

**Report of the Commission on Undergraduate Curriculum:
Final Recommendations**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION:	2
I. Introduction/Background	3
II. Learning Outcomes for a New Truman Curriculum	4
III. Common Curricular elements	5
<i>Portfolios for Learning and Assessment</i>	5
<i>Number of Hours Required for Graduation</i>	6
<i>Using the Same Course to Satisfy More than One Degree Requirement</i>	6
<i>BA/BS Distinction and Foreign Language</i>	6
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	7
<i>Interdisciplinary Thinking</i>	7
<i>First-Year Seminar –The Truman Seminar</i>	7
<i>Essential Skills</i>	10
<i>Essential Skills—Writing</i>	10
<i>Essential Skills—Speaking</i>	10
<i>Essential Skills—Mathematics</i>	11
<i>Essential Skills—Statistics</i>	12
<i>Essential Skills—Personal Well-Being</i>	12
<i>Experiential Learning Component</i>	12
<i>Learning-Centered Education</i>	13
IV Unresolved Issues	14
V Proposed Models	15
Communities of Discourse.....	15
A Modified Liberal Studies Program With 7 of 8 Modes	21
A Modified Liberal Studies Program With 6 Modes.....	24
VI Assessment	27
Appendix A—A Distributed Model for College Health	28
Appendix B – List of Recommended Actions and Recommendations	33

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I. Introduction/Background

On May 10, 2006, Undergraduate Council established a commission to study undergraduate curriculum at Truman State University. The bill charged the Commission with completion of two phases. The Phase I report, including discussion of motivations for change, the history of the liberal arts in general and at Truman, and a definition and philosophy of curriculum, was released on Dec. 10, 2007. The subsequent approval of that document by the faculty (82.8% in favor) constituted strong support for both the learning outcomes articulated therein and the design principles that should guide the construction of a curriculum.

The bill defined Phase II as follows:

In Phase II, the Commission shall

- a) Develop alternative curriculum proposals to achieve the objectives developed in Phase I, ranging from incremental changes to the current curriculum through more innovative proposals;
- b) Link each element in these curriculum proposals to the achievement of the stated objectives;
- c) Suggest a means for assessing whether the stated objectives have been achieved.

The Commission issued its Phase II report in November 2008. Subsequently, the Commission solicited community feedback on the report in multiple venues. In the fall of 2008, the Commission held a series of forums where the Commission outlined the content of the document. In January 2009, the Commission invited faculty, staff, and students to complete a survey designed to solicit feedback. The Commission received 211 responses from faculty and staff and 953 responses from students. The responses included nearly 300 pages of individual comments on various elements of the Phase II report. The Commission also received comments from numerous academic departments. The Phase II report, moreover, was the focus of the University Conference held on February 19, 2009. After considering the feedback, the Commission has taken the Phase II document and translated it into a series of recommendations and actions that are contained in this document. We have used bold text to highlight the recommended actions. We have also summarized our recommendations and actions in Appendix B.

A careful reader of the Phase II report and our recommendations here will notice that the Commission continues to return to several common curricular elements that we have advocated in our previous reports. After discussing the common elements, we turn our attention to specific curricular models. Based on the feedback we received, we saw a preference for distributional models. Consequently, we did not further develop the Thematic Clusters Model, the Double-FINS Model, and the Portfolio Model. Instead, we offer three variants of distributional models that incorporate many common curricular elements. One of these models, the Communities of Discourses, is a refinement of the earlier Grammars models and replaces the idea of a mode of thinking with a community of discourse. The other two models retain our current notion of the mode.

The Commission, however, sees the limitations of distributional models in helping students make connections across the curriculum. In evaluating three decades of research into student learning, Pascarella and Terenzini conclude:

an interdisciplinary or integrated core curriculum that emphasized making explicit connections across courses and among ideas and disciplines, positively influenced growth in measures of postformal reasoning.¹

Neither our current Liberal Studies Program nor the distributional models proposed here explicitly incorporates this finding into curriculum design. Pulling the idea of clusters from the Thematic Clusters Model as an option to assist students in making explicit connections across courses, we recommend that faculty identify and create clusters of existing and newly proposed classes that create paths through the distributional models. These clusters of courses would include courses that satisfy multiple distribution areas. We encourage faculty teaching and proposing these courses to have on going conversations regarding the clusters to increase the opportunities for making connections across classes. We further recommend that students be encouraged to use interdisciplinary minors to satisfy the distribution requirements and that minor oversight committees encourage the formation of links between classes.

In Phase I, we defined curriculum “*as an intentionally created universe of learning experiences, a description of what we ask students to do in order to meet our learning outcomes.*” We remind the community that our definition includes how we teach our classes as well as what classes we require students to complete. The Commission continues to believe that pedagogy is as important as, if not more important than, any particular curricular model. Regardless of which model is adopted, implementation by faculty in their programs and classrooms matter to the success of our students.

II. Learning Outcomes for a New Truman Curriculum

As part of Phase I, the Truman faculty adopted learning outcomes, the starting point of a new curriculum. We reproduce here the learning outcomes for use in evaluating our curricular recommendations.

Learning Outcomes for a New Curriculum

- Students develop better understanding of the natural, socio-cultural, and historical forces that shape our increasingly global and interconnected world (and their own place within such forces).
- Students develop increasing facility in the essential communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in diverse contexts and in precision of thought quantitatively, qualitatively and abstractly. Students refine transferable critical thinking skills including, but not limited to the ability to construct and critique arguments, to find and evaluate relevant evidence, to frame questions, and to solve problems. Students develop the ability to think and act creatively.

¹ Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*, Josey-Bass. San Francisco, CA, 2005, page 207.

- Students manifest a high level of engagement and accomplishment in a major area of study while demonstrating the ability to synthesize knowledge and skills across disciplines.

Elaborated Outcomes

To enable graduates to make personally and socially responsible choices that will allow them to continue to experience holistic personal development throughout their lives, a Truman education brings together knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, intellectual and practical skills, and deeper integrative learning.

Students develop better understanding of the natural, socio-cultural, and historical forces that shape our increasingly global and interconnected world (and their own place within such forces) by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring, active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges, and broad exposure outside the major area of study, including different skills and methods associated with various academic disciplines.

Students develop increasing facility in the essential communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in diverse contexts and in precision of thought quantitatively, qualitatively and abstractly. Students refine transferable critical thinking skills including, but not limited to, the ability to construct and critique arguments, to find and evaluate relevant evidence, to frame questions, and to solve problems. Students develop the ability to think and act creatively, as these skills are practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance.

Students manifest a high level of engagement and accomplishment in a major area of study to understand one discipline's methodologies and modes of thought, areas or application, and relationship to other areas of knowledge, while demonstrating the ability to synthesize knowledge and skills across disciplines, applying these to new settings and complex problems in both individual and collaborative learning contexts

III. Common Curricular elements

Portfolios for Learning and Assessment

Feedback on the Phase II report suggested that students should receive more feedback on their portfolio submissions. Yet, the community did not like the idea of requiring 1-hour portfolio seminars. Consequently, the Commission does not recommend requiring portfolio seminars. Instead, the Commission encourages the Director of the Portfolio Program to continue to seek ways to alter the current portfolio program to provide more feedback for students. The Commission, further, suggests that the University pilot an

optional 1-hour portfolio seminar that provides students with feedback on their submissions and a chance to evaluate portfolio grading rubrics. Additionally, the Commission believes that students should begin to assemble their portfolios earlier in their Truman careers starting with the proposed Truman Seminars.

Number of Hours Required for Graduation

Recommended Action 1: Reduce the required number of hours for BA and BS degrees from 124 to 120 hours.

Recommendation: Continue to require students who wish to earn more than one degree to earn at least 12 hours in addition to those required by the degree with the highest cumulative hour requirement.

Recommended Action 2: With a decrease in the number of total hours from 124 to 120 for the BA and the BS degrees, reduce the number of required liberal arts and sciences hours from 63 to 61.

Recommended Action 3: Ask faculty in programs awarding the BM, BSN, and BFA to explore the feasibility of reducing the total number of hours required for the degree by 4 hours.

Using the Same Course to Satisfy More than One Degree Requirement

In our Phase II report we suggested that we encourage more “double counting” to help “students recognize that the work they do in their major also has a liberal arts connection, but also to free up more hours, to encourage students to explore more broadly, and more deeply in particular subjects.” Community feedback overwhelmingly endorsed allowing students to double count and use major courses to satisfy LSP requirements. Since the Undergraduate Council recently addressed the issue of double-counting, the Commission makes no formal additional recommendation regarding double-counting.

BA/BS Distinction and Foreign Language

Recommendation: Following current requirements, all students shall demonstrate elementary proficiency in a foreign language. All recipients of BA, BM, or BFA degrees shall demonstrate intermediate proficiency in a foreign language

Recommendation: Following current requirements, all BS recipients shall earn at least six hours of credit from quantitative or formal reasoning-based courses which are designated by the major from the areas of sciences, mathematics, statistics, computer science, social sciences, and logic. These courses should be outside the major and should provide necessary support for the major or the breadth to view issues from the perspectives of other disciplines.²

² The language describing the BS requirement comes from Senate Bill 2495 which created the current Liberal Studies Program.

In the feedback we received on the survey, the Commission noted two types of comments, one from faculty members who desire a more principled and substantive distinction between the BA and the BS degrees, and one stating majors should be the arbiter of BS requirements. The Commission does not, however, see a means to make a more substantive distinction and allow flexibility in BS requirements.

Critical Thinking

Recommended Action 4: Appoint a committee of faculty and students to draft a critical thinking rubric that can be used across programs and in the proposed Truman Seminars.

Recommended Action 5: The faculty adopt a common framework—a description of critical thinking, in the form of a rubric and/or other documents available to the faculty for use throughout programs. Students shall be introduced to the rubric in the Truman Seminars.

Interdisciplinary Thinking

Recommended Action 6: Continue to require all students to complete a writing-enhanced Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar, but create a mechanism by which integrated, linked and/or clustered courses could be used to satisfy this requirement.

First-Year Seminar –The Truman Seminar

Recommended Action 7: Drop the Truman Program as a graduation requirement and require all new first-year students and transfer students³ with fewer than 30 hours at the time of matriculation to complete a 4-hour Truman Seminar that introduces the value of seeing an issue from multiple perspectives.

Recommended Action 8: Require all new transfer students with 30 or more hours at the time of matriculation to complete a 1-hour transfer seminar during their first semester that is not included in the 42-hour transfer block. The seminar will introduce transfer students to Truman’s liberal arts mission, the portfolio, the critical thinking rubric, and Truman resources.

The first-year seminar, the Truman Seminar, will be a discussion-oriented, 4-hour experience for all first-year students taught by faculty across the disciplines assisted by an upper-class peer leader. The first-year seminar will address the current essential skills of public speaking and writing. As in the current LSP, students will be required to complete a total of 4 writing-enhanced courses including the first-year seminar and JINS. Additionally, students will be required to complete 3 speaking-enhanced courses including the first-year seminar. ENG 190 will be officially designated a writing-

³ A transfer student is a student who has earned college credit after earning a high school diploma. While some of our first-year students matriculate with more than 30 hours of credit, they are not considered transfer students since they earned the credit prior to high school graduation.

enhanced course and COMM 170 will be designated a speaking-enhanced course. The models proposed permit, but do not require, students to take ENG 190 or COMM 170.

Following the recommendations of the First-Year Experience Task Force, the seminars will replace the current INDV 101 Truman Week and the extended Truman Week class. To provide an intellectual introduction to Truman, seminars will start during Truman Week. Where appropriate, disciplines are encouraged to continue offering major-based courses to sections composed of first-year students.

First-year seminars

- Introduce the value of seeing an issue from multiple perspectives and lay the foundation for interdisciplinary thinking throughout the curriculum;
- Stress active learning through critical questioning, speaking, listening, discussing, reading and writing extensively about original works (as opposed to textbooks);
- Require students to complete an appropriate research or creative project that requires retrieval, evaluation, and proper documentation of sources; demonstration of critical thinking abilities; and a public presentation of findings;
- Meet the outcomes for writing-enhanced courses;
- Meet the outcomes for speaking-enhanced courses;
- Introduce the University's critical thinking rubric;
- Are the source of the student's first writing, speaking, and critical thinking portfolio submission; and
- Are taught as seminars with between 20 and 24 students.

Faculty should be free to propose topics for seminars that meet the course objectives and fit within a broad overarching theme for the seminars. The broad overarching theme should allow for diverse faculty and student interest while providing some commonality. To provide a small common experience for students, faculty teaching the seminars should utilize one or two texts⁴ that will be used in all seminars in a given year and fit with the broad overarching theme. A broad overarching theme encourages conversation and student curiosity across sections. Such conversations will enrich a student's understanding of the broader issues. We recommend the establishment of a first-year seminar oversight committee that will, among other responsibilities, adopt the broad theme. An example of a possible theme is *the world in 2050*. We believe such a theme allows multiple approaches and can incorporate a tremendous number of topics.

We recommend that all sections of the first-year seminars be offered at two designated times during the week (such as MWF, 9:30-10:20, and TU/TH 10:30-11:50) to allow for intermingling of sections and for common speakers and other activities across sections.

To create a signature event for Truman, we suggest the oversight committee explore the feasibility of having first-year students publicly present the findings from their projects during the last week of classes instead of having regular class meetings. These presentations could be captured on video and become part of students' portfolios.

⁴ In this context, the word text is meant to be interpreted broadly. A text could be a reading, but it could also be a concert, a recital, a play, a film, a speech, etc.

With a class size of 20-24 students, we will need to offer between 60 and 70 sections each fall. We will need 2 or 3 sections each spring for first-year students starting in the spring semester and for students who either withdrew from or failed the course in the fall semester.

Upper-class students participating in the Truman Seminar as peer leaders should be appropriately rewarded for their involvement. Such rewards could possibly include scholarship hours and/or credit for a 300-level version of the Truman Seminar designated as Truman Seminar Peer Leadership.

Transfer students with 30 or more hours upon matriculation⁵ will be exempt from the first-year seminar and will be allowed to use the equivalent of ENG 190 taken at another institution as a writing-enhanced course and the equivalent of COMM 170 as a speaking-enhanced course. Transfer students exempt from the first-year experience will be required to complete a one-hour transfer seminar. To help transfer students transition to Truman, the transfer seminar will introduce the University's critical thinking rubric, the Liberal Arts and Science portfolio, and Truman resources.

Implementation of Truman Seminar

Adopting Truman Seminars will require appointment of a Truman Seminar oversight committee. The committee should

- Choose and periodically evaluate the broad over-arching theme and recommend changes to the theme;
- Assess the effectiveness of the seminars in meeting learning objectives. Since the seminars emphasize class discussion, the assessment program should include a means to assist faculty in assessing the quality and level of participation in class discussion.
- In consultation with the Center for Teaching and Learning, offer an annual spring/summer workshop for faculty and peer leaders to help them effectively develop strategies for teaching writing, speaking, critical thinking, and discussion skills; and
- Offer optional meetings for faculty and peer leaders teaching the seminars to discuss strategies, topics of mutual concern, and to share resources.

We recommend piloting the seminar with 10 to 12 sections in the fall of 2010 with an aim to expand the pilot to 30 to 35 sections in the fall of 2011. We recommend full implementation in the fall of 2012. Spring 2013 would be the first time that sections are offered in the spring. During the pilot phase, students who do not pass the seminar will be waived Truman Week but will be expected to complete the speaking and writing essential skills. The pilot sections should be open to all students regardless of major as we phase

⁵ First-time, first-year students as classified by admission are required to take the first-year semester regardless of the number of transfer hours at the time of matriculation.

out the extended Truman Week Sections and INDV 101⁶. During the pilot, students who opt to take the first-year seminar would be required to complete 2 writing-enhanced courses in addition to JINS and 2 speaking-enhanced courses. These students could use ENG 190 as a writing-enhanced course and COMM 170 as a speaking-enhanced course.

Implementation of the Truman Transfer Seminar

Adopting the transfer seminar will require appointment of a Truman Transfer Seminar oversight committee. Charged with overseeing all elements of transfer student success, the committee should design the learning objectives for a one-hour seminar that introduces transfer students to the critical thinking rubric, the liberal arts and sciences portfolio, and to Truman resources.

We recommend piloting two sections of the seminar in the fall of 2010 and spring of 2011 with the possibility of requiring it for all transfer students starting in the fall of 2011.

Essential Skills

As originally conceived, mastery of essential skills “establishes a foundation upon which future liberal studies and major course work can be built and provides the basis for a lifetime of learning.”⁷ The Commission reaffirms this original conception and embraces the idea that these skills are developed and nurtured throughout the curriculum.

Essential Skills—Writing

Recommended Action 9: Replace the current essential skills-writing requirement with a requirement of 4 writing-enhanced courses including the newly proposed Truman Seminar for first-year students and JINS. Continue to offer ENG 190 Writing as Critical Thinking and allow it to be used as a writing-enhanced course.

Essential Skills—Speaking

Recommended Action 10: Replace the current essential skills speech requirement with 3 speaking-enhanced courses including the newly proposed Truman Seminar for first-year students. Continue to offer COMM 170 Public Speaking and allow it to be used as a speaking-enhanced course.

Recommended Action 11: Create a committee of faculty and students to refine the learning objectives of speaking-enhanced courses and suggest how the speaking-enhanced objectives might correspond to the objectives of current writing-enhanced courses. Additionally, the committee should help identify

⁶ Currently, some majors require students to complete a major-based seminar as their extended Truman Week class. Ideally, these majors would accommodate students who opted to take the first-year seminar by allowing them to join the major-based seminar after Truman Week.

⁷ Senate Bill 2495, “Core Proposal of Undergraduate Council”

courses in the curriculum that already meet the learning objectives for speaking-enhanced courses.

In many of the models of our Phase II report, we suggested that a first-year seminar might serve as a default test-out mechanism for the essential skills of writing and speaking. We also suggested that basic communication skills not be taught in separate “island” courses but be integrated into the curriculum more generally. While our survey did not explicitly ask about maintaining the current essential skills-speech requirement, more than 50% of the faculty supported or strongly supported the idea that students should be able to use formal speaking in the first-year seminar to demonstrate proficiency in the essential skills of speaking and writing. At the same time, Communication Faculty expressed concerns that a first-year seminar and the elimination of a formal speech course would leave our students unprepared for the challenges of the modern world. The Commission believes that a move away from one basic course requirement is warranted, but we do not want to diminish the importance of developing oral communication skills. Consequently, the Commission believes that speaking-enhanced courses will ensure that this important skill is nurtured and developed throughout the curriculum.

We further suggest that Undergraduate Council assess the public speaking abilities of our students to ensure that we appropriately develop the public speaking abilities of our graduates and to establish a baseline of their current speaking abilities under the current Liberal Studies Program.

In speaking-enhanced courses students will

- Enact ethical public discourse and accept ethical responsibility in producing and consuming public discourse.
- Understand and perform the audience-centered approach of the speechmaking process including selecting topics, organizing speeches, using persuasive appeals and using supporting materials effectively.
- Develop critical thinking skills, including the process of listening as receiving, constructing meaning from and responding to public messages.

The first-year seminar will be a speaking-enhanced course. We anticipate that most, if not all, senior capstones would also meet the learning objectives.

Essential Skills—Mathematics

Recommendation: *Continue to require all students to demonstrate proficiency in elementary functions.*

Recommended Action 12: *The Provost fund a faculty development initiative for mathematics across the curriculum.*

Under this initiative, funds would be made available for faculty from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science and faculty from other disciplines, particularly from those who do not currently feature significant integration of mathematics, who are

interested in working together to explore relevant and appropriate points of intersection, and to develop materials that faculty could optionally integrate into courses in order to reinforce the mathematics essential skills.

Essential Skills—Statistics

Recommendation: *All students continue to be required to take a statistics course.*

Recommended Action 13: *The Provost fund a faculty development initiative for statistics across the curriculum.*

This initiative is similar to the development initiative for mathematics, but here the effort would be to help faculty integrate statistics into their courses.

Essential Skills—Personal Well-Being

Recommended Action 14: *Change the name of Essential Skills-Personal Well Being to Essential Skills-Wellness. Reevaluate the means of satisfying the requirement in the spring of 2010 after we have the results of the wellness pilot conducted in the fall of 2010 by the Department of Health and Exercise Science.*

After distributing the Phase II report, a group of student affairs professionals and HES faculty brought the Curriculum Commission a proposal on Wellness. We have reproduced the proposal in Appendix A. We believe there is merit in the proposal and encourage the use of non-course means to satisfy the physical activity component. We note, however, as currently written, the proposal expands the number of hours for the wellness requirement, while one of the Commission's goals was to reduce the number of hours in the core overall. We understand that Undergraduate Council and Faculty Senate have already approved piloting the proposal in the fall of 2009 with a group of first-year students.

Experiential Learning Component

Recommended Action 15: *Require all students to complete at least one experiential learning component (study abroad, internship, undergraduate research, or service learning).*

Recommended Action 16: *Appoint a committee to determine the details of the experiential learning requirement and to write criteria to determine what experiences would fulfill the requirement.*

The Commission received considerable positive feedback on requiring each student to complete a form of experiential learning. Students, however, were apprehensive about being forced to finance a study abroad experience. Students should have options in completing the requirement and understand that they do not have to study abroad.

For service learning, we suggest that the committee build upon the work of the Center for Teaching and Learning in identifying and tagging service learning courses. While the Commission believes that study abroad and internships are easier to define and identify, the committee should help define criteria for the purpose of meeting the requirement. In terms of undergraduate research, the committee should help us better understand the distinction between a good class project involving research and an undergraduate research project.

In implementing the requirement, the University needs to ensure that there are enough experiential learning opportunities so that students can complete the requirement. We are also concerned that significant university resources would be required to implement the requirement and about its impact on faculty and staff work loads.

Learning-Centered Education

Recommended Action 17: Request disciplines to identify requirements that students could possibly satisfy using methods such as testing or portfolio submissions in addition to completed courses.

As we wrote in our Phase I Report when we articulated our design principles, “An effective curriculum recognizes varying kinds of excellence; it supports students, provides opportunities for students who are capable of working independently, recognizes learning that occurs beyond the traditional classroom, and acknowledges outstanding student accomplishment in various venues.” Consequently, we need to identify places in the curriculum where students can use alternative venues and educational experiences to satisfy degree requirements.

Recommended Action 18: While various committees have explored Truman’s scholarship program over the past few years, we recommend the appointment of a committee of faculty, staff, and students to review the scholarship renewal process to allow us to achieve a more holistic view of a student’s progress than GPA alone can provide [understanding that resources available for scholarship are unlikely to increase].

Recommended Action 19: Appoint a committee of faculty, staff, and students to evaluate grading practices including consideration of +/- grading, the credit/no credit policy and the repeat policy.

We want to encourage our students to take academic risks and believe that these committees, as a part of the implementation process, should revisit our current policies and propose changes that would encourage academic risk taking.

IV Unresolved Issues

Creative Expression

Recommended Action 20: Appoint a committee of faculty and students to research creativity, to develop an operational definition of creativity, and to make suggestions of how a creative expression requirement could be implemented.

In response to the draft of the Phase I document, the Commission received many comments that creativity should be part of Truman’s learning objectives. In the Phase II document, the Commission proposed to include creative expression as a degree requirement satisfied by a portfolio submission. The recommendation generated a great deal of feedback. While many faculty appreciated the idea of adding a creativity requirement, many, particularly those in the humanities, felt that the portfolio mechanism undercut the proposal and trivialized the requirement.

After additional deliberation, the Commission realized that we need a better understanding of what we mean by creativity and what is included as evidence of creativity in order to incorporate creativity into degree requirements. Consulting research in the field of creativity studies might help us refine our thinking regarding creativity.

The committee should also help us resolve

- Whether students should be able to use performance-based courses to satisfy an aesthetic mode of inquiry or if we adopt the Community of Discourses model, the Discourses of the Creative Worlds.
- Whether every student should be required to satisfy a creative expression requirement.

Consequently, we recommend that a committee continue to study the role of creativity in the curriculum.

Calendar Options

Recommended Action 21: Appoint a committee to research and educate the faculty on calendar options and to explore the logistics of creating a common unscheduled time during the semester.

Proposed changes to the calendar such as a 4-1-4 calendar sparked a tremendous amount of feedback to the commission. The survey responses reflected a great deal of hostility to the idea of calendar changes as well as significant support for the idea. As was correctly pointed out by one survey respondent, our survey question combined too many issues. While some faculty see great educational merit in taking a single course intensively in a “short” semester, others are excited by the possible benefits from students taking only four courses during the “long” semesters, increasing the time for reflection and deliberation. On the other hand, adjusting the calendar to accommodate the intensive ‘short’ semester raised difficult questions about the optimal length for the ‘long’ semesters, and whether the advantage of the intensive experience and the lower student load are worth the trade-off. While the Commission does not recommend a change to the

calendar at this time, the feedback suggests that these complex issues are not particularly well understood. Specifically, we believe a group of faculty and students should explore

- How the number of courses a student takes at one time is related to student learning;
- Whether learning is enhanced, if for some subjects, students take only one class at a time such as in the 1 part of a 4-1-4 curriculum; and
- Whether moving to a 4-1-4 schedule would necessarily involve shortening the traditional semester.

Faculty responses also pointed to concern regarding finding a common unscheduled time during the week. Many of the written comments suggested that such an effort would be logistically impossible. We suggest that the idea still has merit and that the logistical implications are not well understood. We recommend that the logistical constraints be more deeply investigated.

V Proposed Models

Recommended Action 22: The current Liberal Studies Program be phased out and replaced with one of the three proposed distributional models: Communities of Discourse, Modified Liberal Studies Program With 7 of 8 Modes, or Modified Liberal Studies With 6 Modes.

Communities of Discourse

Rationale

This model agrees with the “mode” concept that there are differences in inquiry that matter, and that to understand those differences, it is helpful to have them taught consciously and contrastingly. This approach is unlike the current implementation of the “modes” in that the Communities of Discourse are conceived more broadly: a major may offer courses that belong to more than one Discourse, a single course may well satisfy the outcomes of more than one Discourse, no single discipline “owns” or even dominates any Discourse, and many disciplines that had no corresponding “mode” in our current curriculum but did offer LAS courses are recognized and valued as part of a Discourse Community. This dramatically increases student choice within the curriculum while still achieving the breadth of study required for a liberal arts education.

What is a Community of Discourse?

The four Discourse categories were developed with an eye to both *what is studied* and *how it is studied*; outcomes for the Discourses therefore reflect both content and process. Discourses are ongoing intellectual conversations that go across disciplinary boundaries. Students taking a course in any Discourse should be invited into the conversation, understanding not just what is to be studied, but how it may be studied in different ways, how different disciplines will ask different questions and pursue different methods in order to answer the questions. Discourses help situate questions and content into this larger conversation.

The brief outline of each Discourse that follows gives a rationale for the Discourse, sets out learning objectives for the Discourse, but does *not* indicate which disciplines or courses will satisfy the Discourse. Certain connections will be obvious (e.g., courses offered by all of our traditional Science disciplines will most likely find the best fit with the Discourses of the Natural World; courses in literature and the arts will most likely fall under Discourses of the Creative Worlds), but it is not our intention to pigeonhole or prescribe. Indeed, it is a central part of this proposal that Departments decide for themselves which of their offerings they will bring forward for approval towards which Discourses.

Although Discourse courses may occur at any level and for any number of credit hours, each liberal arts discipline should offer three-credit introductory-level courses that would satisfy Discourses requirements. Many currently approved “Mode” classes can, with some readjustment, find a home within the new Discourses, as can many other existing LAS courses that were not part of a Mode. We would also hope to see some new course development, as well as some support for this from the administration in the form of curriculum development grants.

Discourses of the Natural World

As biological creatures living in a physical world, humans have looked for regularities and patterns in the world in order to understand, and often to harness, the possibilities.

Students who complete a course in the Discourses of the Natural World will:

- gain knowledge related to the study of biological function and/or the physical world;
- understand how a relevant academic discipline conducts scientific experimentation, including the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and aspects of experimental design, and how these may differ from other ways of studying the natural world. (Note that this does not specifically require students to engage in such research themselves.)
- understand how scientific theories are evaluated and applied;
- understand that science is a human endeavor, influenced by both historical and technological context;
- recognize some of the issues in the study of the natural world that influence society, and be familiar with some of the technical language and basic theories of science that inform personal and public decision making.

Discourses of Symbolic Systems

Reasoning using symbolic representation is fundamental to mastery of axiomatic, analytic and abstract thought. Many academic disciplines (whose courses might otherwise fall into different Discourses) require mastery of a symbolic analytic or axiomatic reasoning system in order to pursue higher levels of inquiry and greater

precision of thought. Although the most obvious sources of courses in this Discourse are mathematics, symbolic logic, linguistics, and computer science, courses from other disciplines might also belong to the discourse.

Students who complete a course in the Discourses of Symbolic Systems will:

- acquire understanding and use of a symbolic system for reasoning (or deeper understanding and greater use of an analytic or axiomatic system that they may have previously used uncritically in their daily lives), including understanding of how the relevant symbolic system differs from other reasoning systems;
- understand what this system is used to represent, its academic and real-life applications and how it facilitates analytical or axiomatic reasoning;
- be able to use the system to reason and to interpret the results of their reasoning;
- understand the limitations of the act of representation (what it fails to capture) and of the system of reasoning that accompanies the representation.

Discourses of the Creative Worlds

Humans have created cultural artifacts and edifices whose study illuminates human creativity and possibility. Exposure to the artifacts, theories of their creation, their value(s), and purposes offer possibilities to learn about human culture and creativity.

Students who complete a course in the Discourses of the Creative Worlds will:

- acquire familiarity with representative works in a chosen area (or areas) of creative production, and how these works are situated into historical, cultural or intellectual contexts; [Note that the works may represent a particular genre, medium, time period, or even the works of a single influential artist.]
- acquire an understanding of specialized vocabularies and concepts relative to the field of study;
- develop an ability to analyze structures and relationships inherent to a given artistic creation, and an understanding of how these structures and relationships are medium-dependent;
- develop an ability to respond or react to a given artistic creation using a range of tools or approaches commonly used within the discipline, with an explicit understanding of how these tools or approaches differ from each other, and a recognition of how our own culturally and experientially derived assumptions shape our response to a creative work.

Discourses of the Social Worlds:

Human interaction has been marked by cooperation and competition. This Discourse focuses on how humans have attempted to organize their lives, including exchange, worship, governance, and domination. Understanding of such interactions facilitates the ability to make more informed decisions about social issues, thus advancing the goal of citizenship and leadership in its broadest meaning in the context of families, groups, communities, societies, and/or the global system in general.

Students who complete a course in the Discourses of the Social Worlds will:

- gain knowledge about some form of social (group) interaction;
- learn to think systematically, critically, and analytically about human societies, and/or organizations, and their interactions;
- learn to think of human societies, and/or organizations, and their interactions in terms of causation, change over time, contingency, and context;
- understand principles, concepts, methodologies, and technical language in a relevant academic discipline;
- understand what constitutes evidence in the relevant discipline, how such evidence is evaluated, and how this may differ from other ways of studying social phenomena.

Achieving Breadth in the Discourse-Based Model

One common criticism of the earlier (Phase II) version of this proposal was that it didn't acknowledge the work students do in their majors and minors. Another criticism was that it would be too easy for students to remain in their comfort zones, as they could satisfy the requirements while taking only a single course in two of the four Discourses. The current proposal therefore features a few changes and clarifications: a student may satisfy a Discourse with minor courses or with “required support” courses outside the discipline of the major, but to ensure breadth,

- All students will complete 24 Discourse hours outside of their major;
- All students will take at least six hours of coursework in each of the four Discourses;
- A student may use courses in his or her major to satisfy one or more of the four discourses but those courses will not count towards the 24 discourse hours;
- Only two courses from a single discipline may be applied towards the same Discourse for any given student. Although a given course may achieve the outcomes of more than one Discourse category, it will only count towards one category for any given student (who may choose in which category to count it).

All majors and minors (disciplinary and interdisciplinary) will be asked to identify which Discourse(s) their courses satisfy, showing how the outcomes of the major or minor satisfy the outcomes of the specified Discourse(s). If students completing the major or minor would necessarily take two courses within the Discourse, this satisfaction is trivial. While students may freely explore within the Discourse categories, taking courses with no obvious connection to each other, we believe it is desirable to maximize a sense of coherence in a course of study. To this end, any Discourse requirements may also count towards the completion of minors and/or course clusters (with the same aforementioned constraint that only two courses from the same discipline may count towards the same Discourse for any given student). Students who come in Undecided should be encouraged to sample widely within the Discourses in order to find their passion. We recommend that we identify and create clusters of existing and newly proposed classes that create paths through the Discourses. We encourage faculty teaching and proposing these courses to have on going conversations regarding the clusters to ensure familiarity with cluster courses so that we increase the opportunities for making

connections across classes. We further recommend that students be encouraged to use interdisciplinary minors to satisfy the Discourse requirements and that minor oversight committees encourage the formation of links between classes and identify courses in the minor that also satisfy Discourse requirements.

Requirements of the Discourse-based Liberal Studies Program (36-53 hours):

<u>Truman Seminar</u> (speaking and writing-enhanced)	(4 hours)
<u>JINS</u> (Junior-level writing-enhanced interdisciplinary seminar)	(3 hours)
<u>Essential Skills</u>	(5-10 hours)
3 speaking-enhanced courses ⁸	
4 writing-enhanced courses ⁹	
Math 186 / Equivalent	(0-5 hours)
Stat 190/290	(3 hours)
Wellness ¹⁰	(2 hours)
<u>Foreign Language (elementary proficiency)</u>	(0-6 hours)
<u>2 Intercultural/International courses</u> ¹¹	(0-6 hours)
<u>Discourses</u>	(min. 24 hours)

Twenty-four credit hours within the Discourses, including two 3-hour courses from each Discourse category not satisfied by a student's major(s) and/or minor(s). Major courses from a single major may not count towards Discourse requirements (although “required support” courses outside the discipline of the major may). Double majors may apply up to 6 hours of major credit towards Discourse requirements. In no case may more than two courses from a single discipline count towards a single Discourse for a given student.

Additional University Requirements

- BA requirement: intermediate proficiency in foreign language (0-6 hours)
- BS requirement: additional 6 hours from quantitative or formal reasoning-based courses which are designated by the major from the areas of sciences, mathematics, statistics, computer science, social sciences, and logic. These courses should be outside the major and should provide necessary support for the major or the breadth to view issues from the perspectives of other disciplines.

⁸ This includes the Truman Seminar. Majors that have public presentations of their capstones might ask to have their capstone courses designated as speaking-enhanced. The committee determining criteria for speaking-enhanced courses may consider whether public presentations at local and/or national conferences should count as speaking-enhanced courses. This requirement, naturally, can be satisfied concurrently (in the same course) with any other requirement.

⁹ Both the Truman and JINS seminars count towards this requirement. At least one other writing-enhanced course is completed within a student's major. This requirement, naturally, can be satisfied concurrently (in the same course) with any other requirement.

¹⁰ This proposal incorporates the revised Health & Wellness requirement recently brought forward by HES and currently being piloted.

¹¹ The Intercultural/International mirrors the present “Intercultural” requirement, but requires 6 Intercultural credit hours, with at least three credit hours that focus on international perspectives. This coursework may also count towards other requirements, including majors, minors, and/or appropriate Discourses.

Completion of JINS (credit not given as part of 42-hour transfer block)
Missouri Statute¹²
Experiential Learning Component
61 hours LAS
40 hours 300 level or higher
Completion of an academic major
120 hours for graduation (132 for concurrent BA and BS degrees)

Missouri 42-Hour General Education Block

Students who transfer to Truman from another Missouri public institution with completion of the General Education Block or an AA degree noted on their transcripts will have fulfilled the Truman Seminar; 1 speaking-enhanced course; 1 writing-enhanced course; Discourse hours; Essential Skills-Mathematics; Essential Skills-Statistics; Essential Skills-Wellness; and Missouri Statute (for students transferring from another Missouri public institution). All transfer students will be required to complete a one-hour transfer seminar and the remaining degree requirements.

To complete the 42-hour transfer block at Truman, a student must complete the Truman Seminar; 1 speaking-enhanced course; 1 writing-enhanced course; Discourse hours; Essential Skills-Mathematics; Essential Skills-Statistics; Essential Skills-Wellness, the Missouri Statute requirement; and electives to total 42 hours.

Implementation of the Discourse-Based Model

Adopting the Discourse-Based model would not mean approving every detail of every outcome statement for each Discourse, just approval of the general framework. This model would require a two-stage implementation process, spread across a full academic year. For each Discourse, a committee would be formed, with representatives from any Departments that indicate interest in offering courses towards that Discourse, to refine the outcome statements for the Discourse. Once these are approved, a second process would be put in place for Departments to show which of their courses meet the outcomes for which of the Discourses. It is hoped that the approval process for the courses themselves would be fairly quick and painless.

¹² 3-credit hour Missouri Statute Courses may count towards the Discourses of the Social Worlds. This will be part of the 42-hour transfer block for students who complete the first two years of their degree in Missouri.

A Modified Liberal Studies Program With 7 of 8 Modes

Essential Skills (5-8 hours)

4 Writing-Enhanced Courses (JINS and Truman Seminar count as writing-enhanced courses)

3 Speaking-Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar counts as a speaking-enhanced course)

Elementary Functions (0-5 hours)

Statistics (3 hours)

Wellness (2-3 hours)

Missouri Statute (0-3 hours)

Modes of Inquiry (22-25 hours)

Choose 7 of 8 modes

Aesthetic – Fine Arts (3 hours)

Aesthetic – Literature (3 hours)

Historical (3 hours)

Mathematical (3-5 hours)

Philosophical/Religious (3 hours)

Scientific – Life Science (4 hours)

Scientific – Physical Science (4-5 hours)

Social Scientific (3 hours)

Interconnecting Perspectives (7-20)

Truman Seminar (4 hours) (for first-time students and transfer students with fewer than 30 hours. Transfer students with 30 or more hours are required to take a one-hour transfer seminar.)

Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (3 hours)

Intercultural Perspective (0-5 hours)

Foreign Language (0-8 hours)

Additional Requirements

61 hours in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

40 hours at the 300-level or above

Experiential Learning Component

An academic major

Optional Clusters and Interdisciplinary Minors

We recommend that we identify and create clusters of existing and newly proposed classes that create paths through the modes of inquiry. These clusters of courses would include courses that satisfy multiple modes of inquiry. We encourage faculty teaching and proposing these courses to have on going conversations regarding the clusters to ensure familiarity with cluster courses so that we increase the opportunities for making connections across classes.

We further recommend that students be encouraged to use interdisciplinary minors to satisfy the modes of inquiry requirement and that minor oversight committees encourage the formation of links between classes and identify courses in the minor that also satisfy modes of inquiry.

Missouri 42-Hour General Education Block

To complete the General Education Block at Truman, a student must complete the Truman Seminar, 1 writing-enhanced course, 1 speaking-enhanced course, Essential Skills—Mathematics, Essential Skills—Statistics, Essential Skills—Wellness, Essential Skills—Statistics, the Modes of Inquiry, Missouri Statute and electives to total 42 hours. Likewise, students who transfer to Truman from another public Missouri institution with completion of the General Education Block noted on their transcripts or an AA degree will have fulfilled the Truman Seminar, 1 writing-enhanced course, 1 speaking-enhanced course, Essential Skills—Mathematics, Essential Skills—Statistics, Essential Skills—Wellness, Essential Skills—Statistics, the Modes of Inquiry, and Missouri Statute. Other transfer students with an AA degree will have satisfied the same set of requirements with the exception of the Missouri Statute.

A comparison of the modified LSP with 7 of 8 modes with the current LSP

Current LSP	Modified LSP with 7 of 8 modes
34-58 hours ¹³	34-58 hours
Essential Skills	
Writing (3)	Writing Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar)
Speaking (0-3)	Speaking Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar)
Statistics (3)	No change
Mathematics (0-5)	No change
Personal Well-Being Wellness (2)	Wellness (2)
Modes of Inquiry (22-25)	
Aesthetic Literature (3)	No change
Aesthetic Fine Arts (3)	No change
Philosophical and Religious (3)	No change
Historical (3)	No change
Social Scientific (3)	No change
Mathematics (3-5)	No change
Scientific: Life Science (4-5)	No change
Scientific: Physical Science (4-5)	No change
Interconnecting Perspectives	
Elementary Language (0-8)	No change
JINS (3)	No change
Writing Enhanced	Defined as essential skill
Truman Program (1)	Truman Seminar (4)

¹³ The current LSP doesn't include the Missouri Statute requirement.

Intercultural (0-5)	Intercultural (0-5)
Missouri Statute (0-3)	No change in requirement but incorporated into essential skills and defined as part of LSP

For most students, the LSP gets smaller despite the official number of credits because:

- Two fewer required essential skills classes (most students take communications)
- Elimination of Truman Week hour
- Addition of 4-hour Truman seminar

For a student entering Truman with no credit, placed into college algebra and elementary language I, the current LSP requires 49 hours of course work and the modified model requires 46 hours assuming these hours also satisfy intercultural, writing-enhanced, and speaking-enhanced requirements.

A Modified Liberal Studies Program With 6 Modes

Essential Skills (5-8 hours)

4 Writing-Enhanced Courses (JINS and Truman Seminar count as writing-enhance courses)

3 Speaking-Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar counts as a speaking-enhanced course)

Elementary Functions (0-5 hours)

Statistics (3 hours)

Wellness (2-3 hours)

Missouri Statute (0-3 hours)

Modes of Inquiry (19-22 hours)

Aesthetic (3 hours)

Historical (3 hours)

Mathematical (3-5 hours)

Philosophical/Religious (3 hours)

Science (with lab) (4-5 hours)

Social Scientific (3 hours)

Interconnecting Perspectives (7-20)

Truman Seminar (4 hours) (for first-time students and transfer students with fewer than 30 hours. Transfer students with 30 or more hours are required to take a one-hour transfer seminar.)

Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (3 hours)

Intercultural Perspective (0-5 hours)

Foreign Language (0-8 hours)

Additional Requirements

61 hours in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

40 hours at the 300-level or above

Experiential Learning Component

An academic major

Optional Clusters and Interdisciplinary Minors

We recommend that we identify and create clusters of existing and newly proposed classes that create paths through the modes of inquiry. These clusters of courses would include courses that satisfy multiple modes of inquiry. We encourage faculty teaching and proposing these courses to have on going conversations regarding the clusters to ensure familiarity with cluster courses so that we increase the opportunities for making connections across classes.

We further recommend that students be encouraged to use interdisciplinary minors to satisfy the modes of inquiry requirement and that minor oversight committees encourage the formation of links between classes and identify courses in the minor that also satisfy modes of inquiry.

Missouri 42-Hour General Education Block

To complete the General Education Block at Truman, a student must complete the Truman Seminar, 1 writing-enhanced course, 1 speaking-enhanced course, Essential Skills—Mathematics, Essential Skills—Statistics, Essential Skills—Wellness, Essential Skills—Statistics, the Modes of Inquiry, Missouri Statute and electives to total 42 hours. Likewise, students who transfer to Truman from another public Missouri institution with completion of the General Education Block noted on their transcripts or an AA degree will have fulfilled the Truman Seminar, 1 writing-enhanced course, 1 speaking-enhanced course, Essential Skills—Mathematics, Essential Skills—Statistics, Essential Skills—Wellness, Essential Skills—Statistics, the Modes of Inquiry, and Missouri Statute. Other transfer students with an AA degree will have satisfied the same set of requirements with the exception of the Missouri Statute.

A comparison of the modified LSP with 6 modes with the current LSP

Current LSP	Modified LSP described above)
34-58 hours ¹⁴	31-51 hours
Essential Skills	
Writing (3)	Writing Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar)
Speaking (0-3)	Speaking Enhanced Courses (Truman Seminar)
Statistics (3)	No change
Mathematics (0-5)	No change
Personal Well-Being Wellness (2)	Wellness (2)
Modes of Inquiry (22-25)	
Aesthetic Literature (3)	Combined into Aesthetic mode
Aesthetic Fine Arts (3)	Combined into Aesthetic mode
Philosophical and Religious (3)	No change
Historical (3)	No change
Social Scientific (3)	No change
Mathematics (3-5)	No change
Scientific: Life Science (4-5)	Combined into Science mode
Scientific: Physical Science (4-5)	Combined into Science mode
Interconnecting Perspectives	
Elementary Language (0-8)	No change
JINS (3)	No change
Writing Enhanced	Defined as essential skill
Truman Program (1)	Truman Seminar (4)
Intercultural (0-5)	Intercultural (0-5)
Missouri Statute (0-3)	No change in requirement but incorporated into essential skills and defined as part of LSP

¹⁴ The current LSP doesn't include the Missouri Statute requirement.

For a student entering Truman with no credit, placed into college algebra and elementary language I, the current LSP requires 49 hours of course work and the modified model requires 42 hours assuming these hours also satisfy intercultural, writing-enhanced, and speaking-enhanced requirements.

VI Assessment

We recognize that an assessment plan for the new curriculum is absolutely essential in ensuring student learning. Determining the specific features of such a plan, however, is difficult without a faculty-approved new curriculum. The details of an assessment plan must be a part of the implementation process. Nevertheless, the Commission can identify elements of the plan. The new assessment plan

- Needs to have a mechanism for assessing the essential communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in diverse contexts and in precision of thought quantitatively, qualitatively and abstractly;
- Should utilize multiple methods including, but not limited to, portfolio submissions, appropriate exams, and surveys;
- Should rely upon direct measures of student work including work submitted by students and work submitted by faculty on behalf of students; and
- Should look at the content and pedagogy of courses used to satisfy general education requirements to see how they meet the general education learning objectives.

Effective assessment requires conversations about student learning directly related to the desired outcomes. While faculty-wide conversations about various components of the new curriculum would be ideal, we recognize that involving a faculty over 300 in a single conversation is difficult. Hence, we recommend that faculty oversight committees be created for each major element of the new curriculum. These committees would be comprised of faculty from across the University. These committees would be charged with designing an assessment plan for each element and for meeting regularly to discuss the University's progress and suggest changes to better meet the desired outcomes.

Appendix A—A Distributed Model for College Health The Problem

Numerous data sources clearly indicate Truman students experience considerable academic and life-related stressors yet those same data sources suggest few students have sufficient education in understanding the identification, impact, or amelioration of these stressors. Truman’s mission specifically addresses the health and wellbeing of its students and research has identified a strong link between health and student performance. Unfortunately, Truman’s current mechanism (HLTH 195/196) for delivering wellbeing content to its students has failed to achieve the desired outcomes. There are many potential explanations for the limitations of HLTH 195/196 including:

- Poor classroom (long, narrow lecture room with poor acoustics)
- Sections (75 to 100 per section) are too large to facilitate individual behavioral change
- Wide range of topics with any one topic reflecting the interest of some but not all students
- Volume of topics necessitates superficiality which may not provide students skills necessary for behavior change
- Pre-conceived bias against the course by some students and faculty
- Graduation requirement seen as too much work for the credit received
- Requiring coaches to teach activities for which they have little expertise or interest and requiring students to take activities that may not reflect their personal interests

Moreover, new curriculum models proposed by the Curriculum Commission appear to devalue the importance of personal health and wellbeing, and marginalize the university’s responsibility in providing for our students’ wellbeing. In response, an interdepartmental group submitted to the Curriculum Commission a mission statement regarding the importance of wellbeing to the liberally educated citizen. The remainder of this document outlines a model by which wellbeing might be more effectively infused in the liberal arts and sciences experience.

A Distributed Model of Student Wellbeing

Organizing Principles

1. Provide excellent and distinctive cognitive and physical activity experiences that facilitate student wellbeing
2. Engage students at a deeper, more meaningful level regarding their own wellbeing
3. Provide a wide range of lifetime coping skills and movement activities that give students skills to manage their lives and get them moving in the present
4. Provide opportunities for students to gain leadership experience by enabling them to create and facilitate cognitive and physical activity experiences for their colleagues
5. Give credit to those students who are already fully engaged in lifetime physical activity and/or cognitive domains of wellbeing

Features

1. Engage the entire campus community in the wellbeing of our students
2. Formation of the Truman Wellbeing Council
 - a. Comprised of faculty, staff, and students
 - b. HES would provide FTE to serve as director of council – anticipated ½ time
 - c. Collect and analyze data regarding student wellbeing needs
 - d. Responsible for development and approval of seminars
 - e. Council would work with authors of potential seminars for uniformity of physical activity outcomes and would take proposals to UGC for approval
 - f. Responsible for developing schedule of seminars to be offered
3. Develop a series of wellbeing seminars each focusing in-depth on a specific topic
4. Seminars reflect cognitive and physical activity domains
5. Seminars 8 weeks in length for 1 hour of academic credit each. This length allows:
 - a. Adequate time for behavior change to take place
 - b. Allow in-depth coverage of the topic
 - c. Minimize impact on faculty and staff loads
6. Students enroll for seminars of their choice during regular registration
7. Seminars listed with a “WELL” department code
8. University requirement would be for students to take 3 hours of wellbeing credit with at least one credit coming from both the cognitive and physical activity domains
9. Students permitted to take as many Wellbeing seminars as they wished
10. A general, 3 credit, wellbeing course would be offered for those students who wanted to explore a wide range of topics. Such a course would fulfill the university “wellbeing” requirement and serve as the substitution option for students transferring to Truman

The Physical Activity Component of the Model

1. All students must take a minimum of one credit of physical activity to fulfill the physical activity component of the wellbeing requirement
2. HLTH 196 (activity component of Lifetime Health and Fitness) is eliminated although HES could offer some physical activity wellbeing seminars
3. Students could receive physical activity wellbeing credit for the following existing activities
 - a. Varsity sports
 - b. Approved club sports such as Iron Dogs, TSUnami, rugby, lacrosse
 - c. Movement-based student groups such as Showgirls, Franklin and High Street Dancers
 - d. Academic courses such as Marathon Training, Mountain Biking, and a variety of dance and swimming courses
 - e. Approved activity classes at the Student Recreation Center

f. ROTC

4. New physical activity wellbeing seminars would be developed by faculty, staff, and students from across the entire Truman community and based on vocational and avocational interests
5. Students who facilitated seminars would receive two credits of physical activity wellbeing
6. All wellbeing physical activity seminars would be designated as “WELL” seminars

Implications of the Overall Model

1. Current Staffing Resources for HLTH 195/196
 - a. Fall
 - i. HLTH 195 (lecture) - 9 large sections (enrollment = 75 students per section) accounting for approximately 2.25 FTE (13.5 credit hours)
 - ii. HLTH 196 (activity) - 37 sections (enrollment = 20 per section) accounting for (19 credit hours)
 - b. Spring
 - i. HLTH 195 (lecture) - 8 large sections (enrollment = 75 students per section) accounting for approximately 2 FTE (12 credit hours)
 - ii. HLTH 196 (activity) - 28 sections (enrollment = 20 per section) accounting for (14 credit hours)
2. Physical Resources
 - a. Pershing Building
 - i. Decreased use of Pershing facilities including “nautilus room”, varsity weight room, racquetball courts, and Pershing Arena
 - ii. Greater access to these facilities for coaches and athletic teams
 - iii. Greater access for student groups and other chartered campus organizations
 - iv. Reduced need for large classroom; PB 325 could return to original two classroom configuration enabling greater scheduling flexibility
 - b. Student Recreation Center
 - i. Increased use of SRC and demand for classes qualifying for activity credit
 - ii. Potential increase in hours of operation and expansion of activities outside SRC
 - c. Outdoor facilities
 - i. Potential increased use of football field and other athletic facilities
 - ii. Potential for development of new outdoor recreation including bike trails, canoeing/kayaking, etc.
 - iii. Increased use of ROTC obstacle courses

3. Human Resources

- a. 5800 students x 3 wellbeing seminars = 17400 seats over a four year period... $17400/4$ (years) = 4350 seats per year/ 2 (per semester) = 2175 seats per semester. Currently offer approximately 1500 seats per semester (half 195, half 196)
- b. Increased number of student instructors at SRC to facilitate increased course demand
- c. Full-time Fitness/Wellness director position critical to employing, training, and supervising student instructors
- d. The $\frac{1}{4}$ contract of most coaches reassigned to Athletics. What to do if some coaches wanted to continue teaching instead of being assigned “administrative” responsibilities in Athletics?
- e. Reduced sections of HLTH 195 would free up teaching load for some HES faculty, primarily temporary instructors. Teaching loads could be reassigned to produce a more realistic teaching load (3-4 load) for all HES faculty and new wellbeing seminars could be offered
- f. Faculty from other disciplines would incur additional teaching load (1 credit hour for a block course)
- g. Staff (e.g., UCS, UCC, NSP) would incur additional responsibility and/or need to reconfigure some existing programs to address student demand and need
- h. Faculty member would need to serve as director of wellbeing; anticipated $\frac{1}{2}$ time load
- i. If graduate program were instituted in HES, GTRA’s could serve as wellbeing instructors

4. Curriculum

- a. Reconfigure wellbeing component of LSP essential skills – need UGC approval
- b. Potential increase in number of academic credits (from 2 to 3) required in LSP
- c. Potential to remove wellbeing completely from LSP and place with Student Affairs and the Co-Curricular record – doing so may disenfranchise faculty who would refuse to support

5. Students

- a. Increased student choice in wellbeing seminars taken
- b. Increased student engagement in taking and administrating wellbeing seminars
- c. Provide a truly distinctive element to the LSP that may be attractive to current and prospective students
- d. Provide greater opportunity to engage in behavior change associated with areas of wellness identified as most important by the student

6. Fiscal Impact

- a. Elimination of $\frac{1}{4}$ contract of some teaching coaches from academic affairs

- b. Students who facilitate wellness seminars could be compensated by receiving credit for two wellness units rather than one – no cost to the university

Pilot Proposal

Health component

1. Offer 4 health seminars focusing on a specific topic
2. All seminars discuss dimensions of wellness and behavior change
3. Other topics integrated into all seminars: stress management, sleep, relationships, healthy eating, physical activity
4. Student Health 101 will be utilized to incorporate other health topics in the seminar

Physical Activity component

1. Offer 4 physical activity courses
2. All physical activity courses focus on behavior change

Other Criteria

Incoming freshmen only

Health seminar in first block

Physical activity course in second block

Appendix B – List of Recommended Actions and Recommendations

Recommended Actions

Recommended Action 1: Reduce the required number of hours for BA and BS degrees from 124 to 120 hours.

Recommended Action 2: With a decrease in the number of total hours from 124 to 120 for the BA and the BS degrees, reduce the number of required liberal arts and sciences hours from 63 to 61.

Recommended Action 3: Ask faculty in programs awarding the BM, BSN, and BFA to explore the feasibility of reducing the total number of hours required for the degree by 4 hours.

Recommended Action 4: Appoint a committee of faculty and students to draft a critical thinking rubric that can be used across programs and in the proposed Truman Seminars.

Recommended Action 5: The faculty adopt a common framework—a description of critical thinking, in the form of a rubric and/or other documents available to the faculty for use throughout programs. Students shall be introduced to the rubric in the Truman Seminars.

Recommended Action 6: Continue to require all students to complete a writing-enhanced Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar, but create a mechanism by which integrated, linked and/or clustered courses could be used to satisfy this requirement.

Recommended Action 7: Drop the Truman Program as a graduation requirement and require all new first-year students and transfer students¹⁵ with fewer than 30 hours at the time of matriculation to complete a 4-hour Truman Seminar that introduces the value of seeing an issue from multiple perspectives.

Recommended Action 8: Require all new transfer students with 30 or more hours at the time of matriculation to complete a 1-hour transfer seminar during their first semester that is not included in the 42-hour transfer block. The seminar will introduce transfer students to Truman's liberal arts mission, the portfolio, the critical thinking rubric, and Truman resources.

Recommended Action 9: Replace the current essential skills-writing requirement with a requirement of 4 writing-enhanced courses including the newly proposed Truman Seminar for first-year students and JINS. Continue to offer ENG 190 Writing as Critical Thinking and allow it to be used as a writing-enhanced course.

¹⁵ A transfer student is a student who has earned college credit after earning a high school diploma. While some of our first-year students matriculate with more than 30 hours of credit, they are not considered transfer students since they earned the credit prior to high school graduation.

Recommended Action 10: Replace the current essential skills speech requirement with 3 speaking-enhanced courses including the newly proposed Truman Seminar for first-year students. Continue to offer COMM 170 Public Speaking and allow it to be used as a speaking-enhanced course.

Recommended Action 11: Create a committee of faculty and students to refine the learning objectives of speaking-enhanced courses and suggest how the speaking-enhanced objectives might correspond to the objectives of current writing-enhanced courses. Additionally, the committee should help identify courses in the curriculum that already meet the learning objectives for speaking-enhanced courses.

Recommended Action 12: The Provost fund a faculty development initiative for mathematics across the curriculum.

Recommended Action 13: The Provost fund a faculty development initiative for statistics across the curriculum.

Recommended Action 14: Change the name of Essential Skills-Personal Well Being to Essential Skills-Wellness. Reevaluate the means of satisfying the requirement in the spring of 2010 after we have the results of the wellness pilot conducted in the fall of 2010 by the Department of Health and Exercise Science.

Recommended Action 15: Require all students to complete at least one experiential learning component (study abroad, internship, undergraduate research, or service learning).

Recommended Action 16: Appoint a committee to determine the details of the experiential learning requirement and to write criteria to determine what experiences would fulfill the requirement.

Recommended Action 17: Request disciplines to identify requirements that students could possibly satisfy using methods such as testing or portfolio submissions in addition to completed courses.

Recommended Action 18: While various committees have explored Truman's scholarship program over the past few years, we recommend the appointment of a committee of faculty, staff, and students to review the scholarship renewal process to allow us to achieve a more holistic view of a student's progress than GPA alone can provide [understanding that resources available for scholarship are unlikely to increase].

Recommended Action 19: Appoint a committee of faculty, staff, and students to evaluate grading practices including consideration of +/- grading, the credit/no credit policy and the repeat policy.

Recommended Action 20: Appoint a committee of faculty and students to research creativity, to develop an operational definition of creativity, and to make suggestions of how a creative expression requirement could be implemented.

Recommended Action 21: Appoint a committee to research and educate the faculty on calendar options and to explore the logistics of creating a common unscheduled time during the semester.

Recommended Action 22: The current Liberal Studies Program be phased out and replaced with one of the three proposed distributional models: Communities of Discourse, Modified Liberal Studies Program With 7 of 8 Modes, or Modified Liberal Studies With 6 Modes.

Recommendations That Support Current Practice

Recommendation: Continue to require students who wish to earn more than one degree to earn at least 12 hours in addition to those required by the degree with the highest cumulative hour requirement.

Recommendation: Following current requirements, all students shall demonstrate elementary proficiency in a foreign language. All recipients of BA, BM, or BFA degrees shall demonstrate intermediate proficiency in a foreign language

Recommendation: Following current requirements, all BS recipients shall earn at least six hours of credit from quantitative or formal reasoning-based courses which are designated by the major from the areas of sciences, mathematics, statistics, computer science, social sciences, and logic. These courses should be outside the major and should provide necessary support for the major or the breadth to view issues from the perspectives of other disciplines.¹⁶

Recommendation: Continue to require all students to demonstrate proficiency in elementary functions.

Recommendation: All students continue to be required to take a statistics course.

¹⁶ The language describing the BS requirement comes from Senate Bill 2495 that created the current Liberal Studies Program.