Amy Green, Associate Professor of Communications and Theater Arts and Deputy Chair of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program (Task Force Chair)
- Kathy Killoran, Academic Director of Undergraduate Studies
The CUNY General Education Reform Project

Our work was also undertaken in the context of a CUNY-wide initiative to bring General Education at the University’s constituent campuses into alignment with best practices nationwide. In 2003, CUNY kicked off a university-wide General Education Project that called for “those closest to teaching students—academic deans and faculty—[to] collectively examine the promise and the practices of General Education of their own colleges within the context of the integrated university.”

A 2007 anthology of essays by CUNY faculty and administrators, Reclaiming the Public University: Conversations on General & Liberal Education, calls General Education at CUNY “the vast unrecognized ground we stand on” and calls for the colleges to “deliver on [the] promise . . . to educate [our students] for a new, increasingly complicated world.” The General Education Project holds regular meetings of undergraduate deans, has sponsored four annual conferences, and published the aforementioned anthology.

General Education reform processes have already resulted in new programs at Brooklyn, City, Hunter, Baruch, and Queens Colleges. Experiences of developing and implementing new curricula at our sister campuses hold valuable lessons for us at John Jay, both in terms of models to emulate and cautionary tales of mistakes to avoid. The Provost at Hunter College, for example, blames “botched implementation” of its 2001 General Education revision for a failure of confidence and an inability to offer the courses students needed to meet requirements. In the summer of 2007, Hunter formed a committee to investigate what went wrong and to suggest options for yet another new program.

General Education Reform at John Jay College

“General Education is so important to our students that institutions should always be seeking to improve the program,” says a leader in the field. John Jay’s General Education program was first developed in the 1960s and underwent revision in 1975 and 1989 when requirements in ethnic studies, philosophy and physical education were added. In the 1990s, the General Education program requirements were reduced slightly because

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2 CUNY Office of Undergraduate Education. General Education Initiative Memorandum, 2003.
CUNY mandated a cap of 120 credits for the baccalaureate degree at all campuses. Beyond these minor modifications, however, the structure of the program has remained essentially unchanged for more than 30 years.

John Jay’s General Education program is poised at the confluence of sweeping transformations. On the local level, we are witnessing the rapid emergence of what President Jeremy Travis calls “the New John Jay.” Currently, the College is

- phasing out associate degree programs and transitioning to senior college status;
- raising admissions standards;
- reintroducing liberal arts majors;
- reorganizing academic departments;
- assimilating more than 145 additional tenure-track faculty hired since 2005;
- establishing new centers for research in such areas as prisoner reentry; race, crime, and media; and critical incident analysis.

Furthermore, the College has stepped up its emphasis on global study, as evidenced by the proposal for a major in Global History, the development of the Masters in International Crime and Justice, and the popularity of the major in International Criminal Justice. New educational partnerships with the six CUNY community colleges will soon bring an even higher percentage of upper-level transfer students to John Jay to complete their baccalaureate degrees. All of these changes are giving the institution powerful jolts of intellectual energy. Given this transformation and the national attention now focused on the quality of General Education, a review of John Jay’s program is timely indeed.

**About This Report**

This report reflects the Task Force on General Education’s year-long investigation. The following chapters focus on:

- The Process and Methodology used by the Task Force on General Education at John Jay College;
- The History and Status of the General Education program at John Jay College;
- Proposed Institutional Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College;
- Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College;
- Models of General Education;
- The Future of General Education at John Jay College.

The Task Force proposes a campus-wide vetting process for the ideas and recommendations contained in this report. We are eager to hear responses and fresh ideas from faculty, students, staff, and members of the administration. We plan to emulate the successful processes through which we came to consensus on the 2005-2006 Critical
Choices decision to transition to senior college status and on the revised College Charter of Governance that was passed at the College Council in April 2008. We look forward to meeting faculty, staff, administrators, and students in formal and informal settings and to incorporate ideas and suggestions from every College constituency.

We understand that discussions about changes to John Jay’s General Education program have been difficult in the past and that caring and well-intentioned people may hold widely divergent views about what will best serve the College and our students. We intend this process to be positive, transparent, and inclusive. We are confident that the mutual commitment to student success that has always distinguished the John Jay College community will keep our purpose, our discourse, and our aspirations high.

II. Process and Methodology

Setting the Stage for the Task Force

John Jay’s General Education reform process completed its second full year in June 2008. In Phase One (Fall 2006), faculty from across our college responded to an open invitation to attend workshops designed both to stimulate thinking about the goals and practices of General Education at John Jay and to identify an initial set of skills, concepts, texts and knowledge bases that we as a faculty want our students to acquire. In the first set of workshops, participants reflected on the highlights of their own undergraduate experiences. They were asked what made a great course and/or a great professor, what drew them to their major or discipline, and what texts, broadly defined, every college student should encounter (see Appendix A).

In Phase Two (Spring 2007), faculty volunteers attended workshops where they shared their experiences as teachers of General Education courses at John Jay and elsewhere. They were given an opportunity to work in small, interdisciplinary groups to plan a hypothetical General Education course on the theme of order and disorder. The diverse syllabi proposed that day were highly innovative, both in content and pedagogy, and the faculty clearly had a great time coming up with their ideas (see Appendix B).

Altogether, almost 200 faculty members representing all 19 academic departments participated in Phases 1 and 2. The ideas generated in these workshops were essential to the work that would follow in Phase Three—the work of the Task Force on General Education.

What did the Task Force Do?

The Task Force took a multi-pronged approach. Over the summer of 2007, Task Force members read Strong Foundations: Twelve Principles for Effective General Education Programs (AAC&U, 1994) and collected data about General Education programs at a wide variety of colleges and universities throughout the United States. These ranged from large public institutions like ours, to small, liberal arts colleges with significantly different levels of resources and student preparation. In Fall 2008, we shared our research, considered the relative merits of different models, compared John Jay’s requirements in math, science, foreign language, speech, and physical education to those
at other CUNY campuses (see Appendix C), and formulated Learning Objectives and guiding Principles based on what the faculty told us in workshops, as well as what we had learned through research.

In Spring 2008, the Task Force fanned out across campus to conduct confidential interviews with faculty who teach General Education courses, held a workshop for new faculty who were not on campus for Phases One and Two, convened a focus group of graduating seniors to hear their impressions of General Education at John Jay, and made calls to campuses whose General Education programs and reform processes seemed to make sense.

We also learned, mid-semester, that we had been accepted to attend the AAC&U Institute on General Education held at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, May 31-June 4, 2008. A team of six Task Force members (Valerie Allen, Andrea Balis, Meghan Duffy, Lior Gideon, Amy Green, and José Luis Morín) attended. Under the guidance of Institute faculty, they were able to situate John Jay’s General Education in a national context and to affirm and refine the process, objectives, and principles that are reflected in this document.

**How will the Task Force Report be used?**

This report is the result of the Task Force’s year-long investigation. It is intended to inform the community about regional and national trends in General Education and advance the consensus-building process begun in 2006. After hunkering down around the conference table, sharing information and debating (sometimes vigorously) the goals, needs, and potential future of our General Education program, the members of the Task Force are eager to hear the community’s reactions to their work.

In Fall 2008, members of the Task Force will answer questions and hear responses to this report from faculty, students, staff, and administrators in order to build the broadest and most inclusive consensus on the Learning Objectives and guiding Principles with the goal being their formal adoption by the College Council in Spring 2009. We will appear before the Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards Committee, the Council of Chairs, the Council of Coordinators of Majors and Programs, the Student Council, and the Faculty Senate. We will also attend departmental meetings when invited. The conclusion of this report lays out an incremental process and timeline for reaching consensus and for curricular development, implementation, assessment, and revision.

**III. The Status of General Education at John Jay**

**The General Education Program, Past and Present**

John Jay’s General Education program was first developed in the 1960s as a modified version of the Columbia great books Core Curriculum. It underwent minor revisions in 1975 and 1989 when requirements in ethnic studies, philosophy and physical education were added. In the 1990s, the General Education program requirements were reduced slightly because CUNY mandated a cap of 120 credits for all baccalaureate degrees. Beyond these minor modifications, however, the structure of the program has remained
essentially unchanged for more than 30 years. Our General Education requirements are all at the 100 and 200 levels and include basic skills courses in English, speech and mathematics as well as components in the humanities, arts, social sciences, science, and physical education.

Despite its historical pedigree, however, General Education at John Jay has an identity problem. The Task Force discovered that today few students or faculty are aware of its origins or see it as a coherent and intellectually rigorous curriculum. The program is presented in the bulletin and in advising and registration materials as a laundry list of skills, core, and distribution requirements with the vague promise that they will create “well-rounded individuals.” This is how the program is presented in the 2008-2009 Undergraduate Bulletin:
GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for the baccalaureate degree who enrolled at the College for the first time in September 1989 or thereafter must complete 37-57 credits in the General Education requirements listed below. Students are encouraged and advised to complete the requirements in English, speech and mathematics within their first 30 credits, and the requirements in history, literature, philosophy, ethnic studies, and those in the social sciences that are prerequisites for their majors within their first 60 credits. All remaining General Education requirements should be completed within the first 96 credits, i.e., by the conclusion of the student’s junior year.

Students who enrolled at the College prior to September 1989 may apply the General Distribution Requirements then in force toward their degrees. A copy of those requirements may be obtained at the Office of the Registrar or the Office of the Associate Provost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BACCALAUREATE DEGREE</th>
<th>GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Skills</td>
<td>Subtotal: 12-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>English 101 or SEEK-English 995</td>
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<tr>
<td>(These courses are a prerequisite for all courses at the 200-level.)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>English 201 (formerly English 102)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(This course is a prerequisite for all courses at the 300-level or above.)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech 113 or SEEK-Speech 115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics 104, or 105 or exemption 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics 108 or 141</td>
<td>0-3</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>II. Core Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>History 231 and 232</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature 230 or 231 and Literature 232 or 233</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy 231</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>III. Distribution Requirements</td>
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<td>A. Cultural Studies</td>
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<td>1. Foreign Languages 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Note: To take SPA 101, SPA 111, FRE 101, RUS 101, or RUS 113 a placement test is required before registering. The tests are administered in the Foreign Language Laboratory in Room 112W.)</td>
<td>0-6</td>
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<td>2. Ethnic Studies 3</td>
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<td>Select one of the following three courses:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Studies 123: Race and American Society:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The African-American Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Studies 124: Puerto Ricans and Other Hispanics in American Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Studies 125: Race and Ethnicity in America</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>III. Distribution Requirements continued</td>
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<td>B. Social Sciences 6</td>
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<td>Select two of the following:</td>
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<td>Anthropology 101</td>
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<td>Economics 101 or 102</td>
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<td>Government 101</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Psychology 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology 101</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students should consult their major prerequisites before choosing their social science courses.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Natural Sciences 0-4</td>
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<td>Natural Science 107 or exemption</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Select one of the following:</td>
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<td>Environmental Science 108, Forensic Science 108, or Physics 108</td>
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<td>Physics 101 or Physics 203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(calculus-based, for students with a strong math background)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology 103 or Chemistry 103</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(for students with a strong science background)</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any course offered by the Department of Physical Education and Athletics except PED 172, for 1-3 credits or exemption 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 44-60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Students must enroll in ENG 101 or ENGS 095 in their first semester at the College except for those who are required to take remedial or developmental work in writing. All students must pass ENG 101 or ENGS 095 before registering for ENG 201 (formerly English 102). Placement in the required English and mathematics courses is based upon results achieved on the CUNY Skills Assessment Tests and upon assessments by the Department of English and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. For information about the CUNY Skills Assessment Tests, see Chapter 5, Admission and Registration.

**Note: Students with a strong mathematics or science background without an exemption may satisfy the general education science requirement with two laboratory-based science courses such as BIO 103-104, CHE 103-104, PHY 101-102, PHY 203-204, or the equivalent.

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1. Exemption from the speech requirement is granted by the Department of Communications and Theatre Arts is based on extensive job-related public or small group speaking experience. Apply at the department when classes are in session. Students who are not fluent in spoken English should enroll in the sections of SPE 113 designated for non-native speakers of English. Students who require speech therapy should also apply to the department chair for special placement before they register for SPE 113.

2. Placement in or exemption from a beginning mathematics course is determined by the student’s score on the CUNY Mathematics Compass Test. Students exempt from MAT 105 can fulfill the mathematics requirement with either MAT 108 or MAT 141.

3. The foreign language requirement is a one-year sequence. It is strongly suggested that students seeking a bachelor’s degree complete the sequence within a three-semester period. Students, who have completed three years of a language at the high school level, including a passing grade on a New York State Level III Regents Examination, are exempt from the foreign language requirement. Transfer students who can provide documentation showing they have successfully completed one year of a foreign language on the college level may have fulfilled the foreign language requirement.

**Please note:** Students who can provide documentation of a high school degree from a foreign country and whose primary language is not English are exempt from the foreign language requirement but are not awarded any credits. Students who receive a grade of three or higher on the Advanced Placement Examination in high school are exempt from the foreign language requirement and will be awarded 6 credits, which may be applied toward a minor in a foreign language. Credit by examination (up to a maximum of 6 credits) or exemption by examination may be obtained by taking the CLEP examination. For additional information, see Chapter 5, Admission and Registration. In addition, American Sign Language shall be accepted on the same basis as all other languages in fulfillment of John Jay's foreign language requirement for graduation.

4. Students who have completed three years of science in high school (9th-year general science plus two years of New York State Regents credit) are exempt from taking NSC 107 but are still required to take another laboratory-based science course. To confirm exemption, students must fill out the appropriate form at the Office of the Registrar. Students who have completed two years of science in high school (9th-year general science plus one year of Regents credit) must take NSC 107 and one additional course, or pass a placement examination and then take one course other than NSC 107. Students cannot take NSC 107 after they have taken any other science course at John Jay College.

5. Students who have received physical education credit for their military training, or police, fire, or corrections academy, or other comparable agency training are exempt from this requirement.
The proliferation of footnotes to explain the exemptions and permutations of the General Education program suggests that it is difficult to navigate and often does not achieve its intended coherence.

**The Politics of General Education at John Jay**

As on many other college campuses, decisions about General Education at John Jay have sometimes been based on political rather than educational considerations. Discussions of General Education can center on matters of “turf” and whether or not departments will “win or lose” a slot in the program. In these instances, the needs of students can fall by the wayside. This common mistake has been exacerbated at John Jay since the fiscal crisis of 1976 forced us to abandon liberal arts majors. Departments were thereafter divided into “mission” and “service” departments, the latter of which have worried that their very survival depended on preserving their participation in the General Education program. That climate is changing now that we are developing majors in the liberal arts. This should give us breathing space to step back from old habits and start a fresh conversation about the General Education program.

**Who teaches General Education courses?**

*Avoiding the Potholes* on the Curricular Highway (1980) is Jerry Gaff’s landmark reference guide to General Education reform. When members of the Task Force met the author at the AAC&U Institute in June 2008, he noted an essential irony in the politics that often surround decisions about General Education. After hotly contested battles over which departments win or lose slots in the program, victorious departments often hand over the teaching responsibilities for their General Education courses to adjuncts so that their full-time faculty are free to focus on electives or courses in the major.

Here again, historic realities at John Jay exacerbate the problem. When the General Education program was first formulated at John Jay, virtually every section of every course was taught by full-time faculty. However, decades of increasing student enrollment and under-funding of the College forced us to rely heavily on part-timers. In Fall 2006, adjuncts taught 73 out of 75 sections of English 101; 49 out of 65 sections of Speech 113; 25 out of 32 sections of Government 101; and 25 out of 26 sections of Psychology 101.

**Implications for Student Achievement and Retention**

Over-reliance on part-time faculty, especially in the freshman year, can have serious negative consequences for students. Research has shown that instruction by full-time faculty in the freshman year has a significant positive impact on student retention and academic success. Dr. Audrey Jaeger, associate professor of higher education at North Carolina State University conducted a study that found that students whose “gateway” courses were taught by part-timers were “far more likely to drop out” than students

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whose first year included courses taught by full-time faculty. The problem was not the competence or dedication of the adjuncts, many of whom, as we know from our own experience, are first-rate teachers. According to Jaeger, lack of availability outside of class due to teaching at multiple institutions, inadequate office space and equipment, etc., are among the obstacles to establishing a meaningful connection between the student and the institution via the faculty.

The national average drop-out rate between freshman and sophomore years is 26%. John Jay’s drop-out rate is even higher at roughly 30%. There may be a connection between this figure and the extremely low percentage of entry-level General Education courses taught by full-time faculty.

One of the goals of an invigorated General Education program at John Jay would be to make teaching General Education courses more attractive and rewarding to full-time faculty. This change may be more feasible due to the hiring of 146 additional full-time faculty members in the past three years. Increased numbers of full-timers and senior faculty who opt to participate in a revised General Education program will be one measure of its success.

IV. Proposed Institutional Learning Objectives

A Shift toward Learning-centered General Education

In its 2006 report, Greater Expectations: the Commitment to Quality as a Nation Goes to College, the AAC&U urges a shift away from a predominantly content-based teaching model organized along strict disciplinary lines toward a learning-centered approach grounded in clearly articulated objectives for students’ overall intellectual, ethical, and personal development.

“The fragmentation of the curriculum into a collection of independently ‘owned’ courses is itself an impediment to student accomplishment,” the report stated. “A college degree more frequently certifies completion of disconnected fragments than of a coherent plan for student accomplishment.” Intentionally designed, developmentally scaffolded General Education programs that encompass coursework, co-curricular activities (such as internships, clubs, study abroad), and students’ professional lives empower students to synthesize what they are learning, monitor their own progress, and acquire the essential abilities to “adapt to new environments, integrate knowledge from different sources, and continue learning throughout their lives.” To this end, the AAC&U published a set of

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4 To see more about the study, go to http://ced.ncsu.edu/edu/ahe/announcements/jaeger-news.php.
5 This is a weighted average based on the 2007 enrollment figures for entering baccalaureate (9,268) and associate (3,365) students and preliminary 2008 retention figures of 72% and 63%, respectively. Enrollment numbers from Fall/2007 Fact Sheet. New York: Office of Institutional Research, John Jay College, retrieved from http://inside.jjay.cuny.edu/docs/research/f2007fs.pdf. Preliminary retention figures are from Gail Hauss, Director, Institutional Research, email transmission dated Oct. 17, 2008.
6 AAC&U website: http://www.aacu.org/gex/index.cfm
Essential Learning Outcomes for the 21st century (2007) to prompt campus communities to deliberate the competencies and areas of knowledge that are best suited to the mission, goals and students at their particular institutions. The Task Force began its consideration of learning objectives for John Jay College with this list:

The Essential Learning Outcomes

Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Integrative Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning: analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College (2002), Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree (2004), and Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Achievement in College (2005). Liberal Education Outcomes is available online at www.aacc.org/leap.
What do Employers look for in College Graduates?

In 2008, the AAC&U followed up with a commissioned study of what employers value most in college graduates. The study found that most graduates are well prepared for entry level positions but lack the intellectual flexibility, self-direction, and leadership qualities needed for promotion. The following table indicates the percentage of employers who want colleges to “place more emphasis” on these Essential Learning Outcomes:

### Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- Science and technology: 82%
- Global issues: 72%*
- The role of United States in the world: 60%
- Cultural values/traditions (U.S./global): 53%*

### Intellectual and Practical Skills
- Teamwork skills in diverse groups: 76%*
- Critical thinking and analytic reasoning: 73%
- Written and oral communication: 73%
- Information literacy: 70%
- Creativity and innovation: 70%
- Complex problem solving: 64%
- Quantitative reasoning: 60%

### Personal and Social Responsibility
- Intercultural competence (teamwork in diverse groups): 76%*
- Intercultural knowledge (global issues): 72%*
- Ethics and values: 56%
- Cultural values/traditions--U.S./global: 53%*

### Integrative Learning
- Applied knowledge in real-world settings: 73%

* Three starred items are shown in two learning outcome categories because they apply to both.

These findings are taken from a Survey of Business Leaders commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and conducted by Peter D. Hart Associates in November/December 2006.
**Why do Colleges and Universities Adopt Institutional Learning Objectives?**

Campuses across the country have discovered that overarching undergraduate learning objectives are best met when they are adopted as institutional goals rather than relegated to the province of General Education alone. Ann Ferren, a member of the AAC&U Institute faculty, asserts that General Education is least effective when it operates under the “inoculation” model in which, for example, a single shot of English composition is supposed to immunize students against writing problems for the rest of their education.

At Brooklyn College/CUNY, for example, professors are asked to consider what they want their students to learn rather than what they want to teach. 8 The University of Charleston curriculum is “outcomes-based” and designed to build competencies in a set of Liberal Learning Outcomes. “Each course and degree program has clear statements about the skills or knowledge a student must demonstrate (competencies), to meet a specific learning goal (outcome), the levels of achievement expected (standard), and how each level of achievement is to be measured (assessment). Students and faculty therefore have a shared understanding of learning expectations.”9

Higher-order skills of critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and oral and written communication cannot be developed in a single course. Writing and speaking at the levels at which we expect John Jay graduates to perform takes years of practice, trial and error, and feedback. Effective training cannot be confined to a set of introductory courses with no formal relationship to work in the majors. Any changes to the current General Education program should grow out of a college-wide commitment to meeting agreed-upon objectives for every undergraduate student. The Task Force on General Education recommends, therefore, that the college first adopt a set of Institutional Learning Objectives for undergraduate education at John Jay College.

**How will Institutional Learning Objectives Improve Educational Outcomes at John Jay College?**

At its current size of up to 57 credits out of the 120 required for the baccalaureate degree, General Education is by far the single largest component of the undergraduate program at John Jay College. Yet, our research indicates that both students and faculty are ambivalent about it. A clearly articulated set of Learning Objectives would make clear to everyone what we expect our students to accomplish en route to the bachelor’s degree and the role of General Education in meeting those expectations.

The Task Force heard time and again from seniors in our focus group, from faculty who teach General Education courses, from counselors, and from research at other campuses that students often question why they have to take General Education courses. We owe them a meaningful response. When asked to state their reasons for attending John Jay, John Jay students most frequently replied: this college offers programs/majors that interest me. Ninety percent of the students surveyed listed this as one of their reasons for

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8 Brooklyn College website: [http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/portal/core/](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/portal/core/)
attending John Jay. In other words, an overwhelming majority of John Jay students come here because of our criminal-justice and public-service oriented majors. However, John Jay welcomes these students to campus with a roster of 14 entry-level General Education requirements whose relevance to those majors is not apparent to them. It is not surprising, then, that many of our students treat General Education requirements as hurdles to get out of the way so that they can get to the courses they came here to take or as last-minute necessities crammed in immediately before graduation.

Students’ lack of motivation to engage within these courses also has a negative impact on the morale of General Education faculty. In one-on-one interviews, professors who teach in our current General Education program confided to members of the Task Force that they sometimes feel like second-class citizens, relegated to do the grunt work of General Education while their more fortunate colleagues enjoy the privileges and prestige of teaching electives or courses in the majors. Many of the General Education faculty suspect that students enter courses in their majors pre-disposed to take them seriously because they recognize the intrinsic and pragmatic value of the course content to their academic and career goals. On the other hand, the faculty sense that students are less inclined to appreciate the personal and intellectual rewards of exposure to a diversity of literatures, communities, and modes of inquiry and communication that are not related directly to their major interests. We surmise that low morale is one of the reasons such small numbers of full-time—especially senior—faculty teach General Education courses. At the 100 level, adjuncts teach up to 96% of sections of General Education courses.

John Jay College can do a better job of making the General Education experience as intellectually and personally satisfying as every other part of the curriculum. A signature General Education curriculum that is designed intentionally to meet a transparent set of learning objectives will provide compelling answers to the question “why do I have to take this?” Also, it will lay the groundwork for meaningful assessment of the extent to which we meet identified goals.

**Proposed Learning Objectives for John Jay College**

*The best General Education program is one that is aligned with the learning needs of the students on a specific campus and that the faculty of a campus believe in and teach with passion, commitment, and intentionality—only then can they help their students engage fully with its purposes and opportunities.*

The Task Force on General Education constructed a list of Proposed Learning Objectives from faculty ideas generated at the workshops in Phases One and Two. The faculty said they wanted students to grapple with big ideas, as well as make connections between work in different courses and between the classroom and the real world. They devised lists of “essential texts” that “explore big ideas or important themes and conflicts . . .

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11 Ferren (2008).
transcend boundaries . . . [and] give the reader a sense of mastery and achievement.”

The Task Force compared the items on that initial list to the AAC&U’s LEAP (Liberal Education and America’s Promise) Essential Outcomes and to goals articulated on other campuses. The proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College were distilled through these processes.

The Task Force offers the following list of Learning Objectives for consideration and campus-wide discussion. We hope to see a version of these objectives formally adopted by the appropriate curricular and college-wide governance bodies. As you will see, the Objectives do not reinvent the educational wheel at John Jay. There is much of value in our current General Education offerings. Many of the courses John Jay offers already address one or more of the Learning Objectives and may easily be adapted to fit a revised General Education program. Formal adoption of the Objectives will enable the faculty to map out intentional pathways to student achievement across courses, programs, and co-curricular activities and to keep track of our progress.

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Proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Reasoning and Analysis: the ability to
- observe, sort, prioritize, and structure evidence;
- analyze different kinds of data;
- understand the distinction between evaluative and factual statements;
- solve problems through evidence-based inquiry (i.e., recognizing, using, and evaluating evidence in support of a hypothesis, theory, or principle);
- employ mathematical methods in the service of inquiry and quantitative and comparative analysis.

Communication Literacy: the ability to
- communicate clearly in standard written and spoken English;
- understand and target an audience;
- comprehend and discuss complex material, including texts, media, and numerical data;
- comprehend not only the broad or general points, but also the small details and nuances that contribute to (or complicate) the larger meanings of texts and other sources of information and knowledge;
- maintain self-awareness and critical distance as a reader/viewer/listener or as a producer of texts and other sources of information.

Information Literacy: the ability to
- understand how information in various formats is generated and organized;
- find and navigate appropriate resources in print and electronic formats;
- critically evaluate information for usefulness, currency, authenticity, objectivity and bias;
- recognize the importance of point of view in understanding, interpreting, and evaluating sources of information;
- understand issues surrounding plagiarism, copyright, and intellectual property and cite sources appropriately;
- use information in an effective and responsible manner.

Technological and Computer Literacy: the ability to
- conduct complex and dynamic Internet and database searches;
- use technologies to construct and disseminate their own knowledge and opinions;
- use common workplace software applications.
Ethical Practice: the ability to
• cultivate self-understanding by situating one’s own experiences and perceptions in historical, cultural, and psychological contexts;
• use cross-cultural knowledge to explore multiple perspectives and ways of understanding;
• articulate the ethical dimensions of personal, academic, social, and political issues and choices;
• be an informed and responsible citizen of the world.

Creativity: the ability to
• understand artistic expression as a form of inquiry and problem solving, and problem-solving as a form of creativity;
• recognize and experience some of the methods and forms of artistic and imaginative expression.

Intellectual Maturity: the ability to
• be curious, tolerate ambiguity and disagreement, persist in the face of obstacles, and achieve critical distance;
• live a “good life” by developing the habits of introspection, personal and civic responsibility, and communication necessary for effective interaction with others;
• understand and embrace learning as a life-long process that enriches and gives meaning to daily experience.

Essential Knowledge: some familiarity with
• world history and the historical contexts of world languages, religions, and cultures;
• science and scientific methodologies and approaches to knowledge;
• the ideas of major thinkers and the works of major writers and artists;
• the nature and operations of various economic and political systems;
• the grammar, vocabulary, and syntax of another language;
• the social, political, and economic institutions of the United States;
• global interdependence; the impact on other parts of the world of seemingly disparate social, political, economic, cultural and environmental phenomena;
• the ways that technologies, information, and culture interact.
Questions for a College-wide Dialogue about the Proposed Learning Objectives

We invite every College constituency—faculty, students, staff, administrators, alumni, employers—to join in a campus-wide discussion of the Objectives over the course of the Fall 2008 semester. We look forward to hearing your feedback and refining the list to reflect consensus on the common goals of an undergraduate education at John Jay College. In preparation for those conversations, please consider the following questions:

• Which of these objectives should be given highest priority in a John Jay curriculum?
• Is the list comprehensive? What is missing? Are there items that do not need to be included?
• To what extent can we expect students to meet these objectives in courses at the 100, 200, 300 and 400 levels? How can we set developmental milestones for meeting the objectives?
• How does our current curriculum address the Objectives, and what can we do differently to accomplish them more effectively?
• How can we use the Learning Objectives to form the basis of creative, ongoing assessment strategies?
• What roles can co-curricular opportunities (e.g., internships, study abroad, club leadership, etc.) play in helping students meet these objectives?

V. Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College

To provide a framework for decision-making and the design of a revised General Education program at John Jay, the Task Force on General Education distilled its findings of best practices into a set of nine guiding principles. They are presented below and followed by extended discussions of Principles 1, 3, 5 and 9. We also provide examples of those principles in action at other institutions. As with the Learning Objectives, our goal is to achieve campus-wide consensus and have the principles ratified by the College Council in Spring 2009.

An Effective General Education Program at John Jay will:

1. **Have a clear purpose** that can be succinctly stated and explained and has a distinct identity at and beyond our campus. The purpose can relate directly or indirectly to the mission of the college.

2. **Foster, assess, and certify an agreed-upon set of learning objectives**, including skills and/or areas of knowledge.

3. **Scaffold undergraduate education at all stages and include cornerstone, milestone, and capstone experiences**. Learning objectives should be embedded across the curriculum at developmentally appropriate stages throughout the student’s career. The General Education program should include upper-level courses that provide opportunities to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge
acquired in lower-level courses and to demonstrate progress toward meeting the learning objectives. There should also be a reciprocal relationship between General Education and the majors, so that the learning objectives are reinforced consistently across all facets of the student’s academic program. Co-curricular activities might also be incorporated into the overall structure of the General Education program.

4. **Enjoy high institutional priority.** The college could demonstrate this by: 1) establishing a faculty committee to oversee General Education; 2) creating the position of a faculty coordinator or dean for General Education; 3) funding faculty development programs and providing incentives for faculty to create, teach, and assess the General Education program and courses; 4) recognizing the scholarship of teaching and learning as equal to traditional disciplinary scholarship (thus the Office for the Advancement of Research would value and reward both, as would the faculty personnel process); and 5) recognizing faculty participation in pre-major advising.

5. **Focus on pedagogy.** An integrated General Education program considers not only what is to be taught but how. A variety of learning-centered teaching strategies should be marshaled to meet the Learning Objectives. The college should provide significant support for teaching faculty through formal training and informal curricular and pedagogical exchange. The new Center for the Advancement of Teaching provides a faculty-centered venue for these development activities.

6. **Be deliberately and explicitly student-centered.** The General Education program should be tailored to the particular needs and interests of the John Jay student body and responsive to changes over time in those needs and interests. This student-centered approach might be achieved by some or all of the following: 1) availability of pre-major academic advisement for students; 2) acknowledgement and accommodation of different perspectives, learning styles, and “ways of knowing”; 3) development of interactive pedagogies; and 4) engagement with Student Development staff to develop a holistic approach to supporting student achievement.

7. **Provide one or more common experiences for ALL students.** General Education puts its “signature” on all graduates. All students would share one or more common academic experience(s): these might be one or more core courses, a research project, a service-learning experience, or something else yet to be imagined.

8. **Build community among all JJC constituencies** by: 1) building on a shared commitment to the Learning Objectives; 2) encouraging cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary communication and collaboration among faculty; 3) developing a sense of “JJC citizenship” in students; and 4) creating and strengthening connections among students, faculty, administrators, staff, and alumni/ae through research projects, discussions, mentoring and advisement, internships, and other activities.
9. **Be Flexible and Accountable.** Assessment, review, and revision should: 1) be built into the General Education program; 2) occur regularly and systematically; and 3) involve alumni, potential employers, and graduate programs, as well as current students and faculty.

**Principle 1: An effective General Education program at John Jay College will have a clear purpose** that can be succinctly stated and explained. This purpose can relate directly or indirectly to the mission of the college.

*How Should the General Education Program Relate to the Mission of the College?*

Articulating a distinct mission will give John Jay’s General Education program direction, identity, and coherence.

Given the College’s commitment to educating for justice and the powerful attraction that justice-related study has for our students, we should at least consider aligning the mission of the General Education program with that central theme. Broadly defined, justice encompasses many topics. A decision to align our General Education program with our core mission need not preclude general-interest courses. Just as our current program includes traditional courses in literature, history, philosophy, science, mathematics and the arts as intellectual and ethical preparation for the study of justice, a revised General Education program with a justice focus would have room for a wide variety of disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary courses in the liberal arts. The justice orientation would, however, engage students with the big ideas that brought them to John Jay in the first place and make the rationale for General Education more compelling.

The mission could reinforce the College’s justice orientation. It might focus on big ideas and questions or great books; it might have some other broad but unifying theme or approach. The important goal is for our General Education program to have a bold and compelling identity that engages the imaginations of our students and faculty.

*General Education Mission Statements from Other Colleges:*

A sampling of General Education mission statements from other institutions range from succinct to elaborate:

- **Pennsylvania State University:** “The inclusion of General Education in every degree program reflects Penn State’s deep conviction that successful, satisfying lives require a wide range of skills and knowledge.”

- **Columbia College:** “The Core Curriculum is the cornerstone of a Columbia education. Central to the intellectual mission of the Core is the goal of providing all Columbia students, regardless of their major or concentration, with wide-ranging perspectives on significant ideas and achievements in literature,

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13 Pennsylvania State University website: bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/bluebook/general_education.cfm
philosophy, history, music, art, and science.”\(^{14}\) (See page 47 for a full description of the Columbia Core.)

- **Brooklyn College/CUNY:** “The Core Curriculum aims to broaden awareness, cultivate the intellect, and stimulate the imagination, rather than to provide specific career preparation. The courses are intended to develop mental skills, rather than vocational skill, and in this respect, the courses constitute the best possible long-term preparation for any career.”\(^{15}\) (See page 48 for a description of the Brooklyn Core.)

- **City College/CUNY:** “The new General Education requirement is at the heart of our mission at City College; the City College faculty intend for students to graduate not only with essential reading, writing and quantitative skills, but with the excitement of academic discovery in a variety of disciplines, a strong foundation in critical reasoning and a firm grounding in ethics. The educational mission of The City College of New York is to provide a diverse student body with opportunities to achieve academically, creatively, and professionally in their chosen fields. In particular, it provides that “The College will graduate students who, in addition to demonstrating knowledge and skills in their chosen majors, are able to: 1. Demonstrate critical thinking and levels of oral and written communication that will serve them well during their university years and in their postgraduate, professional, and personal lives; 2. Demonstrate the skills necessary for quantitative reasoning and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis that will enable them to integrate new information and become lifelong learners; 3. Demonstrate an appreciation of arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences, regardless of their fields of concentration, and an awareness of values, cultures, languages, religions, and histories other than their own. 4. Demonstrate the creativity, flexibility, and problem-solving ability needed to succeed in the ever-changing work and educational environment of the 21\(^{st}\) century.”\(^{16}\)

- **Pratt Institute:** “The mission of Pratt’s General Education program is to complement studio practice and to ensure breadth, diversity, and depth in the students’ education through engagement with the ideas and modes of inquiry of different fields of study. Pratt graduates emerge as creative professionals whose work is informed by a critical understanding of their cultural and physical environment and of the ideas and values that have shaped the world’s societies and their own lives and creative work. Based on the belief that creative practice and critical thinking form an integral whole, General Education emphasizes development of visual and verbal intelligence; engagement in critical inquiry and analysis; integration of ideas and approaches from different disciplines; appreciation of human differences and multiple perspectives; and reflection on

\(^{14}\) Columbia University website: http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/

\(^{15}\) Brooklyn College website: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/portal/core/

\(^{16}\) CCNY/CUNY. General Education Mission Statement. 2006.
students’ responsibilities to themselves, to society, and the environment in the creation of original, innovative work.”

Whatever the new or revised General Education program looks like, it will be important to disseminate its mission, goals, and requirements through active internal and external communications. A signature General Education program will also be a powerful recruitment tool for incoming students.

**Principle 3: An effective General Education program at John Jay will scaffold undergraduate education at all stages and include cornerstone, milestone, and capstone experiences.** Learning objectives should be embedded across the curriculum at developmentally appropriate stages throughout the student career. The General Education program should include upper-level courses that provide depth and breadth. Upper-level courses create the knowledge and opportunities for students to integrate and apply the skills acquired in lower-level courses and to demonstrate progress toward meeting the learning objectives. There should be a reciprocal relationship between General Education and the majors, so that the learning objectives are reinforced consistently across all facets of the student’s academic program. Co-curricular activities might also be incorporated into the overall structure of the General Education program.

**Integrated General Education**

Many General Education programs are now designed to support students’ intellectual development from the first semester through graduation. Starting with a freshman seminar or core cluster and continuing through mid-career to senior experiences, these integrated General Education programs reinforce and advance learning in planned sequences, so that students and faculty share clear and transparent expectations and can monitor progress from one level to the next. By including co-curricular activities such as internships, study abroad, service learning, and club activity as the means by which students can meet General Education requirements, schools expand the scope of their programs without necessarily adding credits.

**Cornerstones:**

It is now common for colleges and universities to offer some type of freshman seminar to orient students to college life and the culture and resources of their particular institution. Some of these are 1-credit or no-credit courses that focus primarily on familiarizing students with the campus and with one another. Others are content-rich courses that immerse incoming students in serious college-level study. The Director of the Freshman Year Experience should work closely with the team that designs one or more cornerstone experiences for John Jay’s General Education program. In addition, cornerstone experiences can be adapted to accommodate the needs of incoming transfer students. Below are examples of innovative freshman programs at a variety of CUNY and other public and private institutions.

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Sample cornerstone experiences

• When City College (CCNY/CUNY) revised its General Education program in 2006, it developed a 6-credit Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar (FIQWS), and a 3-credit course in Quantitative Analysis of the Contemporary World (FQUAN). CCNY now offers more than 50 different themed sections of the FIQWS, each co-taught by a full-time faculty member and a paid fellow of the graduate program in creative writing. The full-timers come from a wide variety of departments in the humanities, social sciences and science. They can design their courses around their own special interests, as long as they meet the reading and writing requirements demanded of every FIQWS. While the full-time faculty member focuses on thematic content, the writing instructor focuses on the arts of writing, analyzing texts, developing clear ideas and arguments, and researching and composing a college-level research essay on a topic related to the theme of the course.

Recent FIQWS themes include:
* Societies of Modern Africa
* Environmental Impact: A Sustainable Future
* Memory and Identity: The Psychology of Remembering
* Gender and Politics in the U.S.
* From Kerouac to Tupac: A Musical Approach to Understanding Modern Poetry
* Israel-Palestine: Narratives, Identities, and War in Literature
* Ethnography and Film
* Web Discourse
* Literature and Psychoanalysis.

Quantitative Analysis of the Contemporary World is CCNY’s only General Education math requirement, although many of their majors have additional requirements in math. City is also developing courses outside the math department that teach these same quantitative skills and would also meet this requirement. In Spring 2008, for instance, the psychology department offered a course that analyzed the statistical outcome of the ‘No Child Left Behind Act.’ Envisioned for the future are political science courses that analyze election returns, or similar topical courses in sociology, economics, and the sciences.

• Hunter College/CUNY offers a 1-credit freshman seminar. Sections are capped at 22 students and are taught by professors from many departments. There are 1700 students in the program. Shared texts create a freshman reading community. One book-length and several short and compelling readings get the students interested. Skills are developed through interaction with those texts. Students learn to negotiate the library and electronic information, identify opposing arguments, and develop their position in writing. The course also introduces students to academic culture and the various programs of study. The college is
considering expanding the course to three credits, adding a second semester, and creating opportunities for team teaching.

- **Baruch College/CUNY** enrolled 700 students in a pilot, non-credit freshman seminar in Fall 2007. In Fall 2008, they expect to enroll 800 of their 1430 freshmen to participate in 40 learning communities. Last year’s seminar met once weekly and was led by students who were trained and paid for their work. The goal of the seminar was for students to produce a self-directed, “experiential project” as a team. Teams created a variety of original works including a video that documented weddings across cultures, a dramatic performance, oral histories of Brooklyn neighborhoods, and a cookbook—all of which required research and collaboration. The supervising faculty found that, although students complained about having to do so much work for no credit, their journals—a requirement of the program—reflected how much they enjoyed the projects. The college is considering revising the freshman seminar in the future, perhaps involving greater faculty oversight and offering the seminar for credit.

- The 2006 Newsweek Kaplan College Guide anointed **Ursinus College** as having the nation’s “Hottest Freshman Year” in recognition of its Common Intellectual Experience (CIE). The CIE brings together first-year students “in small groups to read, discuss, write, and reflect on the great questions of human existence, like love, friendship, happiness, life, death, God and nature.” Classes are led by faculty from every discipline and meet all over campus from dorm lounges to the campus lawn. The college claims that “the depth of the intellectual exchanges and the personal interactions” among the students and faculty make “all the difference.”

- **Bard College** requires incoming freshman students to attend a three-week, pre-matriculation intensive Workshop in Language and Thinking. The course includes common readings and stresses writing across disciplines and genres. Students must complete the course the summer before they enroll. Once officially enrolled at the college, beginning students take a two-semester seminar that emphasizes “precise analytical thinking” through frequent writing and class discussion of common “core texts (which may include a painting or a symphony)” around a chosen theme. The Theme in 2007-2008 was “What is Enlightenment? The Science, Culture and Politics of Reason.” The reading list included Kant, Plato, Descartes, Rousseau, Mary Shelley, Wollstonecraft, Marx, Weber, Lu Xun, Galileo, Locke, Nietzsche, Freud, Ibn Tufayl, Equiano, Austen, and Dafoe. All freshman students at Bard are assigned a full-time faculty advisor who meets with them several times each semester to discuss everything from their classes, choice of majors, and career and personal aspirations.

- **North Carolina A&T**, whose students come from some of the worst-performing high schools in the state, requires a coordinated freshman year curriculum offered in the division of University Studies. The year begins with a 1-credit course called University Experience, which provides an overview of the programs and disciplines available at the college and includes considerations of ethics, wellness,
diversity, and civic engagement. Students are also required to take four 3-credit courses: Critical Writing, The Contemporary World, Analytical Reasoning (covers numerical, graphic, verbal/logical, and algebraic reasoning), and The African-American Experience: An Interdisciplinary Experience. All of these emphasize critical thinking, and oral and written communication.

Like Baruch College, Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) enlists sophomore and junior students to help facilitate the freshman year experience. IUPUI’s theme-based Freshman Year Seminar is taught in sections of 20-25 students by a faculty member, a trained student mentor, and a professional academic advisor. Student mentors must complete a 4-semester sequence of 1-credit courses in order to qualify for the job. The academic advisor usually becomes the students’ advisor for the rest of their academic careers. The Seminar is a component of a freshman learning community that also includes “gateway courses” to the majors. Faculty meet monthly across disciplines to coordinate their courses.

What cornerstone experiences does John Jay already offer?

John Jay may not need to look outside the College for inspiration for a common cornerstone course. At least four existing programs and/or exploratory activities at John Jay could be copied, modified, or expanded to serve as the cornerstone experience for incoming freshman students.

Since Fall 2006, our Office of Freshman Services has been experimenting with learning communities. That first semester about 120 entering freshmen were enrolled in 5 course clusters, which addressed such topics as homelessness, immigration and citizenship, family and culture, public housing, and child welfare. The clusters consisted of 4 block-scheduled classes that included the theme seminar and some combination of English 101, Speech 113 and/or 100 level classes in math, ethnic studies, humanities, social science, or counseling. The students did not like the four-course cluster which, they complained, limited their opportunities to meet a wide range of fellow students and made them feel like they were still in high school.

In response, the learning communities changed in Fall 2007. Instead of four block-scheduled classes, students took paired courses with a shared theme. These seem to be more popular. In Fall 2008, 800 entering freshman students were placed in paired-course learning communities. The College’s 2006-2007 Campaign for Success indicates an intention to “gradually expand the number of students until our entire freshman class is in one learning community or another.”

John Jay’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment finds that learning communities have a positive impact on retention, GPA, and credit accumulation.

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81% of students who participated in learning communities in Fall 2006 returned in Fall 2007 compared to 74% of non-learning community baccalaureate students and 63% of non-learning community associate students who persisted in that same period. The Fall 2006 learning community cohort averaged a 2.521 GPA by the end of Spring 2007, while first-year GPAs for other students in basic skills courses averaged between 2.199 and 2.501. Students who participated in learning communities accumulated an average of 24.4 credits by the end of the freshman year; whereas the College-wide mean was 20.44.

The impact of learning communities on another important College constituency must also be considered. Because of our high reliance on part-time faculty, the question arises as to how fair it is to expect adjunct instructors to put in the extra hours required for planning and coordination with their full-time teaching partners without additional compensation.

- Freshman Services also sponsors a five-week intensive Summer Academy for students who have been admitted to the College but failed one or more CUNY placement tests in reading, writing, and math. Students take skills classes that prepare them to retake their placement exams and also take Connections Seminars, which help students transition into their new roles as college students. In addition to practical information about study skills, library use, campus services, etc., the program guides students to explore what it means to be a college student and life-long learner. In Summer 2008 the program’s thematic focus was the New York City transit system—particularly the subways—which, for our students, are the literal link between their lives at home and school. Students read, wrote, and performed calculations on subway schedules and users. They photographed their own subway stations and went on field trips. The Academy wants students to see the connections between academics and real-world observations and understand how critical-thinking skills can be applied to everything around them.

- The Interdisciplinary Studies Program (ISP) Theme A Lecture is the centerpiece of a learning community for 100 first-year students. The name is a bit of a misnomer, as very little traditional lecturing goes on. The course is taught by an interdisciplinary team of four professors who meet weekly with the full group for the first period of a double-period class. Then they break out into groups of 25 for discussion, in-class writing, and small-group activities led by a member of the teaching team. Each fall, Theme A courses are variations on “The Individual in Society.” Each spring they explore “The Individual in Conflict.” For example, in Spring 2008, the Theme A Lecture was led by professors with backgrounds in history, ethnomusicology, English, and speech and drama. It focused on “conflicts involving gender, race, ethnicity, ideology, and age” and included explorations of “war, domestic violence, ‘ordinary’ disputes, and revenge as well as conflict-resolution and peace-making.”

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19 Interdisciplinary Studies Program, “Theme A Course Offerings, Spring 2008.” Printed announcement.
With advisement from the full-time ISP counselor/coordinator, students in the Theme A Lecture select two additional ISP courses each semester. Most of those classes, all of which are reading, writing, and speaking intensive, are taught by interdisciplinary pairs of faculty. Other courses in Theme A in Spring 2008 explored revenge, returning veterans of the Iraq war, migration, diasporas, and the sense of loss, and the Patriot Act.

ISP teaching teams meet frequently to design, plan, and assess their courses, and the full Theme A faculty meet once or twice a semester to share curricular ideas, discuss classroom triumphs and failures, and to identify students who may need the attention of the program counselor. In a Fall 2007 survey of ISP students and alumni, 93% said they “would recommend this program to other students.”

- In September 2007, the college held a retreat for invited faculty, staff, and administrators—this time on the theme of Student Success. One important outcome of that meeting was the decision for Academic Affairs and Student Development to work together to develop an introduction to college course with the working title University 101. A reunion of retreat participants in April 2008 invited mixed groups of faculty, staff, and administrators to devise hypothetical versions of the course. The proposals focused on introducing students to campus resources and programs, writing, experiential learning, and what it means to make the transition into college. Since then, the Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies, José Luis Morín, has been in communication with Vice President for Student Development, Berenicia Johnson-Eanes, and Ma’at Lewis-Coles, the Director of the Counseling Department, about replacing the current CSL 112 with the new University 101 course. Two key persons are being integrated into the process, the new Director of the First Year Experience, Kate Szur, and the new Director of Academic Advisement, Sumaya Villanueva.

**Milestones:**

Second- and third-year General Education experiences are less common than freshman seminars, but are becoming more popular as campuses build on their first-year curricula. Milestone experiences can help students deepen, integrate, and apply what they learned in entry-level courses, assess their progress toward meeting the Learning Objectives, and prepare for advanced work in their major. Milestones can be opportunities for collaborative efforts between General Education and the major.

*How can milestones help us meet the needs of transfer students?*

Currently, John Jay does not have any special programs or courses to help new transfer students acclimate to the academic culture of the College. In addition to a special transfer-student cornerstone experience, milestone experiences in John Jay’s General Education program would help us meet the needs of incoming transfers. In the United States and in Europe, more and more college students attend two or more institutions of higher education on their way toward a bachelor’s degree. Colleges and universities,
especially large, public university systems, are challenged to facilitate “seamless transfer” across institutions.

In 2000, CUNY instituted a policy under which any student who completes an associate degree at a CUNY community or comprehensive college “will be deemed to have automatically fulfilled the lower division liberal arts and science distribution requirements for a baccalaureate degree.” Under the CUNY policy, however, “students may be asked to complete a course in a discipline required by a senior college’s baccalaureate distribution requirements that was not part of the student’s associate degree program.” This exception is generally interpreted to include courses above the 200, or sophomore, level, which is where the associate’s degree ends. In other words, the CUNY policy allows us to require one or more general education experiences at the 300 level or above.

In the last 5 years, between 21% and 26% of every incoming class at John Jay were transfer students. John Jay requires a 30-credit residency to earn a baccalaureate degree, which means that transfer students may enter John Jay having already completed up to 90 out of the 120 credits required for graduation. Our new program should have multiple points of entry and follow through to the culmination of the undergraduate experience.

A mid-career, integrative experience would enable the College and the student to assess transfer students’ readiness for upper-division coursework at John Jay. In addition, such a course or program would help to acculturate transfers to the College and ensure that they graduate with some semblance of the signature General Education available to native John Jay students.

Sample milestone experiences at CUNY:

CUNY colleges with intermediate General Education requirements offer students a choice of disciplinary courses that may or may not pick up where introductory courses leave off. At Hunter College, students take 31 credits at the 100 level (9 in Academic Foundations and 22 under the umbrella of Broad Exposure). After that, they are required to take six credits of Focused Exposure, including one course in the humanities or arts and one in social science, science or math. The requirement mandates only that the two courses be “beyond the introductory level.” Both Brooklyn College and Queens College mandate six credits of Upper Tier or Tier Two coursework. York College’s graduation requirements include two writing intensive courses at the 300 level: a writing course and another disciplinary course, usually in the major. Lehman College requires two 300-level interdisciplinary course, one called Studies in the Humanities and Sciences and the other called The American Experience. 60 credits of course work is the prerequisite for both courses at Lehman.

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Sample milestone experiences at non-CUNY colleges

Other schools are offering milestone experiences in which students broaden their horizons, deliberately synthesize their entry-level coursework, and may either confirm or decide on a major. The milestone experience is sometimes completed in the context of a course, or it can be a co-curricular activity.

- **King’s College**, a small, Catholic school in Pennsylvania, requires a Sophomore-Junior Diagnostic Project: “Each department or program designs a screening exercise, usually conducted within a required sophomore or junior course for the major, to determine each student’s ability to transfer critical thinking and effective communication (writing and speaking) to an appropriate project related to the major field of study. Faculty interact with students throughout the project and share results with them. If the proper level of skill is not apparent, the student is referred to an appropriate office (such as the Academic Skills Center) for assistance. The process also evaluates the student’s likelihood of success in the major.”

- **Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis** (IUPUI) requires all students to select two activities from a choice of undergraduate research, study abroad, internship, and service learning, as part of their General Education requirements. Because a majority of IUPUI’s students come from low-income households, the school offers an affordable 6-week program in Mexico, where students take courses and work in schools, hospitals, and elsewhere in the community. Attempts are made to link the work students are already doing at their jobs or in their communities to one of the four options. Projects in the major can fulfill the requirement.

- **Portland State University, Oregon**, has won several national awards for its innovative University Studies integrated General Education program which, they say, “teaches you how to learn.” After completing a full year of interdisciplinary, theme-based, team-taught Freshman Inquiry courses, PSU students move into **Sophomore Inquiry & Upper Division Clusters**. Each Sophomore Inquiry course is a gateway to an upper-division cluster that enables students to “explore topics of interest that are different from, yet complementary to, the students' majors.”

Sophomore Inquiry seminars meet twice a week with a faculty member and once a week with a graduate student mentor. Depending upon the number of credits students may have brought with them to PSU, they are required to take one, two, or three Sophomore Inquiry seminars, after which they choose an Upper Division Cluster in the interdisciplinary area of the Sophomore Inquiry seminar they found most interesting. Among the dozens available are Clusters in Asian, Latin

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21 Baruch College website, “The Common Core Curriculum.”

22 Portland State University, Oregon, website: http://www.pdx.edu/unst/sinq.html
American, and African Studies, American Community, Renaissance, Media, Medieval, Middle East, Women’s Studies, Global Environmental Change, and Understanding Popular Culture. Students select three interdisciplinary courses offered within each cluster.

In addition to the Sophomore Inquiry seminars and Clusters, PSU offers classes specifically for transfer students. “Fast-paced and interactive” Transfer Transition classes “help orient students to PSU and introduce them to the four University Studies goals: critical thinking, ethics and social responsibility, understanding the diversity of human experience, and communication skills for learning and expression.” In other words, they help transfers catch up with the institutional learning objectives and acculturation that students who began their studies at PSU started working on from their first day on campus.

Capstones:

In addition to cornerstone and milestone requirements, some colleges and universities have added integrative senior capstone courses and projects to their General Education programs. At John Jay, every major requires a 400 level course. We could opt to embed a capstone project into those courses to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and information specific to their chosen field. With the adoption of institutional learning objectives that cut across General Education and the majors, it would be possible to redesign those courses to do double duty and to create new courses in other majors, non-major disciplines, or interdisciplinary projects specifically designed to meet the General Education requirement. There are a wide variety of models for capstone programs at other campuses.

Sample capstone experiences

- **Baruch College/CUNY** divides its General Education requirements into three tiers. The third tier encompasses “disciplinary and interdisciplinary concentrations” of three courses (9-12 credits) outside the student’s major. Disciplinary concentrations are offered in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. Interdisciplinary concentrations include Information Studies, Information Technology and Social Responsibility, Women’s Studies, American Studies, Asian and Asian-American Studies, Black and Hispanic Studies, Humanities with Honors, and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Two of the three Tier III courses must be at the 3000 level or higher. The third course, taken only after the student has completed the first two in the concentration, is “the 4000, 5000, or 6000 level capstone course created or designated by each department in the concentration. Capstone courses are research-oriented and communication-intensive courses.”

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23 Portland State University, Oregon, website: http://www.pdx.edu/unst/sinq.html

24 Baruch College website: http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/ugradprograms/tier3.htm
• The Senior Integrated Assessment at King’s College takes place within the context of a required senior course, a capstone seminar, or a project in the major that allows a faculty member and a student “to measure command of subject matter and methodology, as well as advanced-level competence in the seven skill areas,” Kings’ name for its “key competency areas.”

• Portland State’s interdisciplinary capstone courses “build cooperative learning communities by taking students out of the classroom and into the field. In Capstone courses, students bring together the knowledge, skills, and interests developed to this point through all aspects of their education, to work on a community project. Students from a variety of majors and backgrounds work as a team, pooling resources, and collaborating with faculty and community leaders to understand and find solutions for issues that are important to them as literate and engaged citizens.” The university’s website offers a sampling of web-based reports, handbooks, brochures, and multi-media presentations produced by capstone teams who focused on such issues as living with cancer, motor vehicle fuels, promoting tourism to the Steens Mountains area of southeastern Oregon, and restoring the ecosystem of Johnson Creek.

**Principle 5: An effective General Education program at John Jay College will focus on pedagogy.** An integrated General Education program considers not only what is to be taught but how. A variety of learning-centered teaching strategies should be marshaled to meet the Learning Objectives. The college should provide significant support for teaching faculty through formal training and informal curricular and pedagogical exchange. The new Center for the Advancement of Teaching provides a faculty-centered venue for these development activities.

**Pedagogical Challenges at John Jay College**

According to our conversations with John Jay faculty, pedagogy in our General Education program faces two major challenges. First, departmental course outlines often require faculty to cover too wide a range of material in a single semester. Second, we learned in interviews with faculty members who teach General Education courses that they felt unprepared to meet the needs of students whose skills and general knowledge they believe require specialized pedagogical training. In Phase One and Two workshops, we heard that few professors received training in pedagogy while in graduate school. Those faculty members who have no formal teacher training may spend a majority of class time on lectures and limited discussion and assess student learning through short answer and/or multiple choice tests.

**The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

Meanwhile, the scholarship of teaching and learning shows that today’s students do not retain much of the information they receive by listening to lectures. Research has shown

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25 King’s College website: http://www.aacsb.edu/Resource_Centers/Assessment/practices-KingsColl.asp
26 Portland State University, University Studies website: http://www.pdx.edu/unst/capstone.html.
that “despite our most carefully crafted and elegant lectures,” students who walked out of a science lecture class were asked what the lecture was about and were able to articulate “only [the] vaguest generalities.” Other studies found that “attention to and absorption of material begin to decline dramatically after about 15 minutes of lecture” and that “in general, very little of a lecture can be recalled afterwards except in the case of listeners with above average education and intelligence.” Fortunately, the growing literature presents a wide array of active learning strategies that have been shown to increase student achievement (see Appendix D).

**Putting Pedagogy First**

The Task Force recommends that the College reverse the usual order of curriculum development by putting pedagogy first, then letting that drive course and program design. A subcommittee of the Task Force is actively seeking grants for substantive faculty support to study in depth:

- the processes by which students mature intellectually and personally;
- how to adapt the curriculum to accommodate differences in learning style;
- active, interactive and integrative learning models;
- the tensions between competing priorities in General Education—broad content coverage vs. a narrower, theme-based or interdisciplinary approach;
- and achieving a productive relationship between content and skills development.

One approach to improving respect and enthusiasm for teaching General Education is to establish a dedicated, interdisciplinary General Education faculty, whose members could be either drawn from the departments or appointed directly to the General Education program. Portland State University provides generous grants to departments to release faculty to teach full-time in their interdisciplinary General Education program for at least two years. John Jay’s Interdisciplinary Studies Program works much the same way, but without financial compensation to the home departments.

**Pedagogical Resources at John Jay**

Here again, a General Education initiative can build on rich resources already available at John Jay. While a faculty development process will bring in outside expertise, John Jay has its own collective treasure trove of teaching talent and experience that can be shared and adapted. The fact that many of our founding faculty are retiring at the same time that we are absorbing an influx of new faculty presents an opportunity to pass on practices from senior to junior colleagues that have developed at the College.

**Principle 9: An effective General Education program at John Jay College will be flexible and accountable.** Assessment, review, and revision should: 1) be built into the General Education program; 2) occur regularly and systematically; and 3) involve alumni, potential employers, and graduate programs as well as current students and faculty.
Adoption of institutional learning objectives will set a solid foundation for assessing the effectiveness of the General Education program at the individual, course, and program levels. Assessment is most effective when the competencies to be measured are clearly identified up front, at the curricular and course design phase. Once the faculty agrees about what our students should be learning, they can devise ways to determine if that learning is taking place.

**Modes of Assessment at the Individual, Course, and Program Levels**

Ross Miller is the Senior Director of Assessment for Learning in the Office of Education and Quality Initiatives of the AAC&U and a faculty member at the Institute on General Education. At the June 2008 Institute, he explained to members of John Jay’s Task Force that effective assessment does not necessitate quantifying results. There are ways to identify intellectual growth other than by counting the percentage of correct answers on a multiple-choice test. He advised the team to think about the process of assessment as we do other research projects—as a process of gathering evidence that can take many forms. It does not have to be a radical change in the way we determine achievement today, nor does it demand an excessive amount of additional work. In many instances, formal assessment may simply mean standardizing and communicating more specifically the kinds of judgments faculty already make when they grade papers, tests, and projects. Performance in the milestone and capstone projects described above would also supply evidence of how well students are learning and integrating their studies.

A comprehensive assessment program would include multiple opportunities to gather evidence of the program’s effectiveness. It might offer some type of “compass” by which students can consciously monitor their own progress; instruments to facilitate student feedback on the quality of their experience in the program; and mechanisms for alumni, employers, and graduate schools to let us know how well our students are prepared for life after college.

**Models of Assessment**

Although Miller is sure that “assessments that are locally developed have an improved chance of being aligned with local goals and curricula.”

Faculty members and institutions use a wide array of written and electronic rubrics and mapping tools to determine the extent to which learning objectives are being met. Below are samples of strategies used at the individual, course, and program levels.

**Assessment of Individual Students:**

**Assessing Assignments**

- The University of Michigan, Flint has a Scoring Rubric for Critical Thinking that can be used to assess assignments across the curriculum:

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# APPENDIX B
## SCORING RUBRIC FOR CRITICAL THINKING

**Essay #**

**Reader:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to take reasoned positions on issues of importance and support those positions with evidence.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1a</td>
<td>The student has a clearly stated conclusion as to the reasonableness of the argument in the author's essay.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1b</td>
<td>The student provided reasons to support their conclusion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1c</td>
<td>The reason(s) provided give relevant support for the student's conclusion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1d</td>
<td>The reason(s) provided give adequate support for the student's conclusion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to apply reasoning to solve authentic problems through experimentation, data collection, and induction of principles.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2a</td>
<td>The student has accurately interpreted statistical data in charts and/or tables.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2b</td>
<td>The student has drawn appropriate conclusions from the statistical data in charts and/or tables.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to apply quantitative reasoning to problem-solving.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3a</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an understanding of what role the statistical (quantitative) evidence plays in the author's argument.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3b</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an ability to critically assess the relevance of the quantitative evidence.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3c</td>
<td>The student demonstrates an ability to critically assess the accuracy of the quantitative evidence.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to critically examine issues that affect their world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4a</td>
<td>The student identified the conclusion (the main point) of the author's essay.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4b</td>
<td>The student identified the reason(s) (the evidence) offered by the author in support of that conclusion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4c</td>
<td>The student identified an implication (or implications) of accepting the author's proposal.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4d</td>
<td>The student evaluated the implications of accepting the author's proposal.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4e</td>
<td>The student provided reason(s) to support their assessment of the implications of the author's proposal.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative Literacy and quantitative reasoning are assessed according to “student behaviors” at the University of Arkansas, Ft. Smith. Each behavior is rated exemplary, accomplished, developing, or beginning, according to specific criteria. The four behaviors are:

* **Student Behavior One:** The student will identify appropriate mathematical formulas and principles that can be used to solve a real-world problem.

* **Student Behavior Two:** The student will use numerical data to solve a real-world problem.

* **Student Behavior Three:** The student will analyze data for support in research.

* **Student Behavior Four:** The student will analyze and make inferences based on quantitative data expressed in charts and graphs.

Behavior three, for instance, is considered “Exemplary” if the student “analyzes and selects the most important, current, accurate, and relevant statistics/data for support in a research assignment or task.” Whereas a student who is rated “Accomplished” would “analyze and select statistics and data for support, but may not always choose the most important, current, accurate, or relevant data.” A beginner “may include data in research assignments but does not offer explanations or context for that data.”

Communications faculty at The University of Alaska, Southeast use a common rubric called the Competent Speaker Assessment. The instrument addresses eight public speaking competencies that range from “Chooses and narrows a topic appropriately for the audience and occasion,” through “Uses an organizational pattern appropriate to topic, audience, occasion, & purpose,” to “Uses physical behaviors that support the verbal message & communicates engagement with the audience through confidence, sincerity & enthusiasm for the topic.” A rating scale of unsatisfactory, satisfactory, and excellent is used on each competency and each entry leaves space for comments.

**Assessing student learning over the course of the academic career:**

- ePortfolio is a web-based individual assessment tool. ePortfolio provides a platform for students to post comprehensive, multi-media evidence of their cumulative academic and co-curricular achievements, to reflect on their educations and goals, and to present their profiles to potential employers and graduate admissions officers. More than 400 colleges and universities nationwide are using ePortfolio. Students within the University of Minnesota’s state-wide system have generated more than 50,000 of them. At Penn State, students collect, select, reflect, and publish evidence of what they’ve learned in their ePortfolios.

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28 University of Arkansas, Ft. Smith, “Rubric for Assessment of Quantitative Literacy and Quantitative Reasoning.”

LaGuardia Community College/CUNY has pioneered ePortfolio at CUNY. Since 2001, more than 8000 students have created ePortfolios that demonstrate their achievements from course to course and year to year, reflect on their evolving academic, professional, and personal selves, and create documents that can supplement resumes and transfer applications to senior colleges. The goals of the program include encouraging students to take control of their educations, to become self-directed and self-motivated learners, to link classroom and lived experiences, and to increase facility with digital communication. According to LaGuardia’s website:

Many LaGuardia students begin depositing work in the ePortfolio in their first semesters at the college and continually refine their presentations as they move forward, each time looking to reflect on and understand the process of growth and improvement. Personal essays encourage students to explore their changing sense of themselves. Designed to help students connect classroom, career, and personal goals and experiences, the ePortfolio moves students toward not only integrated learning, but also more integrated lives.

LaGuardia’s Faculty Senate Sub-committee on Assessment has developed rubrics for faculty program assessment based on ePortfolio content that provides “more nuanced, authentic data, drawn from classroom work.” LaGuardia uses a commercial ePortfolio software package called Concord Masterfile and provides
extensive faculty training and support through its Center for Teaching & Learning. More than 115 faculty members currently include ePortfolio in their courses.

Assessment of General Education at the Course Level:

- At Brooklyn College/CUNY, the faculty is encouraged to “no longer ask merely: what do I want to teach? But rather: what do I want my students to learn?” The answers to those questions appear on the course syllabus and online. Courses and assignments are designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their newly acquired skills and knowledge. The College uses a Core Course Assessment Form to rate class performance on a particular project or assignment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
<th>Rubric List characteristics of an assignment in the category.</th>
<th>Number of papers in the category; tally AFTER assignment is assessed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets only minimal expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to meet expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please submit four sample papers/assignments—one from each of the above categories—with this form to Scott Dexter in 1216 Boylan. If you have any questions or concerns, email sdexter@brooklyn.cuny.edu or call x5287.

The grid enables faculty members to distinguish the characteristics of student performance that would fall into the categories “better than good enough, good enough, and not good enough.” Professors tally the numbers and percent of students who achieved each of those levels. Completed forms are submitted along with four sample papers/assignments to the Core Director and are used to evaluate the program.
Queensborough Community College/CUNY faculty complete a Course Objectives Form to identify the specific context and goals of their course within the overall program and in relation to their institutional learning objectives. The form asks the faculty member to specify the educational context (where the course sits in the overall curriculum architecture), curricular objectives, General Education objectives, and activities by which those goals will be achieved and demonstrated. The instructions for filling out the form encourage the faculty member to use only active verbs, “select, transform, revise, classify, combine, analyze, annotate, etc.” and to avoid such passive statements as “be exposed to, become familiar with, or gain a good grasp of.”

Once the course objectives have been clearly identified, QCC faculty collect evidence of the extent to which the objectives are actually achieved by their students in the course. The first section of the standardized Course Assessment Form refers back to the goals articulated in the Course Objectives. Part II guides the faculty member to design activities and assignments that address specific objectives and learning outcomes. A grid prompts the professor to indicate “Desired Student Learning Outcomes” alongside “the range of activities students will engage in for this assignment,” and “what assessment tools will be used to measure how well students have met each learning objective.”

In Part III of the Assessment Form, faculty members state the standards by which they will judge student performance. The standards may be expressed as “a checklist, a descriptive holistic scale, or another form,” that may be shared with students to make expectations transparent. Part IV asks for an aggregate assessment of each of the learning objectives and a comparison between the original learning projections and the actual results. In the final phase of the assessment, faculty members interpret and evaluate the assessment results, and describe the actions to be taken as a result of the assessment.

Assessments of General Education at the program level:

Program-level assessment is sometimes done by category of requirement within the General Education program and sometimes by how well the learning objectives are being met across the full range of requirements.

The University of Maryland, College Park continually reviews and evaluates core requirement categories. The Undergraduate Study Team collects and analyzes samples of student work across sections of courses within the category. That data is then used to improve the General Education program by tweaking course content, pedagogy, and/or sequencing.

An interesting set of findings emerged from their review of the Critical Thinking and Diversity components of the program. At the end of the critical thinking courses, they observed that students were able to present their ideas more clearly but still had trouble supporting their arguments with facts. In the diversity

sections, they found that students seemed better able to appreciate and discuss issues of diversity if they took the course in the junior or senior year. The team feels that this is not only because juniors and seniors should have more highly developed skills but that upper division students are more mature and being exposed to the wide diversity of students on campus primes them to engage with the course material more effectively.

- **Portland State University (PSU)** measures the development of “ethical reasoning and social responsibility” on a 6-point scale derived from publications of the Center for the Study of Ethical Development. At the top of the scale, a score of 6, the student
  - Consistently does all or almost all of the following:
    - Creatively and comprehensively articulates approaches to ethical issues and social responsibility, in a scholarly matter, citing specific evidence;
    - Demonstrates an ability to view multiple sides of these issues;
    - Questions what is being taught;
    - Constructs independent meaning and interpretations;
    - Presents well-developed ideas on the role of ethical issues and social responsibility in both private and public life;
    - Demonstrates a deep awareness of how a conceptual understanding of ethical issues and social responsibility manifests concretely in one’s own personal choices, including decisions on when and how to act.

In contrast, at a score of 2, the student’s work:
  - Does most or many of the following:
    - Mentions some issues involving ethics and/or talks about social responsibility in a general fashion, but does not discuss these areas in a meaningful way;
    - Contains some evidence of self-reflection in the area of ethical issues and/or social responsibility, but this reflection is superficial and reveals little or no questioning of established views.

VI. **Models of General Education**

Judging by the variety of anagrams, diagrams, and fancy titles that colleges and universities have devised to represent their General Education programs, they seem to be as varied as the number of institutions that offer them. However, most General Education programs require some combination of skills, core, and distribution requirements:

**Frameworks or Models of General Education**

- Choices from among many courses (distribution);
- All students taking the same courses (required core);
• All students taking a few of the same courses and choices for the rest of the requirements (mix of core and distribution);

• All courses taken at the 100 and 200 level (roughly the first two years or the equivalent of the community college transfer modules);

• Courses taken at all levels from 100 to 400 (distributed across four years);

• Courses taken together to strengthen interdisciplinary perspectives (tandem or clustered courses);

• Courses taken in sequence to promote study in depth (prerequisite or linked courses);

• Integration of goals into many courses (writing across the curriculum, technology intensive).

General Education programs may either be comprised of existing courses or courses designed specifically for General Education. Some programs list pages of course options in different categories and tiers, while others offer a more limited array of choices. Still others prescribe the specific courses required of all students. Some program designs are so complex as to require elaborate graphics that tend to confuse students and faculty; the more elegantly simple designs can be depicted in line diagrams or grids. The chart below compares the most common options:

### 4. STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All students take same program</th>
<th>Program modified for professional programs</th>
<th>Each college has own requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program represents 50-60 credits of foundation and distribution requirements</td>
<td>Program is 36-48 credits/ students can double dip with major</td>
<td>Program is less than 30 credits/ no overlap with major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed for ease of transfer based on course equivalencies</td>
<td>Unique structure requires adaptation for transfer students/ not all credits accepted</td>
<td>Transfer facilitated through course for transfer students reflecting unique feature of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses stand alone, taken in any order</td>
<td>Courses sequenced or clustered with prerequisites to be developmental</td>
<td>Linked courses taken together to deepen learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary courses serve only the core such as Humanities, Classical Thought</td>
<td>Many courses drawn from the major/ disciplines such as history and literature</td>
<td>Choice of courses to contribute to a theme or strand: Human Nature, Civic Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique feature related to location: Appalachia, Manhattan</td>
<td>Unique feature expresses mission: Christianity, African-American heritage</td>
<td>Unique feature related to pedagogy: cooperative education, internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple section courses uniquely designed by faculty to match SLOs</td>
<td>Comparability across multiple sections through core readings and activities</td>
<td>Comparability across sections through common syllabus and exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency/ competency based and met through examination/papers/ etc.</td>
<td>Credit based met through passing a number of courses</td>
<td>Experience based met through opportunities for reflection/ co-curricular</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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31 Ferren (2008).
John Jay’s current General Education program is a foundational hybrid with 15 credits in skills, 15 credits of core classes in history, literature, and philosophy, and 15-27 credits of distribution requirements in foreign language, ethnic studies, the arts, science, phys ed and introductory social science surveys. The variance in number of credits depends on whether or not students qualify for certain exemptions (see page 13 for the bulletin entry on General Education Requirements).

Newer models of General Education are “more than just a collection of ‘liberal arts and science’ course requirements—the programs are now integrated with the major, co-curricular activities, and practical experiences in the community and the workplace.”

Below is a sampling of traditional and non-traditional General Education programs from which John Jay might draw inspiration.

**Examples of Different Models of General Education Programs**

**Columbia College Core Curriculum**

The Columbia Core curriculum is designed to help students “to understand the civilization of their own day and to participate effectively in it.” The 13-to-17 course program consists of:

- Contemporary Civilization (2 semesters)
- Literature Humanities: Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy (2 semesters)
- University Writing
- Art Humanities: Masterpieces of Western Art
- Music Humanities: Masterpieces of Western Music
- Frontiers of Science
- Science (2 courses)
- Major Cultures Requirement (2 courses)
- Foreign Language Requirement (4 terms or the equivalent)
- Physical Education Requirement (2 terms and a swimming test)

The first six courses are the hallmark of the Columbia Core. The full-year **Contemporary Civilization** introduces students to “a range of issues concerning the kinds of communities—political, social, moral, and religious—that human beings construct for themselves and the values that inform and define such communities; the course is intended to prepare students to become active and informed citizens.”

The extensive reading list is comprised primarily of Western classics in philosophy, theology, social, political, and economic theory, psychology and evolution from the Greeks to the

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32 Ferren (2008).
33 Columbia University website: www.college.columbia.edu/core/classes/cc.php
20th century and includes Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Kant, Descartes, Hegel, and Freud. Since the inception of the all-Western, all-male core in 1919, the list has expanded to include the Qur’an and writings by Mary Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, Frederick Douglas, and W.E.B. DuBois.

Columbia’s leading scientists present series mini-lectures in the **Frontiers of Science** course. Weekly seminar sections of 22 students led by “senior faculty and Columbia post-doctoral science fellows (research scientists selected for their teaching abilities), focus on discussing the lecture and readings, and “debating the implications of the most recent scientific discoveries.”

Even this venerated core contains room for students to make choices in science, foreign language, major cultures, and physical education, although the mandatory swim test has notoriously nettled aqua-phobic students.

**Brooklyn College/CUNY Core Curriculum:**

First created in 1980, the Brooklyn College Core was revised in 2006 to “provide more choice, restructure the sequence of courses so that upper-tier courses would build more effectively on knowledge and skills acquired in the lower tier, recognize the importance of interdisciplinary approaches . . . , and open the curriculum to a global perspective.”

Today’s core is designed to address ten common goals that “reflect the knowledge, understanding, judgment, and skills that a person needs to make meaningful contributions to society and to assume tasks of leadership in the world.” Eleven courses are chosen from among twelve categories, nine of which are in the “Lower Tier” and two in the “Upper Tier.” Six of the nine Lower Tier courses are prescribed. In the Upper Tier, students select from approximately a dozen courses in each of the three subject areas. These courses are more narrowly focused, mainly along traditional disciplinary lines. Additional “Liberal Competencies” are satisfied by two basic English courses and either coursework or examination in foreign language and speech (see chart on the following page).

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34 Columbia University website: http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/classes/fos.php
35 Brooklyn College website: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/portal/core/
36 Brooklyn College website: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/portal/core/
## Brooklyn College Core Curriculum LOWER TIER
Select one course from each box (9 courses required).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts &amp; Literatures</th>
<th>Philosophical &amp; Social Inquiry</th>
<th>Scientific Inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CC 1.1</strong> Classical Cultures</td>
<td><strong>CC 2.1</strong> Knowledge, Reality and Values</td>
<td><strong>CC 3.11</strong> Thinking Mathematically OR <strong>CC 3.12</strong> Computing: Nature, Power and Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CC 1.2</strong> Introduction to Art</td>
<td><strong>CC 2.2</strong> Shaping of the Modern World</td>
<td><strong>CC 3.21</strong> Biology for Today’s World OR <strong>CC 3.22</strong> Science In Modern Life -- Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CC 1.3</strong> Music: Its Language, History, and Culture</td>
<td><strong>CC 2.3</strong> People, Power, and Politics</td>
<td><strong>CC 3.31</strong> Physics: The Simple Laws That Govern the Universe OR <strong>CC 3.32</strong> Geology: The Science of Our World</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Brooklyn College Core Curriculum UPPER TIER
Select one course from two different boxes (2 courses required).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts &amp; Literatures</th>
<th>Philosophical &amp; Social Inquiry</th>
<th>Scientific Inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CC 10.01 - 10.99</strong> Exploring Literature</td>
<td><strong>CC 20.01 - 20.99</strong> Exploring Global Connections</td>
<td><strong>CC 30.01 - 30.99</strong> Exploring Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Brooklyn College Core Curriculum LIBERAL COMPETENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Composition</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
<th>Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English 1</strong> English Composition I</td>
<td><strong>Satisfaction of College Requirement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Screening by the Speech Communication Arts &amp; Sciences Department</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English 2</strong> English Composition II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fairleigh Dickinson University Core/Distribution by Perspectives Model

The distinguishing feature of Fairleigh Dickinson University’s General Education is a four-course interdisciplinary Core sequence required of every undergraduate:

- The Global Challenge
- Perspectives on the Individual
- Cross-cultural Perspectives
- The American Experience: The Quest for Freedom

According to the FDU website: “The four Core courses are carefully designed to build on each other in sequence. They must be taken in order, . . . normally begin[ning] in the freshman year. The second and third Core courses are taken in the sophomore year, and the fourth in the first semester of the junior year. No more than one Core course may be taken in any one semester.”

In addition to the core, FDU requires a combination of skills and distribution courses that give students choice:

- A 1-credit freshman seminar;
- 16-23 credits of skills courses in writing, oral communication, mathematics, computer skills, modern language and culture, and physical education;
- 18-20 credits in distribution requirements, including 6 each in social/behavioral sciences and humanities, and 6-8 in laboratory science.

Portland State University, Oregon, University Studies—Integrated Model

PSU is recognized nationally for its comprehensive, developmentally scaffolded, and engaging General Education program that is comprised entirely of dedicated General Education courses. PSU’s University Studies program includes:

- a broad-based, year-long, interdisciplinary freshman seminar;
- an assessment and catch-up course for transfers;
- three thematic sophomore inquiry courses selected from 27 topic areas;
- three upper division cluster courses that advance study in the same field as one of the sophomore inquiries;
- a community-based senior capstone course.

Special features and challenges of the PSU program include student mentoring in freshman and sophomore inquiry courses and interdisciplinary team teaching.

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37 Fairleigh Dickinson University website: view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=12
The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts includes a 12-18 course General Education core that incorporates the liberal arts, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary education, with a special emphasis on New York City.

The core requirements are structured around three learning communities—one each in the first, intermediate, and senior years. The learning communities are issues-based and stress critical-thinking, writing and problem-solving skills. Two of the learning communities include a reflective tutorial course that helps students integrate what they are doing in their coursework and their field experiences.

First and senior-year learning communities include experiential learning opportunities in which small groups of students spend three hours per week in field sites related to the theme of the learning community. Placements may include service learning, participatory learning, independent study, field trips, and community research. Each freshman student’s field experience is linked to a reflective tutorial taught by one of the learning community faculty. The reflective tutorial emphasizes writing and discussion skills as students link their field experiences directly to their coursework. The professor who teaches the reflective tutorial serves as the students’ advisor.

Recent 3-course freshman learning communities have included:

The Wheel of Fortune:
- Political Philosophy, Basic Macroeconomics, and Nagging Issues in Democracy
- Experiential placements in nursing homes and political campaigns

Creativity and Conflict in Modern Times:
- Modern Art—19th & 20th Centuries, Western Civilization in Modern Times, and The Power of Images
- Experiential placements at: public school reading program and Council on the Arts and Humanities of Staten Island

The senior learning community is in the major and is linked to a second reflective tutorial.

**Hunter College/CUNY Mellon Project Proposals**

After acknowledging its failure to garner faculty support and adequately implement its 2001 General Education revision, Hunter College received a substantial grant from the Mellon Foundation to diagnose its troubles and propose new options.

The conclusion of its 72-page report, How We Care for the Curriculum, proposes four curricular models. The first is a simplification of the 2001 distribution model that adds a

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38 Hunter College Mellon Project website: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/mellonproject/
coordinating structure and identified learning goals. The second is a comprehensive distribution model in which students would choose one or two existing courses at the 100 or 200-level in selected areas of the curriculum. Skipping number three for the moment, the fourth model is a completely individualized program with no specific requirements. Under intensive faculty advisement, students would essentially create their own General Education programs. While such a plan would foster close connections between students and their faculty advisors, the report cautions that students could easily fall through the cracks.

The third proposal is an integrated, “blended” model that combines:

- **a four-course core** called The Hunter Seminar, 75% of which would be taught by full-time faculty. All seminars would be writing intensive, technology-rich, and include quantitative and comparative components.
- **distribution requirements** in “five or six topical content areas,” not necessarily mapped to the departments, and
- **integrated extracurricular experiences and applications**—Staged milestone experiences: a first year collaborative community project; choice of internship, study abroad, or organized reading during a January term in the second and third years; and a culminating project and presentation in the final year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUNTER SEMINARS</th>
<th>KEY EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>DISTRIBUTED AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Analyzing &amp; Taking Action</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
<td>Five or six topical content areas, taken in no necessary order, such as...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Discovering</td>
<td>Internship, Study Abroad, or Organized Reading</td>
<td>- World Cultures &amp; The New Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performing</td>
<td>Community Project</td>
<td>- Diversity &amp; Evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Inquiring &amp; Communicating</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Civic Understanding &amp; History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Political Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Mind &amp; Meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BASELINE COMPETENCIES**

- Literacy in English and a Foreign Language, Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Thinking & Scientific Reasoning

The Task Force on General Education invites the John Jay College community to consider and critique these multiple models to determine which elements we might want
to emulate or reinvent as we decide how best to prepare our students for academic, professional, and personal success in the 21st Century.

VII. Conclusion: The Future of General Education at John Jay College

To ensure that any change to John Jay’s General Education program reflects the will of the faculty and has appropriate support from the students and administration, the Task Force on General Education recommends an incremental process of curricular review and revision, beginning with the campus-wide conversation about this report in Fall 2008.
Incremental Process for General Education Review and Reform at John Jay College

1. Share Task Force Findings with the College Community:
   - Disseminate this report for campus-wide deliberation;
   - Create a General Education Website;
   - Utilize many forums for campus-wide discussion and consensus building (e.g., electronic, public, private, formal, informal).

2. Build Consensus on Undergraduate Learning Objectives and Guiding Principles:
   - Identify areas of agreement and disagreement and seek compromise and reconciliation on differences;
   - Seek formal endorsement of undergraduate learning objectives.

3. Secure Institutional Support:
   - Attain the commitment of top-level administration to publicly support General Education reform as a campus priority;
   - Attain the commitment of top-level administration to provide fiscal and structural resources for faculty development, a full-time coordinator of General Education, and a faculty oversight committee that might be a subcommittee of the College Council.

4. Establish Faculty Development Program:
   - Invest in faculty development before curricular development;
   - Create working groups that focus on the literature surrounding the pedagogy of General Education;
   - Apply for external funding to supplement these activities.

5. Pilot, Assess, and Improve New or Adapted Courses:
   - Implement curricular development process by faculty;
   - See timeline below for details.

6. Design a New or Modified General Education Curriculum:
   - Synthesize curricular development data from pilot and assessment process to create a new or modified program design;
   - Attain institutional adoption of the new design by gaining final approval at the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the College Council.

7. Institute Ongoing Assessment, Development, and Improvement:
**Timeline for Development and Implementation of a New or Modified General Education Program at John Jay College**

Cautionary tales abound about campuses that attempt to change their General Education programs all at once or too quickly. “Planning on only a short term process,” “assuming that the plan is the end of the process” and “taking it for granted that the program will work well the first time” are among the potholes against which colleges are cautioned in Jerry Gaff’s classic article on avoiding common mishaps in the General Education reform process.³⁹ To steer clear of such mistakes, the Task Force proposes a deliberate, multi-year process of consensus-building, faculty development, curriculum design, piloting, assessment, and revision.

**Timeline for the Development, Adoption, and Implementation of a Revised General Education Program at John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

- **Fall 2008**
  - Task Force on General Education completes its report
  - Report circulated and vetted before the College community

- **Spring 2009**
  - Task Force on General Education incorporates community feedback on the proposed Learning Objectives and Principles for an Effective General Education Program at John Jay College
  - Revised Learning Objectives and Principles submitted to Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards Committee for adoption (March)
  - Revised Learning Objectives and Principles submitted to College Council for adoption (April)
  - Faculty working groups begin to develop possible models for new program architecture

- **Summer 2009**
  - Faculty working groups refine proposed models for new program architecture and prepare them for presentation to the college community

- **Fall 2009**
  - College-wide discussion of proposed models for new program architecture and selection of preliminary working model
  - Faculty curriculum development groups design experimental cornerstone courses for piloting in Spring 2010

- **Spring 2010**
  - Experimental cornerstone courses are piloted and assessed
  - Curriculum development groups design experimental milestone courses for piloting in Fall 2010

Summer 2010  Capstone courses and the working model for new program architecture are assessed and revised

Fall 2010  Revised experimental cornerstone courses move through governance for adoption
Experimental milestone courses are piloted and assessed
Curriculum development groups design experimental capstone courses for piloting in Spring 2011

Spring 2011  Revised experimental milestone courses move through governance for adoption
Experimental capstone courses are piloted and assessed

Summer 2011  Experimental capstone courses and the working model for new program architecture are assessed and revised

Fall 2011  Revised capstone courses move through governance for adoption
Revised program architecture including adopted courses and assessment data presented to college community for final comment
New General Education program submitted for adoption by the Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards Committee and College Council

Looking Toward the Future of General Education at John Jay College

The Task Force on General Education hopes that this report provides enough information about General Education at John Jay College, at CUNY, and around the United States to guide us in renewing and improving our own General Education Program. The options presented herein reflect two years of faculty deliberations about General Education and are informed by research and the recommendations of the AAC&U. At the core of this document are the proposed Institutional Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College and the Nine Principles for an Effective General Education Program at John Jay. Consensus on these key proposals will be the springboard for action to invigorate our General Education program. The Task Force looks forward to an open and inclusive discussion about how John Jay College can best meet the academic, personal, and professional aspirations of our 21st century students.
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Status Report on the Revision of the General Education Requirements

BACKGROUND

John Jay’s General Education curriculum was established in 1975 as an adaptation of the Columbia College model. Requirements in ethnic studies, philosophy, and physical education were added in 1989, and slight modifications of particular courses or distribution options were introduced from time to time thereafter, but the underlying framework and principles remained unchanged: John Jay’s General Education Program continues to be organized along disciplinary lines and to consist primarily of introductory surveys. Skills courses, which relate to general education courses primarily as prerequisites, are separate from the core and distribution requirements.

While John Jay’s General Education Program has stayed essentially the same, globalization, the electronic information explosion, and the attendant economic and demographic shifts of the last decades have altered the educational needs and expectations of all undergraduate students, including our own. At this point it makes sense for John Jay—along with the many other U.S. colleges now engaging in this process—to re-examine our long-standing General Education courses and requirements and to ask ourselves whether this curriculum still serves our students well.

In 2004, responding to directives from the CUNY administration, John Jay made an abortive attempt at quick General Education reform. A special committee appointed by the Provost worked diligently to forge a modest proposal; departments met and debated; public hearings were held. But in the end, despite hard work and good intentions on all sides, the effort failed, leaving most participants pessimistic about the entire enterprise.

Although this failure may be partly attributable to John Jay’s unique history and mission, a large body of educational research suggests that our revision process was, in the words of Gerald Graff, senior scholar at the Association of American Colleges and Universities, “a recipe for disaster” (peerReview: 2004). Numerous studies—many of which were undertaken for funding agencies such as the NEH—have shown that successful general-education revision requires: 1) consensus that reform is necessary; 2) broad agreement about what students should learn; and 3) community-wide engagement. When these conditions have not been met, revising the General Education requirements is predictably frustrating, contentious, and wearying; when, on the other hand, adequate time and attention have been devoted to paving the way, the process can bring people together across disciplines and energize the entire college community.

Mindful of these findings, the Office of Undergraduate Studies aspires to create a constructive and intellectually lively General Education reform process at John Jay.
APPENDIX A

PHASE ONE: Spring, 2006

The first phase of what is envisioned as a multi-stage General Education review process had four major goals. What follows is a description of each goal, the strategy used to implement it, and the outcome of that strategy.

1. **Goal: Build a sense of community among faculty.**

   This goal may sound platitudinous, but without productive conversations across disciplines, significant General Education reform is impossible. Yet, for several reasons, such conversations—difficult at all colleges—are especially tricky at John Jay. The divide between “flagship” and other departments is a major part of the problem: professional studies are usually identified as central to the College’s mission and identity; liberal studies are ghettoized, praised for their contributions to student learning but seldom integrated into professional studies in a significant way. This traditional division has been complicated in the last few years by the retirement of the College’s founding faculty cohort and their replacement by newly hired professors who bring talent and new ideas, but who have not yet had the opportunity to become well acquainted with the College or one another.

   **Strategy:** The first step in achieving this goal was simply to bring together faculty from around the college—including all ranks and all departments and even a few senior administrators—in small, diverse groups for one-hour workshops. These workshops were intended to be relaxed, interactive, task-oriented, and fun: The Dean of Undergraduate Studies sat in as a note-taking listener. A facilitator ensured that everyone participated and that no one, however senior, monopolized the discussion.

   **Outcome:** In the course of the Spring, 2006, semester, over 100 people—about one-third of the full-time faculty—participated in a Phase One workshop.

2. **Goal: Identify some characteristics of a “meaningful” liberal arts/sciences course.**

   A preliminary understanding of the qualities that make undergraduate courses worthwhile is an obvious first step in any curricular reform project.

   **Strategy:** The initial prompt in each workshop was: Recall an undergraduate course in liberal arts or sciences that you took in college and that you remember as being especially meaningful. What was it and what made you choose it?

   The Dean and the facilitator were well aware that the term “meaningful” is vague; indeed, that is why they chose it as an opening gambit. They were also aware that the responses to this prompt should not be used too prescriptively: the course characteristics that a middle-aged history professor from Idaho recalled as “meaningful” are not necessarily the characteristics of an ideal John Jay College course—although they might be. Thus, the purposes of this prompt were not to establish policy; they were, rather, to: 1) set a relaxed tone; 2) get faculty thinking in an expansive and imaginative way; and 3) identify recurring themes.
As participants spoke about why their chosen course had made such an impression on them, the facilitator took notes on large post-its stuck to the walls, so that all could see the commonalities emerging. Faculty spoke with surprising passion, given the number of years that had elapsed since they sat in the undergraduate classroom, about courses that had transformed them in some way—from a pre-med to an English major, from a bored and alienated freshman to a scholar in love with learning, from an obedient but passive consumer of knowledge into someone who aspired to challenge old ideas and to create new knowledge.

**Outcome:** Although each workshop had a dynamic of its own, the same themes recurred—with astonishing regularity—in every session. A record of these themes, in the words of the participants, follows.

A. **Pedagogy and “content” are not separable.** Although a few participants remembered professors so charismatic that the course material was almost irrelevant, or course readings so compelling that the professor was irrelevant, it quickly became clear that there is no real boundary between pedagogy and curriculum. If, for example, course readings had led to a new and significant kind of “thinking outside the box,” the assignments and class discussions had almost always played a reinforcing and enriching role. Thus, curriculum (i.e. the readings assigned, the structure of the course, the “content”) can most usefully be thought about as a form of teaching—as serving a pedagogical purpose; conversely, pedagogy (how the professor chooses to use class time) is often woven into the fabric of the course, inseparable from the ideas and information imparted.

B. **In memorable liberal arts/sciences courses, students have a sense that the class is profoundly important,** either because of the texts (“foundational, seminal, complicated, hard, deep, revelatory”) or because of the professor, who conveys a sense that the enterprise of learning is important and that ideas really matter.

C. **Meaningful courses are hard.** Students have the sense that they are getting the genuine academic article—real college stuff. The professor has high expectations, assigns tough readings (primary sources, original thinkers), and devises challenging assignments. The students feel that they have been invited into a new world, a special club, The Society of Thinkers and Educated People. More important, having met the challenges of the course, students experience a sense of mastery; they feel intellectually empowered.

D. **Meaningful courses forge connections, make linkages and bridges, and reveal patterns across time, space, cultures, and academic disciplines.** The courses convey the diversity of human thought but also the sense of interconnectedness, repetition; of variations within universal themes. Such courses supply surprising insights and recognitions: students are introduced to newly contextualized ways of seeing; they find fresh meanings in the familiar and question their old ways of organizing their ideas and perceptions. These courses are often provocative and disturbing; sometimes they even seem transgressive.
E. **Meaningful courses break down the boundaries between the “real world” and the classroom.** A course of this kind may present material that is so powerful and intense, so resonant, that students experience it emotionally as well as intellectually: the class work seems to explain their own lives. Sometimes a course sets up a dialogue between theory and practice, so that the students recognize the practical application of academic skill or knowledge. Sometimes a professor is adept at connecting ideas to the lived experience of the students, so that they suddenly see aspects of their lives as manifestations of larger trends or principles. Sometimes the real world is invited into the classroom as a guest or a research problem; sometimes the professor sends students out into the world to do research, record experiences, solve a problem.

F. **Meaningful courses involve inventive, imaginative assignments—tasks that call for creativity and problem-solving, that foster critical thinking, that push students to engage with the material more seriously or with greater curiosity.**

G. **Meaningful courses are taught in a variety of styles; there is no single right way to be a successful undergraduate professor.** Nonetheless, certain words and phrases were used again and again in describing memorable professors: passionate about the subject, joyous about learning, enthusiastic, committed to their students’ education. Workshop participants recalled successful teachers who demonstrated deep knowledge and extensive preparation, but not in way that intimidated or alienated their students: these professors didn’t show off. In fact, they took pains to explain what they were doing and to make their thinking process transparent. In this sense they functioned as role models and mentors, giving their students permission to enter their world and inviting them to aspire to be their peers. Students left such classes feeling empowered and competent.

Some professors made a course meaningful not by the force of their personalities or the depth of their learning, but by turning their classrooms into learning communities. Participants remembered these as safe, student-centered spaces where they could share values and points of view with their peers, critique one another’s work, and learn from each other. In these classrooms student comments received serious attention and students were encouraged to look to each other as mentors and models.

3. **Goal: Identify the qualities of “essential undergraduate texts.”**

**Strategy:** Working in interdisciplinary groups of two or three, workshop participants were asked to come up with a list of three texts (broadly defined to include books, articles, poems, paintings, musical compositions, performances of various kinds, etc.) that they agreed all undergraduates ought to encounter. Ideally, one text on their group’s list would be from none of their disciplines. For each work, the group was to provide a rationale for its inclusion. As each group reported, the facilitator recorded the results on the wall posters, noting common themes.
The purpose of this exercise was not only to begin the process of characterizing “essential” texts—and hence, “essential” knowledge—but also to give participants the experience of collaborating on a curricular project with colleagues from other disciplines.

**Outcomes:** A list of the recommended texts is appended.

Not surprisingly, the “essential” texts exhibited some of the same qualities as the “meaningful” courses.

The following qualities—some contradictory, others complementary and overlapping—were most frequently cited as reasons for assigning a text:

- It introduces or explores big ideas or important themes and conflicts;
- It is a foundational or seminal work—other works refer back to it; it changed the world of ideas or the real world;
- It tackles tough or controversial issues;
- It provides a roadmap or model or inspiration for living a good life; it is humane in the fullest sense of the word;
- It is difficult, knotty, challenging: understanding it gives the reader a sense of mastery and achievement;
- It is concise, readable, accessible, immediately relevant to students’ experience;
- It crosses or transcends boundaries—disciplinary, cultural, racial, or historical;
- It surprises, provokes, disturbs, disorients;
- It is multipurpose, multilayered, nuanced, resistant to simplification.

4. **Goal:** Create a list of faculty interested in participating in a review of the General Education requirements.

Ideally, the Phase One and Two workshops will generate widespread faculty interest in and discussion of General Education at John Jay. The greater the faculty engagement in the process, the more likely it is to succeed.

**Strategy:** At the conclusion of each workshop, participants were invited to sign a sheet if they wished to be kept informed of General Education activities and developments. Signing did not commit them to working on a committee; it only indicated interest in the process.

**Outcome:** Of the ninety two (92) people who attended a workshop, fifty eight (58) requested to be kept informed about the process.

**PHASE TWO: Fall, 2006**

Building on the information gathered in Phase One, the Office of Undergraduate Studies plans a second series of workshops in 2006-2007. Unlike the Phase One workshops,
which focused on common values, these workshops will invite participants to think about disciplinarity—about what is unique to each discipline and how different disciplines can relate to and inform each other. Phase Two workshops will also begin to focus more specifically on possible General Education courses.

While moving forward on curricular reform, Phase Two workshops will continue the community-building efforts begun in Phase One.

APPENDIX: “Essential” Undergraduate Texts

**Films:**
- Apocalypse Now
- Birth of a Nation
- The Godfather, Part I
- Red Desert
- Casablanca
- Unforgiven
- Million Dollar Baby
- To Kill a Mockingbird
- Twelve Angry Men

**Music and Art:**
- Marley, Selected Works
- Mozart, The Jupiter Symphony
- Picasso, Guernica

**Written Works:**
- An American Dilemma (Bok and Myrdal)
- Anti-Semite and Jew (Sartre)
- Apology (Plato)*
- Beloved (Morrison)*
- Bible
- Bhagavad Gita
- Brave New World (Huxley)
- Candide (Voltaire)
- Civil Disobedience (Thoreau)
- Civilization and its Discontents (Freud)
- Communist Manifesto (Marx)*
- Constitution of the United States/ Bill of Rights*
- Crime and Punishment (Dostoyevsky)
- Declaration of Independence
- Dehumanization of Art (Gasset)
Don Quixote (Cervantes)
Double Helix (Watson)
English Dictionary (any good one)
Ethics and theories of government (Hobbes and Locke)
From Slavery to Freedom (Franklin)
Gilgamesh
Great Gatsby (Fitzgerald)*
Hamlet (Shakespeare)*
Heart of Darkness (Conrad)
Huckleberry Finn (Twain)*
“I Have a Dream” (King)
Implosion Conspiracy (Nizer)
Inferno (Dante)
Interpretation of Dreams (Freud)
King Lear (Shakespeare)*
Iliad (Homer)*
Madame Bovary (Flaubert)
Midnight’s Children (Rushdie)
Mismeasurement of Man (Gould)
Moby Dick
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
New York Times
Odyssey (Homer)
One Hundred Years of Solitude (Marquez)
Othello (Shakespeare)
People’s History of the United States (Zinn)
Proper Study of Mankind (Chase)
Romeo & Juliet (Shakespeare)
The Red and the Black (Stendahl)
The Republic (Plato)*
Silent Spring (Carson)
Sophocles (Homer)
Souls of Black Folk (DuBois)
Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Kuhn)*
Utopia (More)
Wretched of the Earth (Fanon)
*Listed by more than one group
In the second phase of John Jay’s General Education Renewal Project, Phase-One participants who had chosen to remain involved were joined by new members of the faculty. The Phase Two all-day workshops were designed to achieve four goals:

1. Advancing cross-disciplinary understanding;
2. Providing opportunities for multidisciplinary curricular collaboration;
3. Beginning a cross-disciplinary conversation about the characteristics of a successful General Education course;
4. Continuing the community-building efforts begun in Phase One.

* * *

I. Advancing cross-disciplinary understanding.

At many—perhaps most—colleges, the biggest impediment to student-centered General Education reform is a beleaguered sense of departmental loyalty. Even if faculty dislike teaching their department’s required General Education courses, they may feel protective of their “turf” and fearful of yielding any curricular ground to other departments. For historical reasons, this territoriality is particularly pronounced at John Jay: as a result of the New York City fiscal crisis of 1975, many of the college’s most ambitious liberal arts departments lost the right to offer majors, and teaching General Education courses thus became their raison d’etre. Before constructive, imaginative, and intellectually coherent General Education reform can take place at John Jay, this legacy of defensive departmental territoriality must be overcome.

Strategy: To begin to counter a thirty-year tradition of curricular development shaped by political negotiation, the Office of Undergraduate Studies decided to initiate a different kind of conversation—one that would enhance professors’ understanding of the intellectual claims, concerns, and aspirations of disciplines other than their own. As a first step, the workshop facilitator posed two questions to participants:

• **Question 1:** What do you like best about your discipline? What makes it fun or rewarding or interesting to you personally?

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40 For the first time in over thirty years, new liberal majors will be permissible at John Jay. Several are now being developed.
This question had two purposes: a) to remind participants of their personal and intellectual commitment to their own fields (as distinct from their allegiance to their departments); and b) to allow them to hear the passion and excitement (as distinct from departmental protectiveness) with which their colleagues spoke about their disciplines.

- **Question 2:** What do you see as the essential ideas, skills, or information associated with your discipline that every college graduate ought to be at least somewhat familiar with?

The intention of this question was to identify areas of shared interest or concern among disciplines while, at the same time, highlighting important concepts, information, or skills that seem to be the province of a particular discipline.

**Outcome:** In response to the first question, participants in each of the three Phase Two workshops spoke with great conviction about the challenges, opportunities, and delights of their disciplines. They talked about the ways that their disciplinary methodologies had not only helped them frame and investigate fundamental questions about the world, but had also enriched or transformed their lives in more direct and personal ways. This exercise served to introduce participants to one another and helped set a tone of shared intellectual enthusiasm and commitment.

In response to the second question, participants listed the following skills, ideas, and information as essential elements of any John Jay graduate’s education:

1. **Reasoning and Analysis:** the ability to
   a. observe, sort, prioritize, and structure evidence;
   b. analyze different kinds of data;
   c. understand the distinction between evaluative and empirical statements;
   d. solve problems through evidence-based inquiry (i.e. recognizing, using, and evaluating evidence in support of a hypothesis, theory or principle);
   e. develop a healthy skepticism;
   f. employ mathematical methods in the service of inquiry and analysis.

2. **Literacy:** the ability to
   a. communicate clearly in standard written and spoken English;
   b. understand audience;
   c. read and discuss complex texts;
   d. recognize the importance of point of view in interpreting texts;
   e. read both “up close,” with attention to words and sentences, and “at a distance,” grasping larger issues and connections;
   f. maintain self-awareness as a reader and writer.
APPENDIX B

3. **Ethics:** the ability to
   a. achieve self-distance by situating one’s own experience and perceptions in historical, psychological, cultural, psychological contexts;
   b. appreciate multiple perspectives and ways of understanding;
   c. animate platitudes about “tolerance” and “understanding” with solid cross-cultural and international information, experience, and knowledge;
   d. articulate the ethical dimensions of social and political issues.

4. **Creativity:** the ability to
   a. understand artistic expression as a form of inquiry and problem-solving;
   b. recognize the basic methods and forms of artistic and imaginative expression.

5. **Essential Knowledge:** some familiarity with
   a. world history and the historical contexts of language and culture;
   b. science and the scientific method;
   c. the ideas of major thinkers and the works of major writers;
   d. the nature and operations of various economic and political systems.

II. **Providing opportunities for multi-disciplinary collaboration**

Members of the faculty from different departments most often encounter each other in meetings—usually as departmental representatives charged with furthering their own departments’ goals—but they seldom have the opportunity to converse about ideas. If General Education revision at John Jay is to be an intellectually invigorating process, it is important for as many faculty members as possible to experience the pleasures and challenges of multi-disciplinary or trans-disciplinary curricular development.

**Strategy:** To give participants an experience of (as distinct from a discussion or lecture about) multidisciplinary curricular collaboration, participants were divided into groups of four or five and charged with the task of developing a hypothetical required John Jay General Education course with the title *Order and Disorder*.

Each group was provided with giant “post-it” paper, markers, and the following instructions:

- Write a course description of 1-3 sentences, specifying the level of the course;
- Develop a course outline, as elaborated as you can make it, which includes: 1) topics to be covered; 2) readings; 3) assignments; 4) learning goals; and 5) special features such as speakers, trips, and student projects or research opportunities.

The groups had about an hour and a half to work; they then put up their course descriptions and outlines for an impromptu poster presentation and discussion.
**Outcome:** The discussions were intense and lively, and the participants reported that they had had great fun figuring out ways to combine their disciplines. All the groups developed imaginative and challenging course proposals.

Their hypothetical courses were organized in a variety of ways:

1. Focusing on particular “pivotal” natural, historical, social, or scientific moments (e.g., the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Civil Rights movement, or natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions or hurricanes) from multi-disciplinary perspectives;
2. Addressing questions of order and disorder through themes of revolution: revolution of ideas, revolution of the self, and socio-political revolution;
3. Looking at order and disorder as they are expressed and investigated in a variety of disciplines, such as music, literature, art, and the social and natural sciences;
4. Examining the relationship between order and disorder in relation to speech, writing, and numbers.

**III. Beginning a cross-disciplinary conversation about the characteristics of a Successful General Education course**

Most faculty members at John Jay envision General Education as a set of required courses “owned” by particular departments, and have not given much thought to the relative costs and benefits of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and multi-disciplinary General Education courses. Without favoring one type of course over another, the workshop leaders wanted to encourage participants to reflect on: a) the differences between the courses they had sketched out and more traditional disciplinary General Education courses; b) the advantages—and disadvantages—of both kinds of courses; and c) the features of each type of course that seem most valuable, especially in light of participants’ earlier responses to Question 2 (What do you see as the essential ideas, skills, or information associated with your discipline that every college graduate ought to be at least somewhat familiar with?).

**Strategy:** The facilitator asked participants to consider the following question: Based on our discussions and course-designing experiences today, what do you see as the essential features of a successful General Education course? What do you see as potential pitfalls or problems?

**Outcome:** In all three workshops, the responses to this question revealed a fascinating—and widely shared—ambivalence about the nature and purpose of General Education courses.

On the one hand, the participants were proud of the courses they had worked on together: these were courses that they wanted to teach and that students would enjoy taking. The participants also reported that they had found the process of collaboration surprisingly energizing; in working together they had taught—and learned from—their colleagues, imagined new connections, thought of new ideas. They especially appreciated the
experience—an experience that they imagined sharing with their students—of playing around with ideas.

On the other hand, however, most participants felt that the courses that they had developed were somehow *too* playful to qualify as respectable General Education courses. Given the many deficiencies in our students’ preparation for college, it would be irresponsible, they said, not to give students a traditional meat-and-potatoes educational diet of disciplinary and skills-focused courses. Of course such courses might not be particularly appetizing: a General Education program made up of them would be viewed by students as a curricular obstacle course, something to “get out of the way,” and by faculty as a wearying duty. And yet—with so many students completely unacquainted with the most basic information about the world, wasn’t it the task of General Education courses to pour as much of it as possible into their heads?

IV. **Continuing community-building efforts begun in Phase One**

The community-building goal of Phase Two involved: a) remaining in touch with the 58 faculty Phase One participants who had indicated that they wished to be kept informed about the General Education revision process; b) including 30 of them in the Phase Two workshops; c) inviting 8 new faculty members to join the process; and d) identifying 7 nominees for a small task force charged with undertaking the more time-consuming work ahead.

**PHASE THREE: 2007-2008**

In March, 2007, a task force was appointed by the Dean for Undergraduate Studies, after consultation with faculty leaders and with the Faculty Senate. The faculty members of the task force are:

- Jama Adams, African American Studies
- Valerie Allen, English
- Rosemarie Barberet, Sociology
- Anthony Carpi, Science
- Katie Gentile, Counseling
- Lior Gideon, Law, Police Science, and Criminal Justice Administration
- Amy Green, Speech, Theater, and Media Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies

The task force will also include two students, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Academic Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Director of Outcomes Assessment, and the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management.

The task force will function, to begin with, as a study and research group. This group will educate itself about the state of general education nationally and the current wisdom about what students of the twenty-first century need to know and be able to do. The task force will collect, examine, and analyze examples of newly revised general education programs from within CUNY and across the country; study John Jay’s General Education program; and invite consultation from members of the community and beyond.
The result of this research and study process will be a report to the Provost, to be disseminated widely throughout the college and to be discussed in a variety of forums. This report will articulate the principles of effective General Education programs. It will address the educational needs of John Jay students and the goals of the college, and connect them to the principles of effective General Education. Finally, the report will present a variety of options for next steps, for consideration by the College Curriculum Committee and the College Council.
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<td>Intro. to College Writing (4 cr.)</td>
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<td>English Composition 1</td>
<td>FIQWS (6 cr.) <em>(Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar – 1 semester, 2 part, team-taught topic combined w/writing.)</em></td>
<td>Communications Workshop</td>
<td>English Comp.</td>
<td>ENG 101 College Comp. 1</td>
<td>Principles of Effective Writing I</td>
<td>Freshman English or College Comp.</td>
<td>English Comp.</td>
<td>English Composition (3 cr) or AP credit for score of 4 or 5/College NOW; potential for transfer waiver</td>
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<td>Writing 2</td>
<td>English Composition II</td>
<td>English 210 <em>(not yet fully implemented)</em></td>
<td>College Writing</td>
<td>Survey of Literature</td>
<td>ENG 201 College Comp. 2</td>
<td>Principles of Effective Writing II</td>
<td>College Composition II</td>
<td>English 120W: Comp. II <em>(recommended for selected students; counts as one WI unit; 3 cr)</em></td>
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<td>2 cr. <em>(Freshman Seminar 1, II)</em> OR SP/C 003 *(Transition from high school to college – SEEK students, .5 credits), SP/C 004 <em>(College as a Social System, .5cr)</em></td>
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<td>Fundamentals of Speech</td>
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<td>6 cr. <em>(comm.)</em> May be included in major Oral Comm.</td>
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### CUNY General Education Charts – Updated June 18, 2008
(all courses 3 credits unless otherwise noted)

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<td><strong>Foreign Lang.</strong></td>
<td>0-6 cr.</td>
<td>College req. – level 3 or higher</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} or 4\textsuperscript{th} semester language course</td>
<td>Proficiency exam</td>
<td>3-9 cr.</td>
<td>2 courses (100 level) (6 cr.) or exemptions</td>
<td>3 courses</td>
<td>Knowledge or equiv. up to 3\textsuperscript{rd} or int.cr. level of foreign lang. or HS or proficiency waiver (0-11cr.) to 3 semesters at college level (0-9cr.)</td>
<td>0-8 cr. (0-2 courses)</td>
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<td>4 Comm. Intensive classes</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>6 courses</td>
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<td>3 courses</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>4 courses (3 prior to 60\textsuperscript{th} credit, 1 after)</td>
<td>3 WI units (3-9 cr.)</td>
<td>3 (2 lower division, one upper)</td>
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<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td>1 course (4 credits)</td>
<td>2 courses (Biology or Chemistry; Physics or Geology), 1 course (exploring science)</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
<td>2 semesters (lab course)</td>
<td>7 cr. (2 courses, 1 w/lab)</td>
<td>2 lab science courses (4 cr. each) NSC 107 Introduction to Science in Society and either FOS 108 Introduction to Forensic Science or ENV 108 Principles of Environmental Science For science majors 100-level science courses count toward Gen Ed reqs</td>
<td>2 lab courses (4 cr. each)</td>
<td>Lab Science, 8 cr. (one year sequence of lab science req.)</td>
<td>2 PLAS\textsuperscript{41} (7 cr), Natl. Sciences (1 lab), 2\textsuperscript{nd} course need not be PLAS</td>
<td>5-6 credits (in 2 disciplines)</td>
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\textsuperscript{41} Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences
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<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<th>BROOKLYN</th>
<th>CITY*</th>
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<th>HUNTER</th>
<th>JOHN JAY*</th>
<th>LEHMAN</th>
<th>MEDGAR EVERS</th>
<th>NY CITY TECH</th>
<th>QUEENS* (Starting Fall 2009)</th>
<th>YORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math/Quantitative Reasoning/Comp. Science</td>
<td>1 course (200 level - BBA req. calculus)</td>
<td>1 course (Thinking Mathematically or Computing)</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>2 courses: MAT 104 Elements of Modern Mathematics II or MAT 105 Modern Mathematics; and MAT 108 Social Science Mathematics or MAT 141 Pre-calculus</td>
<td>1 3-4 cr. course or 3 1cr. courses.</td>
<td>1 course (4 cr.)</td>
<td>7/8 credits (math 1 and II)</td>
<td>Satisfaction of math skills req. (0-3cr); exemption possible (HS regents); AP scores of 3,4 or 5; College NOW; Compass Exam and 1 course (need not be PLAS) extended req. (3 cr), Abstract or Quant. Reasoning</td>
<td>1 course (4 cr.)</td>
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(all courses 3 credits unless otherwise noted)
# Social Sciences

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<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<td><strong>SCHOOL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MEDGAR EVERS</strong></td>
<td><strong>NY CITY TECH</strong></td>
<td><strong>QUEENS</strong></td>
<td><strong>YORK</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Subject** | 13 credits (one anthro/soc, econ, politics/gov, 3c; general psychology, 4cr.) | People, Power, and Politics | 3 credits (Human Behavior/Soc. Sciences) | 6 cr. | 2 courses: ANT 101 or ECO 101 or GOV 101 or PSY 101 or SOC 101 | 1 course (from Individuals and Society distribution area), 1 course (from Socio-Political Structures distribution areas). | 1 course (from Social & Behavioral Sciences, Psychology, or Sociology) | 9 credits (one year sequence in a behavioral or social science series and one additional course) | 2 PLAS (6 cr.), Analyzing Social Structures | Second course need not be PLAS | 6 cr. (from 2 disciplines outside the major – called “behavioral sciences”)

## Behavioral Sciences

| **U.S. Focus** | 1 course | 1 course (COR 100 United States: Issues, Ideas and Institutions 4 credits) | 3 cr. (U.S. History) | See above | 1 PLAS Context of Experience (3 cr., U.S.) |

## History

| **History** | 1 course | Shaping the Modern World | 2 courses: HIS 231 Origins of the Contemporary World: From the Classical Period to the Enlightenment and HIS 232 Contemporary History: From the Enlightenment to the Present | 1 course | HIST 101 (World Civ. I) OR HIST 102 (World Civ II); 1 200-level history class (can include US history) | 1 PLAS Context of Experience (3 cr., European Traditions) | 1 course |
## CUNY General Education Charts – Updated June 18, 2008
(all courses 3 credits unless otherwise noted)

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<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<th>MEDGAR EVERS</th>
<th>NY CITY TECH</th>
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<td><strong>SUBJECT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>Knowledge, Reality and Values</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 course: PHI 231 Knowing, Being, &amp; Doing: Philosophical Method and its Applications</td>
<td>1 course (called Knowledge, Self, and Values distribution area)</td>
<td>PHIL 101 (Intro. to Logic)</td>
<td>3 courses – 1 literature AND 2 courses from Literature, Aesthetics, or Philosophy</td>
<td>1 course (Culture and Values)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature (beyond the 1st year)</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>Exploring Literature</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 courses: LIT 230 or 231; and LIT 232 or LIT 233</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>ENG 211 (Intro. to Literature); ENGL 300 (Masterpieces of World Lit.)</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>2 PLAS (6 cr.) Reading Literature, second course need not be PLAS</td>
<td>1 course, junior-level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and Performing Arts</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>2 courses <em>(Intro. to Art, Music)</em></td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>1 course (world art)</td>
<td>3 cr.</td>
<td>1 course: any music, art or drama course</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>ART 100 (Intro. to World Art,2 cr.), MUS 100 (Intro. to World Music,2 cr.)</td>
<td>1 PLAS (3 cr) Appreciating and Participating in the Arts</td>
<td>1 course</td>
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<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<th>JOHN JAY</th>
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<th>MEDGAR EVERS</th>
<th>NY CITY TECH (42-42 CR)</th>
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<tr>
<td>SUBJECT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global/Diversity</td>
<td>Exploring Global Connections</td>
<td>Global History and Culture</td>
<td>ENG 111 or COR 200 (counts for pluralism and diversity).</td>
<td>12 cr. (1 from each: non-European societies, diversity in the U.S., women/gender/sexual orientation, diversity in Europe)</td>
<td>1 course: ETH 123 or 124 or 125</td>
<td>1 course (called Comparative Culture distribution area)</td>
<td>International Studies – 6 cr. (choosing from economics, international relations, world geography, or CIS), OR 6 credits foreign language OR 2 courses in ASL I and II.</td>
<td>1 PLAS – Context of Experience (3 cr.), World Cultures</td>
<td>1 course (Understanding Cultural Diversity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health/ Nutrition/ PE</td>
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<td>Fitness for Life (1 cr.)</td>
<td>1-3 credits</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Fitness for Living, 2 cr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other/ Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Classical Cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 course (research and writing for the major, for the sciences, math, and technology, or for professional programs).</td>
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## Upper Level Requirements

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<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<th>LEHMAN</th>
<th>MEDGAR EVERS</th>
<th>NY CITY TECH (42-42 CR)</th>
<th>QUEENS</th>
<th>YORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECT</td>
<td>Upper level courses</td>
<td>2 courses (Exploring Literature, Exploring Global Connections, Exploring Science)</td>
<td>2 courses in dept. outside of the major</td>
<td>English 210 (writing within disciplines)</td>
<td>3 cr. <em>In Humanities or Visual and Performing Arts</em> (beyond 100 level)</td>
<td>3 cr. <em>In social sciences or natl. science/math beyond intro. Level</em></td>
<td>LEH 300 (Studies in the Humanities and Sciences); LEH 301 (The American Experience)</td>
<td>1 synthesis course (3 cr., perhaps)</td>
<td>1 junior-level writing course</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Capstone

- Baruch: Yes (comm. intensive)
## CUNY General Education Charts – Updated June 18, 2008
(all courses 3 credits unless otherwise noted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>BMCC</th>
<th>BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE</th>
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<th>KINGSBOROUGH</th>
<th>LAGUARDIA</th>
<th>QUEENSBOROUGH*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College English 1</td>
<td>English Composition I</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Composition &amp; Rhetoric OR Composition and Rhetoric I</td>
<td>Expository Writing</td>
<td>Freshman English (4 cr)</td>
<td>Composition I</td>
<td>College Composition I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College English 2</td>
<td>English Composition II</td>
<td>Composition and Rhetoric II</td>
<td>Literature and Composition</td>
<td>Freshman English II (3 cr)</td>
<td>Writing Through Literature</td>
<td>College Composition II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freshman Seminar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New Student Seminar (0 cr.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech/Comm.</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Speech</td>
<td>2 courses (Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication; Public Speaking and Critical Listening)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
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<td>SP 211 Speech Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Lang.</td>
<td>6-8 credits, 2 courses</td>
<td>8 credits</td>
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<td>0-8 cr. (0-2 courses)</td>
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<td>1 course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Intensive Requirements</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>2 courses</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 writing intensive courses (2 lower division, one upper)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2 courses (4 cr.)</td>
<td>Lab Science, 8 cr. (one year sequence of lab science req.)</td>
<td>2 courses, one must be a lab.</td>
<td>11 credits (in 2 areas: Biological Sciences, Math and Computer Science, Physical Sciences, Chemistry, Earth Science)</td>
<td>9 credits (3 cr. math, 6 cr. math or natural/applied sciences)</td>
<td>8 cr. lab science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/Quantitative Reasoning/Comp. Science</td>
<td>1 course, 4 cr.</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>1 course</td>
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<td>2 courses (Number Systems, Computer Assisted Statistics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>4 courses (from four diff. disciplines including anthropology, economics, geography, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology or ethnic studies)</td>
<td>2 courses (from Anthro., Econ, Geography, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology or Sociology)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 courses (in Economics, History or Political Science)</td>
<td>9 credits (3 cr. from anthro, econ, political science, sociology, psychology; 3 cr. history; 3 cr. liberal arts elective)</td>
<td>2 courses (Intro. to Sociology and one other course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral Sciences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 courses (in 2 areas: Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology)</td>
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### CUNY General Education Charts – Updated June 18, 2008
(all courses 3 credits unless otherwise noted)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
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<td>SUBJECT</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Focus</td>
<td>1 course, American History</td>
<td>American Nation:</td>
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<td>2 courses (Growth of American Civilization I, II)</td>
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<td>Political and Social</td>
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<td>Development of a People</td>
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<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1 course, World History</td>
<td>1 course (History of</td>
<td>1 course</td>
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<td>the Modern World or</td>
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<td>Intro. to the Modern</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Philosophy</strong></td>
<td>1 English Elective</td>
<td>1 course</td>
<td>2 courses (in 2 areas: Language, Literature or Philosophy)</td>
<td>2 courses</td>
<td>Intro. to Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Literature (beyond the first year)</strong></td>
<td>1 course</td>
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<td>1 course</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fine and Performing Arts</strong></td>
<td>1 course in Music or Art (2 cr.)</td>
<td>Intro. to Art; Intro to Music</td>
<td>2 courses (in 2 areas: Art, Music, Speech or Theatre Arts)</td>
<td>2 courses (Intro. to Art of Dance or Acting I, Art History)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global/Diversity</strong></td>
<td>Health Education (2 cr.)</td>
<td>1 course (1-2 credits)</td>
<td>1 course (1 credit)</td>
<td>1 course (3 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health/Nutrition/PE</strong></td>
<td>Health Education (2 cr.)</td>
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<td>1 course</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other/Interdisciplinary</strong></td>
<td>14 cr. Liberal Arts Elective</td>
<td>Restricted Elective: 1 course elective (from English, History or Social Science)</td>
<td>Students take 18-20 credits in one cluster (out of a choice of four: Communication and Cultural Skill, Arts and Humanities, Processes in the Behavioral Sciences, Processes in the Social Sciences)</td>
<td>1 Education and Language Acquisition course 4 credits Liberal Arts (Integrating Seminar: Liberal Arts Cluster, 1 cr. and Humanism, Science and Technology, 3 cr.) Cooperative Education (6 cr.) Liberal Arts Elective (6 cr) Unrestricted Elective (6 cr, one must be an urban study course)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Level Requirements</strong></td>
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<td>1 course</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capstone</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
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<td>5-6 free electives</td>
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</table>
The J Team will advance the General Education reform process when it returns to campus by implementing discoveries and decisions made at the Institute in three areas: Curricular and Pedagogical Plans; Incremental Process for Design and Implementation; and a Timeline.

Curricular and Pedagogical Plans for “J Studies”

- Remember that the students are the focus.
- It is time to align our General Education with national trends.
- The learning objectives are not just for General Education but are institutional goals and so should reflect the goals and mission of the College.
- Our goals are supported by AAC&U data that include what employers are looking for. (We should include what graduate and law schools want.)
- Responsibility for meeting the learning objectives is shared between General Education and the majors.
- General Education should scaffold the entire undergraduate experience.
- The goals should be embedded and mapped across the curriculum from cornerstone to milestone to capstone experiences.
- Creative assessment of the learning objectives should be embedded and mapped at strategic points across the curriculum.
- We don’t have to reinvent the wheel and can build on the foundations we already have. Many of our existing courses may already address the learning objectives and may fit into a new General Education structure.
- Faculty want students to succeed academically, personally, and professionally.
- Students should be guided to integrate what they are learning in the curriculum, co-curriculum, workplace, and community.
- Capitalize on the complexity of our students’ lives by creating opportunities for internships and service learning where they live and work.
- Recognize that the 4-year model does not apply.
- Learning styles, intellectual development and complexity, and ways of knowing are critical.
- Consider establishing a dedicated General Education faculty.
- The mission, goals, and design of General Education should be clear, concise, and easily communicated.
Incremental Process for Design and Implementation of “J Studies”

1. **Share GE task force findings**
   - Use concise and positive language.
   - Write and disseminate a document that will help build consensus throughout the institution.
   - Utilize many forums for sharing findings (eg. electronic, public, private, formal, informal). Communicate broadly and often.
   - Develop the GE Task Force website.

2. **Build Consensus on Institutional Learning Objectives**
   - Utilize many forums for feedback (eg. electronic, public, private, formal, informal). Communicate broadly and often.
   - Identify “champions of change” among faculty, staff, and students.
   - Identify disagreements and seek compromise and reconciliation of differences.
   - Seek formal endorsement of institutional learning objectives.

3. **Secure Institutional Support**
   - Commit top-level administration to public support GE reform as a campus priority.
   - Commit top-level administration to provide fiscal and structural resources for faculty development, full-time GE coordinator, and faculty oversight committee.

4. **Establish Faculty Development**
   - Put faculty development before curricular development.
   - Create working groups that focus on the literature surrounding the pedagogy of GE.
   - Implement curricular development process by faculty.
   - Apply for external funding to supplement these activities.

5. **Pilot, Assess, and Improve New or Adapted Courses**
   - See timeline for details.

6. **Design “J Studies” Curriculum**
   - Synthesize curricular development data from pilot and assessment process to create overall “J Studies” program.

7. **Obtain Institutional Adoption**
   - Shepherd “J Studies” curriculum through Curriculum Committee and College Council approval process.

8. **Institute Ongoing Assessment, Development, and Improvement**
Bibliography of Best Practices in General Education and Undergraduate Pedagogy*

General


* Adapted from the Bibliography of the 2005 AAC&U Institute on General Education.


**Goals**


**Curriculum Design**


**Pedagogy**


**Assessment**


**Issues of Process**


Politics of Educational Change


**Strategy and Strategies for Curricular Reform**


**Student Development**


**Raising Expectations for Student Achievement**


**Interdisciplinarity in General Education**


**Infusing Technology into the Curriculum**


**Integration of General Education and the Major**


**Diversity**


**Learning Communities**


MacGregor, J. (Comp.). (1999). *Strengthening learning communities: Case studies from the National Learning Communities Dissemination Project (FIPSE)*. Olympia, WA: The Evergreen State College, Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education.


**Faculty Development**


