

The MSU

Educational Goals for Liberal Learning

Summary

The Working Group for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education (WGIUE) was impaneled on March 21, 2005. Academic Governance, with input from the office of the Provost (with Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education, June Youatt, as the point Administration contact), created the Working Group with a membership of twelve faculty and student representatives, five faculty consultants, and two university representatives with academic advising expertise. ^{Appendix A}

The Executive Committee of Academic Council charged the Working Group as follows (emphasis added):

- Provide Commentary on the goals, proficiency and standards included in each of the reports,¹ specifically as to whether or not these articulate our intended outcomes of general education.
- Provide commentary and reactions to the principal recommendations made by the three groups, with particular attention as feasible to the importance, priority, and practicality of the recommendations.
- Consider the major recommendations across the three reports and whether some priority should be given to some of the recommendations (weighing both importance to undergraduate education and feasibility) in any next planning and implementation steps that might follow.
- Identify ways in which enhancements to (1) writing, (2) quantitative literacy and (3) integrative studies might be accomplished by interconnecting structures and learning activities across the three.
- Expand the purview beyond the final reports of IS, QL, and Writing as necessary to meet its broad charge.

As the syntax and context make clear, the charge from ECAC derived from consideration of task force reports that, themselves, culminated nearly two years of deliberations about the nature and structure of general education at Michigan State University. On November 7, 2003 then-Provost Lou Anna Simon declared that the initiatives then developing aimed to construct an “intellectual framework” that would build “a firm intellectual foundation on which to proceed.”²

¹ The “reports” are the 2004 reports from the “Integrative Studies Task force,” the “Quantitative Literacy Task Force,” and the “Writing Task Force.”

² *State News*. November 7, 2003. “Simon says maintain liberal arts programs.” P. 3A.

Accordingly, WGIUE initiated its deliberations with a focus on the reports of the three task force reports noted above. We responded to the charge by a) reviewing each report in detail, b) attending an AAC&U conference on general education to outline a framework in which liberal learning might be pursued at MSU, c) developing a set of goals that would define liberal learning across all aspects of undergraduate education, d) developing exemplars for how these goals would unfold in the context of University, college, and discipline specific requirements, e) reaffirming that the goals of liberal learning must be reinforced and strengthened across all aspects of undergraduate education (curricular and co-curricular opportunities), f) developing recommendations for a structure to guide the institutional implementation of programs and courses designed to address the goals and to foster a scholarly approach to assessment, and g) seeking campus-wide feedback. We therefore recommend that Academic Governance embrace a restatement of the goals of liberal learning and oversight reform dedicated to pursuing the following goals:

1) Goals for Liberal Learning³

INTEGRATED JUDGMENT

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

ANALYTICAL THINKING

LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

2) University Council for Liberal Learning⁴

A director established in and reporting to the Office of the Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies will convene this faculty advisory committee that will present programmatic recommendations for Governance (including UCC) review and approval.

How We Got There

In its initial meeting on April 12, WGIUE initiated its deliberations on the “Quantitative Literacy” Task Force Final Report. A strong consensus readily emerged in support of the thrust of the task force report. Some observations were made concerning modalities and resources, indicating the need for further attention (particularly the need to identify current courses that meet or may readily be adapted to meet the focus at level II, Quantitative Literacy Across the Curriculum). Discussion produced the following results:

³ See the full elaboration at pp. 8-9 below.

⁴ See the full elaboration at pp. 9-11 below.

Terms of Discussion:

1. LEVEL ONE: Prerequisite Knowledge – Prior to entry to MSU, students should have taken four years of high school mathematics that include a minimal set of competencies defined in the report.
2. LEVEL TWO (Freshmen and Sophomores): QL Foundation – students must fulfill a QL Foundation prior to achieving Junior Status at MSU. The following disciplines will serve as a base for each student: Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science
3. LEVEL THREE (Juniors and Seniors): Applied QL – ALL majors will require two additional QL courses, including at least one in their major area. FLEXIBILITY in the context of the defined QL competencies is a key word in meeting this requirement.

ASSESSMENT:

- Assessment must be on going.
- Need to develop “outcomes” instruments to determine “value-added”
- A pilot study should be conducted in Fall 05 to assess baseline QL knowledge of first year students.

A consensus supported “raising the bar” in QL – which is to say getting MORE students achieving an elevated QL standard – and instituting “QL ACROSS THE CURRICULUM.”

On April 21, 2005 (second meeting) the discussion of Integrative Studies observed that the Integrative Studies Task Force’s Final Report⁵ reflected its charge to deal with Structure and Organization, although the Task Force generally believed that it would have been appropriate to review curriculum in relation to the structure. This meant that the WGIUE review would proceed independently of a curriculum review, albeit devoting some attention to “polling” relevant views about curriculum.

Concerning “structure” the Integrative Studies Task Force leaned toward increased centralization, with reservations from the ISB/ISP Task Force membership. Moreover, the Task Force in general advocated “light” rather than heavy centralization. WGIUE weighed the four options presented by the Task Force first in the Integrative Subcommittee and next in the Working Group at large. Eventually WGIUE embraced “option b” of the Task Force position, modified with attention to the issues of integration across the curriculum and efficiency of administration. The problems we considered that induced this result reflected awareness that the University cannot secure liberal learning without addressing budgetary implications both administratively and in terms of curriculum (including engaging faculty in a sustained conversation). We highlighted the needs of the College of Arts and Letters, looming retirements in Integrative Studies, and the need for incentives to alter behaviors. We also recognized that, within the margins, some “budgetary” issues could be handled by cost-shifting instead of new dollars. Increasing general faculty buy-in, however, will likely require additional unit incentives and enhanced administrative status relative to Integrative Studies (where majors, for example, will be asked to give more thought to offering “integrative” courses, it is reasonable to expect

⁵ http://realizingthevision.msu.edu/integrative_studies/updates.html

they will ask for greater say in the process). The yield from such adaptations should be greater faculty/student understanding of IS objectives and strengthened faculty collaboration across disciplines.

Assessment practices must also be made integral to the delivery of Liberal Learning. WGIUE seeks to promote assessment practices that reflect the kind of influence accreditation standards aim to attain. The key, however, is the initial statement of goals, which must make space for a “value added” dynamic in order to enable fruitful assessment. Program reviews should be prescribed in accord with this understanding.

Finally, WGIUE review of the Integrative Studies Task Force Final Report yielded the consensus that it is wisest to treat the issues of integrative studies, quantitative literacy and writing as a single issue, addressed as a whole, which is in terms of liberal learning. This should be accomplished with the goal in mind not only to improve oversight of integrative studies at the University level, but also to reinforce the conception that writing must be pursued rigorously across the curriculum (with special attention to what is being done in Social Science), and within the context of quantitative literacy wherever possible. Moreover, we urge establishing a more comprehensive approach to identifying courses to meet the goals of liberal learning.

Although the initial deliberation was succeeded by two subsequent plenary discussions of the remaining Task Forces reports, on the basis of the initial discussion WGIUE embraced the plan to work through subcommittees,⁶ which would report back to the full group in timely fashion in order to facilitate a coordinated appraisal of all the reports. Thereupon the Working Group proceeded to lay out steps whereby the community at large might review, assess, and embrace appropriate measures for the improvement of undergraduate education, the basis for a final report to Academic Governance.

A further subcommittee participated with Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, June Youatt, to attend the annual conference on general education of the American Association of Colleges and Universities in Newport, Rhode Island, May 20-25, 2005.⁷ The participants developed a work plan designed to aid in the functioning of the Working Group:

“This Work Plan articulates with the efforts of the Working Group on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The Working Group was charged by the Provost to look across three recently-completed task force reports which reviewed components of our liberal education program: quantitative literacy; writing; integrative studies in arts and humanities, social science, and general science.

“The three task forces reviewed current practice in these areas and made recommendations to enhance undergraduate education. The charge to the Working

⁶ Members volunteered to serve on the following subcommittees:

IS: Wm. Allen, Norm Graham, Kurt Stirewalt, Cynthia Taggart, and Antoinette WinklerPrins

QL: Richard Enbody, Doug Estry, Jen Hodges, Ned Jackson, and Wellington Ow

Writing: Rod Phillips, James Porter, Debra Thornton, and Eileen Wilson

⁷ Participants: June Youatt, W. Allen, Doug Estry, Kathleen Geissler, Debra Thornton

Group was to consider and integrate these three sets of recommendations in light of our goals for undergraduate education. Additionally, the Working Group reviews the multiple “goal” statements for undergraduate education, and coordinates a campus-wide conversation to revive commitment to and elaborate the meaning of the liberal (general) education goals for undergraduate students at Michigan State University. The Working Group shall coordinate the process for moving the large, overarching goals to approved outcomes that can be systematically assessed.”

The “Writing Task Force Final Report” issued on November 22, 2004. It eventuated in recommendations both as to Tier I writing instruction and Tier II writing instruction. On May 4, 2005 WGIUE deliberated the Writing Task Force Final Report. We noted that the Tier I recommendations and the Tier II recommendations could be treated distinctly, but we agreed that the Tier I – Tier II model should be preserved. Members made numerous observations pertinent to the practice and assessment of instruction in writing, but the policy-relevant conclusions that emerged to guide future thinking were:

- 1) The University should retain (but improve) its current Tier I/Tier II model.
 - a. The current writing requirement of 4 credits for Tier I should be increased to 6 credits. This would apply to 40-60% of incoming freshmen (based on test scores).
- 2) The University should develop new administrative and governance structures to coordinate and review the general education writing curriculum.
 - a. Tier II needs better support across colleges.

The Task Force recommended two new committees: 1) A University-Level Writing Committee chaired by a University Director of Writing (responsible for both Tier I and Tier II) and 2) a Tier II Advisory Committee, chaired by the Associate Director of the Writing Center. WGIUE finds that these recommendations should be incorporated into the broader proposal for reform in the administrative structure of general education.

Points to emphasize from the review of University writing instruction:

1. Writing should be embedded Across the University.
2. Much more clarity is needed on 1) the resources needed and 2) the direction we aim at?
3. More input is needed from the Writing Center on expectations in general.
4. Writing should not be considered in isolation from quantitative literacy and integrative studies.

In the course of further deliberations, WGIUE decided to resolve questions of whether writing instruction should be centralized or de-centralized (located in departments); whether to seek additional funding to improve writing instruction; whether to require maximum class sizes at both levels; whether to highlight management problems in the writing program; how to strengthen monitoring of Tier-II instruction; how to build in incentives for improved student performance; how to assess Tier I writing instruction; and how far to emphasize/allow a content focus in writing instruction.

The work of WGIUE through its initial meeting structured the charges and expectations of the subcommittees that were to continue working through the summer and report back. Each subcommittee was constructed with representatives cutting across the three report areas, in order to underscore the committee's resolve to provide a coordinated response.⁸

The subcommittees received specific charges based on our prior discussions and additionally were generally asked to "take the directions of CRUE as a given," identify the need for future data collection, and consider the input received regarding opportunities to direct the University's most exciting teachers towards the areas of curricular concern (especially integrative studies). The actual deliberations varied for good reasons, but the specific charges were as follows:

Writing Literacy

- Acquire detailed information concerning the extent to which Tier-II instruction is honored more in the breach than in the performance – i.e., identify courses and typical enrollments the last five years, characterize writing requirements according to amount, opportunity for revision, and guidance by faculty. A collection of syllabi and correspondence with academic advisors could provide this information.
- Provide express statement regarding the extending of Tier-I requirements from four to six credits, both in terms of additional resources mandated and in terms of consequences for credit reduction in other areas.
- Describe the relation of Writing Across the Curriculum to the broader thrust of Integrative Studies.
- Elaborate the anticipated role for the Writing Center
- Make recommendations for SIRS/SOCT items specifically to assess writing emphasis in teaching.
- Make recommendations for administrative accommodations that explicitly take into account the administrative needs of Integrative Studies and Quantitative Literacy.

Quantitative Literacy

- Complete assessment of readiness for mathematics of entering students (with forecasting attention to reasonably expected consequences in the event of markedly increased matriculation rates in Michigan).
- Provide a measure of progress against original CRUE benchmarks.
- Benchmark the proposed augmentations in QL by colleges/programs
- Identify a nomenclature for marking qualified QL courses.
- Describe the relation of Quantitative Literacy to the broader thrust of Integrative Studies.
- Make recommendations for SIRS/SOCT items specifically to assess quantitative literacy emphasis in teaching.
- Provide commentary on the relevance of exit benchmarks for quantitative literacy.
- Outline provisions for articulation with high school and community college programs.

⁸ Subcommittee conveners: IS (N. Graham); QL (R. Enbody) and Writing (J. Porter)

Integrative Studies

- Assess the criterion of “common experience” in foundation classes.
- Review the evaluations of IAH/ISS/ISB/ISP courses for past five years.
- Assess unit/disciplinary participation in integrative students
- Review integrative studies relationship to quantitative literacy and writing
- Assess staffing requirements for integrative studies in relation to multiple scenarios.
- Re-state the mission of general education in light of CRUE expectations (comparative analyses may be helpful here).
- Design a program review for integrative studies/general education.
- Make recommendations for administrative accommodations (Option A or other) that explicitly take into account the administrative needs of Writing and Quantitative Literacy.
- Weigh the possibility of exit benchmarks beyond course credits for integrative studies.

Subcommittee responses highlighted the areas WGIUE could meaningfully affect and set the agenda for the meeting of August 18, 2005. ^{Appendix B}

The subcommittees’ responses to their charges framed (and largely confirmed) the preliminary consensus reached in the meetings of April and May. They also set the agenda for the meeting of August 18, in which WGIUE furthered its work plan by settling upon a general response and organizing the presentation of its recommendations to Academic Governance. We agreed broadly to lay out general outcomes desired from general education. We focused upon what the MSU graduate should look like (that is, what competencies the MSU graduate should have) upon completing the degree program.

With the goal in mind of carrying a fully developed program to the larger community, after extensive vetting, we aimed to complete our initial labors in a broad community conversation in early fall.

To facilitate the campus conversation, we disseminated precise questions and suggestions with a request for input. Our initial discussion of outcomes was informed by the draft of the Quantitative Literacy subcommittee, which posed seven principles that we published on the Angel web site.

Our next task was to elaborate the venues in and through which the outcomes identified with those principles can be accomplished. In that respect we were guided by two expectations, each based upon recognition of the need for genuine assessment of outcomes: 1) deliberate and conscious attention from every undergraduate major to offering instruction in and/or monitoring the accomplishment of general education objectives for their students and, 2), formal university attention to the institutional requisites pertinent to accomplishing that end.

To realize the end envisioned in those departures from past practice, we next sought to identify the venues from which we could provisionally expect the specific outcomes of general education to be provided. We elicited clarifying feedback from academic units, staff, and students across the University. Among the notable contributions, Residence Life reminded us of the broader venue in which Liberal Learning occurs:

Residence Life has five core values and learning outcomes: Community Responsibility, Multicultural Development, Character Development, Learning, and Personal Well-being. Each of these entails specific knowledge, skill, and attitude objectives:

- Community Responsibility
- Multicultural Development
- Character Development
- Learning
- Personal Well-Being

Finally, we carefully weighed the feedback we received and determined to make specific recommendations concerning the “goals of liberal learning” and reform of University administrative structures to support those goals. We recognize that many and far more particular recommendations remain on the table. It is our belief, however, that they can all gain an adequate hearing in the context in which the changes that we recommend are first instituted.

The following major recommendations emerged from our deliberations:

Goals for Liberal Learning ^{Appendix C}

The total effect of the knowledge and skills described in the following goals for liberal learning results in the MSU graduate having the potential to be an outstanding leader – perceiving and developing opportunities, actively fostering and guiding change, and applying skills and knowledge to understand and articulate complex issues of work, community, and public life.

INTEGRATED JUDGMENT

- The MSU Graduate will effectively synthesize specialized discipline-based knowledge with a broad-based liberal arts education, understand the importance of life-long learning, and make decisions that reflect humane, social, ethical, and aesthetic sensibilities developed through coherent curricular and co-curricular activities.

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- The MSU graduate will be a competent writer and speaker, able to write and speak effectively in a variety of situations and to a variety of audiences, able to write and speak with authority within a professional area, and able to write and speak effectively and persuasively as a citizen in the public arena.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- The MSU graduate will have explored global, cultural, social, and intellectual diversity and will value the experiential and intellectual diversity of the academic community.

ANALYTICAL THINKING

- The MSU graduate will be a critical user of knowledge, adept at using current technologies to access information and having the ability to analyze complex information critically, using multiple modes of inquiry (i.e., scientific, artistic, literary, and information methodologies).

LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

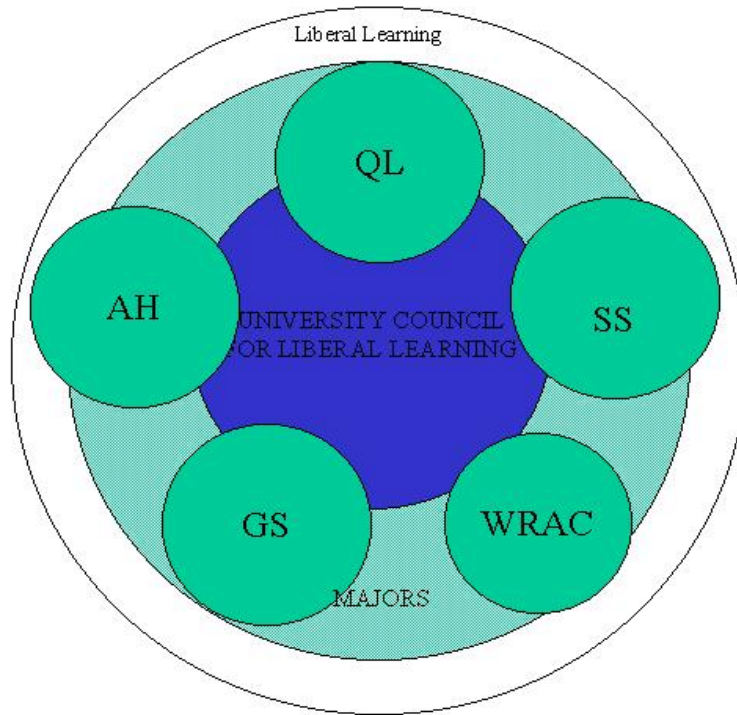
- The MSU graduate will demonstrate ability to formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information, employing analytical arguments and reasoning built upon fundamental concepts and skills of science, mathematics, statistics, and computing.

EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- The MSU graduate will have a sense of responsibility for a dynamic, democratic society that offers broad opportunities and requires the ability to function in an interdependent world.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: University Council for Liberal Learning:

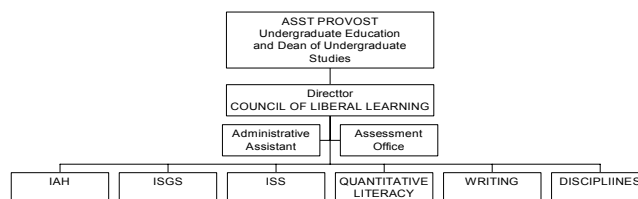
WGIUE recommends an organizational structure for University wide oversight and assessment of liberal education that combines portions of several options proposed in the Integrative Studies Planning Committee report (indeed, the original CRUE proposal of a Council for Undergraduate Education), and also incorporates key structural features recommended by the Writing and Quantitative Literacy Task Forces.



A Director of the Council for Liberal Learning will be established in and report to the Office of the Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies; the Director will convene this faculty advisory committee that will present programmatic recommendations for Governance (including UCC) review and approval

A Director should administer the Center, and the Director's staff should include an administrative assistant and an institutional research officer with special competence in assessment. The Director would be supported by an advisory committee composed of:

- Directors for Integrative Studies (ISGS, ISS, and IAH, and who may be designated by the lead college dean) (3)
- University Director of Writing (1)
- Quantitative Literacy Representative (1)
- Student Representatives (2 from ASMSU)



- Faculty at large (One from each college offering undergraduate programs).
- A Continuing system academic specialist whose major function is advising (1)
- Assistant Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies (ex officio)
- Representative from International Studies and Programs (1, *ex officio*)

CLL shall:

- Promote the liberal learning goals of the University to faculty, staff, students, administration, and external stakeholders
- Secure and maintain a budget to foster the liberal learning goals
- Further assessment practices through design and implementation of learning outcomes relative to the educational goals and curricular principles for liberal learning
 - Focusing upon curriculum-friendly assessment practices that emerge from unit curriculum goals and practices.
- Implement and oversee QL and Writing Task Force recommendations
 - Fostering development of a two-course Tier I writing sequence, expansion of Tier II offerings across the colleges (with generally determined class size limitations), and identification of quantitative literacy courses across the curriculum
- Procuring external resources
- Facilitating within and across administrative units the development and implementation of courses, programs, co-curricular, and experiential opportunities that develop the knowledge and skills that flow from the liberal learning goals
 - Including support for standardizing course credit designation, aiming to establish 3-credit courses as the uniform offering to satisfy the requirements for integrative study and related curricular goals
 - Fostering development of integrative courses within majors in order to promote liberal learning goals
- Extending integrative courses throughout upper division as well as lower division courses to the extent realizable (i.e., this is highly dependent upon the major); this reflects the desire often expressed to escape the practice of confining integrate study to elementary instruction.

Issues of Academic Governance:

Within the existing University governance system CLL should have the ability to initiate both new ideas and policies relative to the goals of liberal learning, making recommendations to UCC or UCAP, and reviewing and making recommendations on courses, programmatic requests, or policies relevant to the goals of liberal learning referred by UCC or UCAP.

Background

On February 20, 2004 then Provost Simon made the case for change in “our current approach to the liberal and creative arts and sciences.”⁹ In doing so she recalled her observation from November 3, 2003, to the effect that “we cannot rely on incrementalism that extends or attenuates past practices and accomplishments as our response...” The reason, partly, was that “there appeared to be a lack of broad-scale faculty engagement in and consensus about the liberal arts and liberal arts undergraduate education across departments and colleges... Furthermore, no unifying university wide vision of the place of the humanities and the liberal arts was readily apparent or emerged from the conversations.”¹⁰ The conversations invoked here were from the focus groups conducted in 2003, the results of which ultimately led, among other things, to the Task Forces reports that WGIUE was established to digest.

Provost Simon characterized the results of those focus groups as demonstrating “that the liberal and creative arts and sciences programs are in danger of becoming Balkanized, parochial, and isolated from each other to the detriment of the larger intellectual life...” In short, what seemed to be happening were enlargement of the “echo chamber effect” (as we termed it in WGIUE) within units and the decline of extended conversation about undergraduate education. Accordingly, the agenda proposed by Provost Simon in this respect aimed squarely at “strengthening the coherence and integration of the undergraduate experience across the university.” The specific targets within that agenda were:

- Create a focal point for efforts to focus undergraduate education and to function as a partner to the Assistant Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School.
- Establish one Center for Integrative Studies.
- Empower a broad-based cadre of faculty to provide intellectual leadership concerning undergraduate education.¹¹

The specific issues the Provost asked the faculty to address were:¹²

- Reaffirming the general purpose of undergraduate education outlined by CRUE (Council to Review Undergraduate Education, 1988)
- Reducing fragmentation of Integrative Studies and other programs that comprise the undergraduate experience through enhanced coordination...
- Addressing faculty and student concerns about requirements for graduation
- Reinvigorating efforts for assessment of student learning outcomes
- Developing initiatives to connect undergraduate learning...
- Extending our efforts toward diversity and internationalization...
- Enhancing connectivity between liberal arts and professional and graduate programs...

The remaining pertinent predicates to WGIUE deliberations are the Task Forces Reports. However, prior to the development of those reports there was at least one intervening report with implications for the Group’s review. That was the “Report on New Directions in IAH.”¹³

⁹ “Realizing the Vision: Liberal Arts in the 21st Century Land Grant University.” P.2.

¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 7.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 8.

¹³ March 1, 2004. pp. 1-2.

Much like the now pending College of Social Science Report, “Social Sciences Requirements Implementation Committee Recommendations to the Dean,”¹⁴ which largely quotes from CRUE and related documents, the IAH report bears importantly upon our expectations of undergraduate education. Moreover, the IAH report made its assumptions quite specific, thus contributing to WGIUE’s ability to determine the extent of consensus or general agreement that might exist within the faculty at large. The IAH report “assumed” the following purposes for integrative studies:

- Become more familiar with ways of knowing in the arts & humanities, biological & physical sciences, and social sciences
- Develop a range of intellectual abilities, including critical thinking, logical argument, appropriate uses of evidence, and interpretation of varied kinds of information
- Become more knowledgeable about other times, places, and cultures, as well as key ideas and issues in human experience
- Know more about the role of scientific method in developing more objective understandings of the natural and social worlds
- Comprehend the role of knowledge, and of values and ethics, in understanding human behavior and solving social problems
- Recognize the responsibilities and opportunities associated with citizenship in a democratic society and in increasingly interconnected interdependent world.

The present observations about the predicates of our deliberation serve mainly to demonstrate that across the University, from CRUE through Realizing the Vision, the language of undergraduate education is doubtless more consistent than might otherwise appear from the suggestion of increasing balkanization. That does not mean that balkanization is not a problem; the problem, however, may lie rather in administrative structures and procedures than in the general he requisites of undergraduate education. Accordingly, we should observe that the conversations largely have reaffirmed MSU’s goals of liberal learning, while diverging on the recommended means to their accomplishment.

What’s Next?

WGIUE transmits this report to the Executive Committee of the Academic Council, and to Provost Wilcox, to fulfill the terms of its charge. We expect that what follows shall be development through the systematic and regular procedures of Academic Governance. Although the members of WGIUE have completed their work, they remain available to consult with Academic Governance and the Administration concerning any particular developments or elaborations that may be requested.

¹⁴ May 17, 2005.

Appendix A

Membership:

Members from UCAP and UCC -- *Chair

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*Alternates

Appendix B

Subcommittee Responses

A. Writing Literacy

The Writing Task Force Report provided a comprehensive assessment and creates the appropriate agenda. The key elements of that agenda are:

- Tier I and Tier II writing courses should provide instruction in writing and not merely be “writing intensive” courses.
- The University should aim for significant involvement of full-time faculty in both Tier I and Tier II instruction.
- The University should re-center writing instruction administratively.
- The University should commit to ongoing assessment of the writing curriculum in the context of general education assessment.
- The writing program should provide more specialized courses and additional support for students who need additional help with writing and language development.
- Expand the Tier I writing requirement.
- Coordinate Tier writing instruction with curriculum requirements in majors.
- Develop coherent plans for Tier II writing instructions in major, coordinated by a Tier II Advisory Committee or equivalent.
- Foster detailed reviews of the Writing Task Force recommendations at unit and University policy and administrative levels.

Writing Across the Curriculum

1) The Current State of Tier II Writing Courses at MSU

Currently, more than 125 MSU courses are designated by the registrar’s office as Tier II writing courses (See Attachment A “MSU Tier II 2003-04 Enrollment Figures”). The University defines a Tier II course as one which is identified by “(W)” at the end of the course title and which is characterized by continuous attention being given to writing. Further, in a memorandum on Tier II requirements by Gerald D. Ludden (Chairperson, UCC) and Barbara Steidle (Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education), entitled “MEMORANDUM: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY’S TIER II WRITING REQUIREMENT FOR BACHELOR’S DEGREES” (9/26/97), the authors clarify and expand the mission of Tier II courses:

“Writing assignments should be conceived by the instructor and presented to the students as integral to course learning. Students should be expected to produce well-written, edited, revised and proofread papers that communicate effectively in their fields. In their Tier II writing experience, students should have at least one writing assignment in which a draft is revised after feedback from the instructors or peers. Students should have received instruction and practice in the tasks, forms, and styles of writing appropriate to their discipline or profession. This should include, where possible, experience with communication technologies.”

Although one would not expect strict uniformity in the implementation of these goals across the entire university community, it seems evident that several serious shortcomings exist in the manner in which the Tier II courses are now offered. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Class sizes vary widely in these course offerings. A survey of MSU faculty concerning conditions in Tier II courses, conducted by the Writing Task Force, resulted in 455 responses. Most respondents (52.7%) indicate enrollment in their Tier II courses ranges from 20-30 students. Another 31.5% of respondents indicate enrollment varies from 31-50. On the other hand, 15.8% of the respondents reported enrollments in these writing courses in excess of 50 students, with 6.9% reporting enrollments in excess of 90 students. In providing these estimates, faculty may have been taking into account Tier II

cluster courses for which the Subcommittee was unable to obtain data.

Large class sizes are not conducive to excellence in writing instruction, and given the fact that a great majority of Tier II faculty do not have a teaching assistant, it is evident that large class enrollment is a major obstacle to success.

•The types of written assignments required in Tier II courses also varied greatly, as might be anticipated with a requirement adhered to by the entire university. A review of approximately 100 Tier II syllabi by the Writing Task Force revealed that students were asked to undertake a variety of forms of writing: lab reports, case studies, letters, research reports, article critiques, proposals, and analyses, to name but a few. A disturbing lack of creativity was observed in assigning “non-standard” writing tasks. Courses that asked students to write for the web or to use presentation software were uncommon. Fewer than half of the courses required some type of oral presentation, and only a small minority of courses required some type of collaborative writing.

Too often, course content and writing tasks seem out of synch with each other. Tier II courses do appear to integrate the teaching of writing and disciplinary content.

•Even more troubling was the broad variation in the amount of writing required in many of the courses. To begin with, there is considerable variation in colleges and departments in the explicitness with which the Tier II requirement is noted on the syllabus. Fewer than half of the syllabi even mentioned that the course fulfills or partially fulfills the Tier II requirement.

Although students appear to be writing in most Tier II courses, the committee did encounter syllabi from a few courses designated as Tier II in which no writing appears to have been assigned. Fewer than 20% of the reviewed syllabi provide evidence that students are required to write drafts and revise those drafts based on instructor or peer feedback. (This conclusion, once again, was based on lack of mention of drafts in the more detailed assignment descriptions as well as on inferences drawn from the absence of due dates for drafts.)

This disparity in the amount of writing assigned was highlighted by the considerable variation in the weight given to writing when determining course grades; the percentage of students’ final grades based on writing varies between a low of 10% to a high of 70%.

In response to these problems and others, when asked to identify methods for increasing their comfort level as instructors of Tier II courses, faculty identified the following strategies (in descending order): lower class sizes (55.3%), [additional] TA support (33%), workshops on methods of teaching writing (25.7%), and observation of model teaching of writing (11.7%).

2) The Extension of Tier-I requirements From Four to Six Credits

Background:

Prior to the semester transition (1992), MSU required a full academic year (9 quarter credits) of freshman writing. During the semester transition, meaningful conversations about writing across the curriculum emerged, providing the impetus for the design of Tier I (one semester or 4 semester credits of freshman writing) and Tier II (writing in the major, traditionally in senior level course work) writing. This reduced the credit load of university level requirements to 28, allowing space for a “transcollegiate” requirement (a 2 semester credit course offered between two or more colleges). From Fall 1992 to Fall 2000, there were insufficient transcollegiate courses available to actually require it of all MSU undergraduate students, so the requirement was unofficially suspended by the Provost’s Office. In 2000, the transcollegiate requirement was officially dropped as a university requirement, university requirements were maintained at 28 credits and the 2 credits from the transcollegiate requirement could be utilized by undergraduate programs as appropriate.

Considerations:

Strong commitment to the integration of writing throughout a student's undergraduate program exists across the academic community. In addition to sound pedagogical reasons, MSU has learned that "writing across the curriculum" and its Tier I-Tier II design are unique cornerstones and branding of its undergraduate education.

However, there has been extensive discussion across campus since the semester transition about the reduction of freshman writing (beyond the preparatory 1004/0102 course) from a full academic year (30 weeks) to one semester (15 weeks). In many cases, it is clear that one semester of freshman writing is sufficient preparation for writing assignments and requirements of future coursework; in other cases, it is clear that students need more instruction and formal experiences with writing before advancing to coursework that expects mastery of writing. Like mathematics, students can practice but rarely can rigorously teach themselves to achieve a high level of competence.

Restructuring freshman writing from one 4 credit course to two 3 credit courses addresses the skills development deficiencies previously noted, but may present concerns from undergraduate programs where flexibility in credit usage is not a luxury.

Restructuring Freshman Writing:

The Writing Subcommittee of the University Working Group for Improving Undergraduate Education respectfully submits the following recommendations to restructure freshman writing.

- Create two 3 credit WRA courses, WRA 101 and WRA 102, whereby students develop a set of writing competencies that could be completed by one course (through the ultimate Tier I course, WRA102) or both of these writing courses. From a college perspective, this would actually provide programs that have serious credit constraints in their 120 credit program one additional credit to use as they deem appropriate. From a student perspective, it allows students the opportunity to access more experience with writing based on their previous performance.
- Create a self-directed writing placement model for students to ascertain where they belong in Tier I-WRA in consultation with their academic advisor. The self-directed placement model could include but not be limited to high school grades, ACT/SAT scores, motivation and a writing sample. In addition, the WRAC would design and implement a writing sample evaluation process in the first week of the semester of the ultimate Tier I course to identify students that should be moved to the first Tier I. Self-selected Tier I enrollment could be approached like students that are placed in a higher mathematics course. Through discussion about their K-12 experience with their advisor, students have the option to back down to the next (lower level) math course to assure competency before going on to the more difficult course. Students who opt to take the first Tier I course gain an additional semester of instruction and writing experience, with the additional 3 credit WRA course counting toward most 120 credit programs.
- For programs that have serious credit constraints, the treatment of the first Tier I WRA course could be similar to the treatment of MTH, for example before calculus (MTH 132) in Engineering or before STT 200/210 in Nursing. The additional 3 credits would be above and beyond the 120 credit program (or in some cases 120+ credit program).
- Effective: Fall 2007 (for on campus preparation for changes as well as PR off campus to high schools and community colleges).

3) Relation of Writing Across the Curriculum to the Broader Thrust of Integrative Studies.

The University needs a comprehensive and systematic means of assessing student writing competencies. To that end, we recommend the implementation of an electronic portfolio system as a mechanism for collecting and assessing student writing from matriculation to graduation. The students could be taught to use such a portfolio in their Tier I course and would begin adding documents to it during their first year at MSU. They would be encouraged to add relevant documents to it throughout their academic experience, particularly writing done in their IAH courses. In the Tier II course, the portfolio could serve as one component for an assessment of the student's overall academic achievement. Such a portfolio system would provide a database of relevant documents that would assist the University in assessing students' writing competence overall; tracking students' writing improvement; and conducting program and curriculum evaluation.

This portfolio system could serve as a useful coordinating mechanism between what are now largely disconnected facets of general education: Tier I, Integrative Studies, and Tier II. Depending on how it is designed, implemented, and used by instructors, a portfolio system could encourage students to see how the discrete components of their education are connected and, further, to synthesize general education course work with the work in their disciplinary and professional areas.

4) The Role of the Writing Center:

The Current Role of the Writing Center

The Writing Center performs a crucial mission for MSU students by providing them with intensive one-on-one assistance with their writing. During 2004, the Writing Center had 3,240 unique clients participate in 1:1 writing consultations, amounting to approximately 10% of the undergraduate enrollment. In 2002, the Writing Center sponsored 7,720 1:1 consulting sessions with MSU students. In 2003, they had 7,729 sessions.

The number of students seeking 1:1 consulting sessions has increased steadily and has exceeded 7000 for the past two years, making the MSU Writing Center one of the most frequently used centers in the nation. The average yearly increase in consulting sessions is 38% (over the life of the program). The Writing Center clients reflect a cross section of class levels, faculty and staff. During 2003, 51% of these clients self-identified as "non-Caucasian," and approximately 44% of the Center's clients are English Second Language (ESL) writers. During the same year, the five colleges whose students sought the Writing Center's services most often were, in descending order, Social Science, Education, Communication Arts & Sciences, Business, and Arts & Letters.

In addition to the Writing Center's main site in Bessey Hall, there are currently three satellites in operation -- The Library Satellite Writing Center, LaCasa Satellite Writing Center, and the SASS Satellite Writing Center. Funding supports the Bessey and Library sites; the Spanish Department pays for the graduate student facilitation and undergraduate consultants in La Casa; and the Student Athlete Support Services program assumes all costs associated with their Writing Center. Individual tutorial numbers for 2004 are as follows: Library: 3474; LaCasa: 257; SASS: 469.

The Center asks student writers to reflect on what they have learned as a result of each consulting session. In a research project developed in 2003 in which 109 randomly selected student reflection portfolios were studied, students indicated that their learning most often focused on "global" attributes of writing. The five most commonly cited areas of learning related to, in descending order were as follows:

- Strategies for revision/composing
- Content issues
- Clarity
- Organization/structure
- Evidence/support

The Writing Center has enjoyed tremendous success in offering students practical assistance with their writing. Of those who responded to an e-mail survey that followed their 1:1 consulting session, 97%

indicated an “intent to return” and 95% found the session to be “very useful” or “useful.” Although fairly limited in number (a fraction of one percent), the most common student complaints are from graduate student writers who have been placed with undergraduate writing consultants, students working with a writing consultant who is not familiar with the form in which they are writing, students working with a writing consultant who can not edit to the client’s satisfaction, or students working with a writing consultant who is unfamiliar with the material.

In addition to assisting students with their writing, the Writing Center currently offers classroom presentation support for faculty, as well as a variety of other methods of support. During 2003, the Writing Center conducted 159 one-to-one faculty consultations, and 224 hours of faculty writing group support. This one-to-one and small group support is augmented by larger workshops, including, for instance, the following recent Lilly workshops: “Beyond the Highlighter: Developing Strategies That Improve Reading Comprehension,” “Designing Effective Writing Assignments,” and “Using Reflective Writing Assignments to Promote Critical Thinking.”

The Future Role of the Writing Center

The Writing Center should broaden its responsibilities—especially in regard to Tier II courses, and we offer the following recommendations:

- Help departments revise their plans for more effective tier II courses by offering additional support for Tier II faculty, help departments revise Tier II plans, and provide additional tutoring services for students in Tier II courses. The Writing Center should be provided resources to expand its services to support Tier II efforts.
- In addition to preparing cohorts of undergraduate and graduate students to provide support for Tier II student writers (as well as other writers) at the pre-writing, drafting, and editing stages of their writing processes, the Writing Center should expand its efforts to provide support for students who are struggling with issues related to grammar, syntax, punctuation, and manuscript and citation conventions.
- The Writing Center should be given a greater role in creating opportunities for faculty across campus to participate in conversations on the teaching of writing within disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and professional contexts, through workshops, roundtables, and presentations.
- The Writing Center, in consultation with TAC, should expand its efforts to provide professional development opportunities for all faculty interested in improving the writing of their students. These efforts will include reviving the Faculty Writing Project (FWP), an adaptation of the National Writing Project’s professional development model. Facilitators of the FWP summer institute will invite faculty (a) to share productive approaches to integrating writing into their courses; (b) to study and collaboratively develop theories, research, methods, and materials related to improving student writing; and (c) to work on their own writing (e.g., to develop and revise publications in their fields of interest).
- The University should create a new position in the Writing Center—the Associate Director for Tier II Writing. This individual, an expert in writing assessment and writing across the curriculum, will provide direct support for the development of departmental plans for improving student writing and for faculty teaching Tier II writing courses. We recommend that the Director of the Writing Center and the Associate Director for Tier II writing become ex officio members of TAC.
- Finally, we recommend the Writing Center be evaluated using a protocol similar to those used for the evaluation of other MSU Centers.

Resources Needed to Support this Expanded Role

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- **Appointment of a University Director of Writing, a ½ time administrative appointment of a faculty member to serve as ex-officio chair of University Writing Advisory Committee, coordinate writing efforts across the campus, and other duties (see Section #6).**
 - **Appointment of a Tier II Associate Director of Writing Center, a new faculty line in assessment and writing in the disciplines to expand Tier II writing support while allowing the Writing Center to maintain its present work across the university, charged with supporting Tier II writing assessment, ex-officio participation on TAC, and other duties in support of the Tier II mission.**
 - **Creation of two new Tier II GA lines, with duties to include support for additional tutor preparation, participation and support of TAC, department-level writing assessments, and other duties in support of the Tier II mission.**
 - **Incentive Grants for Tier II Development. We recommend that the university provide funds allowing TAC to offer small grants in support of department and college efforts to upgrade Tier II instruction and assessment of writing skills.**
 - **Expanded Tutoring Services in the Writing Center to allow for additional tutors to support Tier II writing instruction**
 - **Tier II Faculty Summer Workshop for 12-15 faculty to support Tier II curricula development and to model new strategies for teaching and assessing writing in the disciplines.**
 - **We recommend that the university provide additional supplies, services, and equipment in order to support guest speakers, consultants, program assessment, (including outside reviewers) and an annual one-day conference on writing in the disciplines.**

5) Recommendations for SIRS Items Specifically to Assess Writing Emphasis in Teaching.

Background:

Currently, there is no standard means of evaluating the quality of writing instruction in university courses. Although students could choose to discuss a course's writing assignments in their comments on the back of the SIRS form, the SIRS form currently in use does not feature a standardized question that focuses specifically on writing. Our subcommittee believes that such a question could be a valuable device to measure the effectiveness of writing instruction—especially in courses designated as Tier II courses.

Possible S.I.R.S. questions:

Current S.I.R.S. forms provide students the opportunity to offer feedback on several aspects of the course that may or may not be present, such as collaborative learning, course lectures, and exams. For example, the SIRS form currently in use in James Madison College asks students to evaluate collaborative learning, if it was a substantial aspect of the class:

“If the class included substantial collaborative learning, how well did the collaborative learning (e.g. group work) contribute to your understanding of the course subject matter?”

Along these lines, questions designed to evaluate Tier II writing instruction could be developed, prompting students to offer a response only in designated Tier II courses:

- 1) If this course is a Tier II Writing Course, how well did class assignments and activities contribute to your growth as a writer?
- 2) If this course is a Tier II Writing Course, how well was writing instruction integrated into course content?

3) If this course is a Tier II Writing Course, how well did writing assignments contribute to your learning in the course?

Recommendations:

SIRS forms should be reshaped to include questions aimed at evaluating writing instruction. But we offer the following caveats:

- Evaluation of writing in Tier II courses should begin only after faculty have been provided with sufficient support and training to enhance their abilities in teaching writing. We recommend that evaluation should begin three years after the restructuring of the university's writing program. To do otherwise might negatively impact the teaching careers of faculty members who may not have received adequate training for the task.
- As with several other aspects of the Tier II writing program, we believe that enhanced awareness of these courses, among students and faculty, are needed in order for students to effectively evaluate them. In particular, students will need to be made aware of the goals and expectations for the Tier II writing courses they are enrolled in.

6) Recommendations for Administrative Accommodations for Support of General Education Writing

Tier I

The Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures is the unit primarily responsible for Tier I writing instruction on campus. (Note: Other units do offer their own Tier I curricula -- e.g., James Madison College.) Our view is that WRAC (or any other unit authorized by Academic Governance to offer Tier I) should continue to have complete autonomy in determining what internal administrative structures and roles would provide the best possible support for its Tier I writing courses. We recommend no change in the current approach to administration of Tier I writing.

Tier II

Currently, every academic unit offering an undergraduate major determines the Tier II requirements for its major (with the approval of curriculum committees through Academic Governance). Each academic unit that offers Tier II determines how the course will be taught, and by whom. We believe that this approach is sound and recommend no change in that structure or approach (insofar as it is actually practiced). If units wish to change their Tier II requirements, they should continue to use the established curriculum approval process to do so.

However, we do see the need for expanded support services for Tier II instruction. We endorse the recommendations of the Writing Task Force Report in this regard, specifically the recommendation that expands the mission of the Writing Center to provide additional support for Tier II faculty and students. We feel that the Writing Center is the best unit to provide this overall campus support. As we understand it, this support would take three forms: (1) additional tutoring services for students enrolled in Tier II courses; (2) an annual summer faculty workshop designed to help Tier II instructors prepare their courses; and (3) consulting services for departments/colleges with the aim of helping them to strengthen and improve their Tier II offerings and to implement assessment mechanisms for determining the communication competencies of their students. To support item #3, we recommend that the University establish some kind of incentive or matching grants program that would encourage departments and colleges to upgrade and strengthen support for their Tier II curricula. We feel that this kind of "opt-in" approach, with funding incentives to encourage departments/colleges to participate, is the best way to improve Tier II: departments/colleges that wish to take advantage of the opportunity may do so; those that would rather not, can choose not to.

University-level Coordination

What is currently missing at the University is any kind of University-level coordination of writing instruction and curricula. We support the recommendation of the Writing Task Force Report that calls for the creation of a University-level writing committee and a University Director of Writing who would be responsible for coordination of effort across the University and who would represent the interests of general education writing at the University level.

The University-level writing committee should be a small group — no more than four or five members. Our preference is would be that it function as part of a subgroup of a larger committee, such as the University Center for Liberal Learning that is currently under discussion. This committee should include on its membership: the University Director of Writing, the Director of the Writing Center (or a Writing Center representative), the Chair of WRAC (or a WRAC representative), and two other members. We recommend that the committee be a support and advisory group to Academic Governance (not an oversight committee). It is important that this committee communicate and coordinate regularly with the overall general education effort. To that end, we support the idea of having one general education committee, of which the writing group would be a subcommittee.

This University Director of Writing would sit on the university-wide committee for general education. This Director would report directly to the Provost's Office; would coordinate instructional support for writing across Tier I and Tier II and across WRAC and the Writing Center; would serve in an advisory function to UCC; and would take the lead in writing grants and representing the interests of writing on and off campus. We see this centralized coordination of effort as important, useful, and valuable. We do not see this Director as having approval authority over courses and curricula. Rather, we see this Director as having a coordinating, communicating, and advising function only.

B: Quantitative Literacy

- Develop a matrix of where the knowledge and skills encompassed by MSU's Liberal Learning goals could be taught and learned.
 - Recognize that no one course or single experience is sufficient and that not every course should necessarily be tied directly to a particular goal.
 - Emphasize a coherent combination of curricular and co-curricular experiences that define the foundations that all MSU graduates should acquire.
1. Quantitative Literacy:
 - Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures of algebra and finite mathematics
 - Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures of computing
 - Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures in statistics
 - Proficiency in analytical arguments and reasoning
 - Proficiency in representing and critiquing the world
 - Proficiency in data-based problem solving.
 2. Liberal Learning (alias Integrative Studies – IAH, ISGS, ISS):
 - Familiarity with ways of knowing in the arts and humanities, the biological and physical sciences, and the social sciences
 - Intellectual abilities including critical thinking, logical argument, appropriate uses of evidence and interpretation of varied kinds of information (quantitative, qualitative, text, image, etc.)
 - Knowledge of other times, places, and cultures as well as key ideas and issues in human experience
 - Understanding the scientific method (nature of science) in developing a more objective understanding of the natural and social worlds
 - Role of knowledge and of values and ethics in understanding human behavior and solving social problems
 - Recognizing the responsibilities and opportunities associated with citizenship in a democratic society and increasingly interconnected, interdependent world

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- Knowledge of American histories, politics, and culture
 - Aesthetic appreciation and abilities in music and art
3. **Writing Literacy:**
- Writing that demonstrates understanding and ability to influence audiences with controlled and stylistically appropriate prose and appropriate evidence
 - Awareness of the conventional forms and styles of a variety of discourses
 - Find, evaluate, and synthesize various sources of information in writing to provide evidence of claims
 - View writing as a process that demands a set of flexible strategies to generate, revise, and edit prose
 - Fluency in using multiple media to demonstrate ideas
 - Develop understanding of how cultural and societal practices influence ideas and writing

There are several examples of how the larger goals of Liberal Learning might be detailed in the context of an existing major. A critical component of this exercise was the recognition that the degree to which a student achieves the desired undergraduate competencies is related to the number of opportunities they have to experience them in the multiple components of their total undergraduate experience. No one curricular requirement or co-curricular experience is designed to address all goals. The following represents the undergraduate education goals of the Medical Technology Program aligned with the Liberal Learning goals described in this document. It includes examples of courses and co-curricular experiences that have been structured to assist the student in meeting the goals and it highlights a few of the assessment tools used to measure progress toward the goals.

INTEGRATED JUDGMENT

- The MSU Graduate will effectively synthesize specialized discipline-based knowledge with a broad-based liberal arts education, understand the importance of life-long learning, and make decisions that reflect humane, social, ethical, and aesthetic sensibilities developed through coherent curricular and co-curricular activities.
 - Establish and maintain a productive and efficient work environment that promotes interpersonal relationships and a positive work attitude
 - Recognize the roles of clinical laboratory professionals within the health care system and how they contribute to a patient-focused health care delivery system
 - Maintain and practice ethical standards
 - Maintain laboratory services and staff committed to providing accurate and precise laboratory results to support quality patient care
 - Participate in continuing professional development and effective knowledge seeking strategies

Within the disciplinary major, these goals are achieved through such courses as: MT 220 (Preparing for a Health Professions Career), MT 442 (Education and Management in the Clinical Laboratory), Organized Internships (MT 471-478)

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- The MSU graduate will be a competent writer and speaker, able to write and speak effectively in a variety of situations and to a variety of audiences, able to write and speak with authority within a professional area, and able to write and speak effectively and persuasively as a citizen in the public arena.
 - Effectively teach the knowledge, attitudes and skills defined as, or contained within, the clinical laboratory scientists' body of knowledge
 - Communicate effectively using a variety of modes

Within the disciplinary major, these goals are achieved through such courses as: MT 220 (Preparing for a Health Professions Career), MT 442 (Education and Management in the Clinical Laboratory), MT 496 and MT 498 (Integrative Correlations in Clinical Laboratory Science),

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- The MSU graduate will have explored global, cultural, social, and intellectual diversity and will value the experiential and intellectual diversity of the academic community.

Integrative Studies courses, Study Abroad, discipline based courses that deal with the role of healthcare and medicine in society and the cultural, social, acquired and inherited aspects of disease. (e.g. MT 204, MMG 463, MT 424, MT 430, MT 450, etc.)

ANALYTICAL THINKING

- The MSU graduate will be a critical user of knowledge, adept at using current technologies to access information and having the ability to analyze complex information critically, using multiple modes of inquiry (i.e., scientific, artistic, literary, and information methodologies).
 - Design, evaluate and implement new methods/protocols
 - Recognize a problem, identify the cause, synthesize alternatives and determine practical solutions where no preset criteria are available
 - Correlate and interpret data based on knowledge of pathophysiology

These goals are introduced in courses such as MT 220 and continued as a theme in junior and senior level majors courses such as MT 324, 416, 424, 430, 434, 435, 450, and internship experiences.

LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

- The MSU graduate will demonstrate ability to formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information, employing analytical arguments and reasoning built upon fundamental concepts and skills of science, mathematics, statistics, and computing.
 - Perform analyses on clinical samples
 - Confirm and verify results through an in-depth knowledge of scientific method, principles and instrumentation theory
 - Establish and monitor quality assurance/improvement programs
 - Determine the effectiveness of laboratory utilization

Within the disciplinary major, these goals are achieved through such courses as: MTH 116-124/132 and STT 201, MT 213, MT 324L, MT 424L, all discipline based lectures, MT 442, and internships. (See “Standards” outlined in QL Task Force report for further details on specific competencies.)

EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- The MSU graduate will have a sense of responsibility for a dynamic, democratic society that offers broad opportunities and requires the ability to function in an interdependent world.
 - Contribute to stewardship of their profession

This goal is achieved through Integrative Studies courses as well as discipline based courses designed to assist students in understanding the dynamic role that a healthcare professional has in both understanding and diagnosing disease as well as safe guarding public well being through maintenance of rigorous standards of practice.

These outcomes are assessed using a dynamic set of tools ranging from written and oral presentations, laboratory reports, traditional examinations, oral interviews, employer satisfaction surveys and interviews, national certification examinations, student exit and two year post graduation surveys, etc.

C. Integrative Studies

- Assess the criterion of “common experience” in foundation classes:
 - There are some elements of commonality, but it would be hard to argue that our students leave integrative studies with a truly common experience
 - a clear impression from the Center Directors is that they are concerned about some things in common, but they also have very different emphases and concerns. This points to the need for greater coordination.
 - The new focus on environmental themes may be a very promising direction; it appears that these courses may fit together into a program that will have a clear impact
 - The goals for “verticality” seem not to be met much of the time.
- Review the evaluations of IAH/ISS/ISB/ISP courses for the past five years
 - done, at least at a general level, but we may need to discuss them further
 - They indicate some positive evolution, in contrast to some of the horror stories, but also there is some variability between the courses associated with different centers. IAH probably comes off the worst; Clearly Duncan Sibley spoke eloquently of his efforts to promote good teaching and monitor performance
- Assess unit/disciplinary participation in integrative studies:
 - The fact that the CSS Working Report number 2 on “Rethinking of University and College Requirements in the College of Social Science” and the “Report of the Commission on New Directions in IAH” have not received due response, apparently, from department chairs and perhaps the relevant Deans is worrisome. There seem to be some useful suggestions in each paper that may help address the participation/staffing “cliff” that we understand is approaching, especially in the CSS
- Review integrative studies relationship to quantitative literacy and writing:
 - Discussions on this were only very brief, but there is optimism that there may be real prospects for improved connections between ISB/P and QL.
- Assess staffing requirements for integrative studies in relation to multiple scenarios:
 - In contrast to the recent past, it appears that staffing is not a major concern, even for IAH courses; it appears that the Colleges are supporting the three centers with some vigor.
 - There seem to be no real magic bullets for the question of class size and staffing under heightened constraints.
 - Some promise in hybrid/virtual course delivery seems evident.
- Re-state the mission of general education in light of CRUE expectations (comparative analyses may be helpful here):
 - Discussions with all three directors seemed to indicate strong belief that the goals of CRUE are still relevant and pursued.
 - The ISB/P Director was perhaps the most skeptical on this, wondering in particular if the terminology (esp. “integrative”) was a mistake that still plagues the University.
- Design a program review for integrative studies/general education:
 - This remains to be done in a broader and more direct forum, after questions have been answered: Who should do it consistent with “governance” legitimacy? Does this implicate the

CRUE recommendation for a new faculty council on undergraduate education to handle reviews and reform of IS, QL and W.

- **Recommend administrative accommodations (Option A modified) that explicitly take into account the administrative needs of writing and QL:**
-Note that the natural science faculty, as represented by the ISB/ISP Director, clearly seem very much concerned still about centralization
- **Develop exit benchmarks beyond course credits for integrative studies:**
-There seems to be clear attention to this only in the ISB and ISP courses, but even there the effort seems just beginning. Again no magic bullet or easy approach seems evident, but there was emphasis on measurable student outcomes (identify resulting empowerment), and a focus on good teaching. Increase focus on the students in addition to faculty goals/interests.
- **Prepare a broader debate on the future of general education and the possibilities for innovation:**
-Highlight budgetary concerns and involve faculty out side of the three core (IS) colleges.

Several telling configurations of majors answering to these needs were cited, among which James Madison College's "international relations" major and the Geography major (the latter by its nature an "integrative" discipline crossing the social and natural sciences) are only examples of the possibilities that exist, while the Music Education major is an example of stretching to meet the goal. It provides a broad-based liberal education with the addition of technical training in GISc and Remote Sensing, giving students not only an appreciation for the diversity of peoples and place, but also providing them with skills that are immediately applicable in employment. The major responds to the general goals as follows:

Geography Major:

Quantitative:	Geo 221, Introduction to Geographic Information Geo 463, Quantitative Methods
Communication:	Geo 480, Senior Seminar (Tier II) Electives including other Tier II
Analysis:	Geo 463, Quantitative Methods Geo 113, Economic Geography Geo 206, Physical Geography Any GISc or Remote Sensing course
Synthesis:	And regional course (300 level) Geo 204, World Regional Geography
Diversity:	Geo 151, Cultural Geography Geo 204, World Regional Geography Geo, 413, Urban Geography Geo, 418, The Ghetto
Citizenship:	Geo 151, Cultural Geography (indirectly)

James Madison College International Relations Major:

Quantitative:	MC 295 Research Design and Quantitative Analysis for Public Policy (or approved alternative) MC 364 Policy Evaluation (or approved alternative) University Math Requirement
Communication:	MC 111 Identity and Community-An Approach to Writing MC 112 Identity and Community-An Approach to Writing
	Junior Year IR Electives (Tier II cluster) (all have substantial writing assignments) MC 492W Senior Seminar in International Relations (Tier II writing and oral com.)

Analysis:	MC 220 International Relations I: World Politics and International Security MC 221 International Relations II: The Politics of International Economic Relations MC 364 Policy Evaluation Junior Year IR Electives
Synthesis:	MC 492W Senior Seminar in International Relations MC 220 and MC 221 (both inter/multi-disciplinary) Junior Year Electives (many have a clear multidisciplinary emphasis) FW/MC485 (cross-college course in Science, Technology, the Environment and Public Policy Specialization)
Diversity:	MC 201: Introduction to the Study of Public Affairs MC 202: Introduction to the Study of Public Affairs Junior Year IR Electives (esp. MC 324 Regional Courses on Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Middle East; MC 320: Political, Economic and Social Development in the Third World; MC 325: State and Society in Comparative Perspective; MC 377: Culture, Politics and Post-Colonialism; and MC 441/PLS441 Islam in World Politics MC365 Islam and Development in Southeast Asia MC 385 Comparative Race and Ethnic Relations MC 386 Women and Power in Comparative Perspective MC 387 Jews and Anti-Semitism) IAH (2 courses)
Citizenship:	MC 201: Introduction to the Study of Public Affairs I MC 202: Introduction to the Study of Public Affairs II MC 325: State and Society in Comparative Perspective (normally with strong focus on democratization) MC 326: U.S. Foreign Policy MC 400/401 Field Experience in Public Affairs

The model for music education majors:

Quantitative: (This is probably the weakest link for this degree, as these are low-level math skills. However, here math has the strongest link to the discipline.

MUS 381 20th Century Theory
MUS 277 Principles of Music Education

Communication:

MUS 277 Principles of Music Education
MUS 381 20th Century Theory (Tier II writing)
All elementary and secondary teaching methods courses
MUS 335 Ensemble Conducting

Analysis:

MUS 280 and MUS 281 Musicianship II and III
All MUS teaching methods courses, which require regular written analyses of field experiences and teaching observations.

Synthesis:	MUS 277 Principles of Music Education TE 801 and 803 Professional Roles and Teaching Practice
Diversity:	MUS 277 Principles of Music Education TE 250 Human Diversity, Power and Opportunity in Social Institutions World music course requirement
Citizenship:	MUS 277 Principles of Music Education

Appendix C

The Meaning of the Goals

GOAL # 1

Responsible Knowledge

Responsive Awareness

Responsible Knowledge

- The MSU Graduate effectively synthesizes specialized, discipline-based knowledge and a broad-based, liberal arts education; embraces life-long learning; and makes decisions that reflect humane, social, ethical, and aesthetic sensibilities developed through coherent curricular, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and scientific and environmental literacy.

The Synthesizer

- Integrates specialized knowledge with social, ethical, political, and aesthetic needs
- Achieves informed lay understanding of knowledge-based areas beyond specialty
- Pursues learning throughout life and across disciplinary boundaries
- Exercises informed, humane judgment in all spheres

Responsive Awareness

MSU ALUMNI:

- Successfully complete study in liberal arts as well as specialization
- Successfully engage in co-curricular and extra-curricular fora to expand awareness

GOAL # 2

COMMUNICATION

The MSU graduate will be a competent writer and speaker

- *effective in a variety of situations and to a variety of audiences,*
- *authoritative within a professional area, and*
- *persuasive as citizens in the public arena.*

To Communicate Effectively

The MSU graduate experiences public communication courses and workshops, and participates in student activities:

- *MSU 204, Successful Presentation Skills*
- *MSU 304, Writing for Clarity*
- *MSU 404, Writing Better, Best*
- PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) is holding a meeting on business presentations today.

FOR SUCCESS!

GOAL # 3

.The MSU Graduate will have explored global, cultural, social, and intellectual diversity and will value the experiential and intellectual diversity of the academic community.

Scenario:

.The MSU graduate, even if not having traveled, is aware of a diversity of cultures and life ways that exist in the world;

Process:

- .Through coursework that exposes students to ‘difference’**
- .Through participation in the university community**

Outcomes:

- .A globally aware and sensitive graduate –**
 - .Knowing the American way, and the distinctive differences it displays**
 - .Knowing alternatives to the American way**

GOALS OF LIBERAL LEARNING # 4

The MSU graduate will be a critical user of knowledge, adept at using current technologies to access information and having the ability critically to analyze complex content using multiple modes of inquiry (i.e., scientific, artistic, literary).

Dissect and Understand

To analyze content is to dissect it into its simpler components and understand how those components relate and how they combine to form the whole

Through analysis, we come to “really know” content, the result being that we can:

- Judge its validity and draw inferences from it**
- Uncover flaws in its construction**
- E.g., logical fallacy in an argument**
- E.g., missing device in a story (i.e., tragedy in which the “tragic flaw” is not made clear).**
- Relate it to other content with similar structure**

Judge and Explain

The MSU Grad Judges the *soundness* of claims

- Avoiding logical fallacies
- Probing ground assertions using techniques specific to a given mode of inquiry
- E.g., questioning results that scientists have been unable to reproduce by experiment
- Producing counter-examples (when possible) to refute claims

Appeals to analytical structures in a given field to critique a body of work

Clarifies a web of vague concepts

- Formulating crisp, non-circular definitions of terms
- Separating the accidental from the essential
- Use of dialectic methods

The Educational Map

.Students study in broad disciplines, learning to move from theory to practice in languages, arts, & sciences

.Students develop proficiency in a recognized specialization

.Students extend from the campus into the community, moving from study to service

.Graduates acquire the habits of mind of

- proficient specialists
- proficient humanity
- critical thought

.Graduates acquire not mere cultural familiarity but the ability to direct and form culture

GOAL # 5

Quantitative literacy is the ability to formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information.

Quantitative literacy employs analytical arguments and reasoning built upon fundamental concepts and skills of mathematics, statistics, and computing.

Quantitatively literate MSU students will be more empowered members of a global society through their ability to represent and critique their world.

This is defined as having a strong foundation that includes:

- Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures of algebra and finite mathematics
- Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures of computing
- Knowledge of basic concepts and procedures in statistics
- Introductory proficiency in analytical argument and reasoning

In addition, the MSU graduate should be able to demonstrate the following within the context of the major discipline:

- Proficiency in analytical arguments and reasoning
- Proficiency in representing and critiquing the world
- Proficiency in data-based problem solving

These competencies are accomplished through a coherent set of prerequisite courses that deal specifically with an integrated view of mathematics, computer science, and statistics plus discipline-based courses designed to expand and provide context for knowledge gained through foundation courses.

GOAL # 6

The MSU graduate will have a sense of responsibility for a dynamic, democratic society offering broad opportunities and requiring able functioning in an interdependent world.

Lessons of Democracy

- Practices engagement through student life activities
- Participates in service learning opportunities

-
- **Engages in classroom development of criteria for defining the public space**

Opportunity to Engage

As part of the MSU undergraduate experience – courses and clusters of courses prepare informed citizens, knowledgeable of U. S. history and political practice.

- **HIST, PLS, MC**
- **Integrative studies component**
- **IAH, ISS**
- **Discipline-specific – through capstone course in major**
- **Residence life programming**

Outcome

- **MSU alumni embrace the land-grant tradition**
- **Actively engage in community affairs**
- **Participates effectively in democratic forums**
- **Make informed decisions on matters affecting participation in society**

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

November 15, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ralph Putnam, UCAP Chairperson
Michael Schechter, UCC Chairperson
Jeremy Hernandez, UCSA Chairperson

FROM: Jon Sticklen, Chairperson
Executive Committee of Academic Council

SUBJECT: Final Report from the Working Group to Improve Undergraduate
Education

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OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY
FOR ACADEMIC
GOVERNANCE

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At our November 8, 2005 ECAC meeting it was agreed that when the Final Report from the Working Group to Improve Undergraduate Education was complete we would send it on to your committees for review. We are asking that you be prepared to comment back to ECAC at our January 10, 2006 meeting.

The final report is attached and if you have any questions with regard to this task please feel free to contact me.

JS/jh