

Background

In 1988, the MSU CRUE Report (Council to Review Undergraduate Education) laid out eight principles of undergraduate education, the first of which was “commonality.” Through this principle the Council highlighted the need for a core set of “knowledge and skill areas” and emphasis areas that every student would take (p. 9). The knowledge and skill areas form the basis for our current math, writing, and Integrative Studies requirements, and the emphasis areas set forth the ideas of including international and multicultural experience and national diversity (among other topics) as emphasis areas within these domains.

CRUE defined international and multicultural experience as courses that exposed students to non-Western ways of thinking and complex global issues such as population growth and economic inequity. National diversity called for emphasis on diversity within the United States, including religion, racial/ethnic, and gender (pp. 11 -12).

From this principle, CRUE recommended the creation of “The Core Program,” which is the basis for our current integrative studies model. Furthermore, it suggested the creation of what we now call the I-D-N requirement in recommendations 32 and 33 (p. 44):

32. THAT ALL STUDENTS MUST TAKE COURSES OR A SEQUENCE OF COURSES (TOTALING AT LEAST 6 CREDITS) IN AT LEAST TWO OF THE THREE COLLEGE-LEVEL SCHOOLS OF INTEGRATIVE STUDIES OF PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE; SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE; AND ARTS AND HUMANITIES, WHICH PLACE A CENTRAL FOCUS ON **THE EMPHASIS AREAS OF INTERNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCE.**

33. THAT ALL STUDENTS MUST TAKE A COURSE OR A SEQUENCE OF COURSES (TOTALING AT LEAST 3 CREDITS) IN AT LEAST ONE OF THE THREE COLLEGE-LEVEL SCHOOLS OF INTEGRATIVE STUDIES-- PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE; SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE; AND ARTS AND HUMANITIES--WHICH PLACES A CENTRAL FOCUS ON **THE EMPHASIS AREA OF NATIONAL DIVERSITY.**

Currently, the MSU graduation requirement states that students take at **least two Integrative Studies courses that emphasize diversity:**

1. one course designated "I" and one designated "N", or
2. one course designated "I" or "N" and one designated "D"

"I" - emphasizes international and multicultural diversity

"N" - emphasizes national diversity

"D" - emphasizes both of above

Beyond Integrative Studies

Although the vision of a strong foundation in cultural understanding as laid out in CRUE still remains a vital piece of the undergraduate learning experience, much has changed in the world. There is increasing demand for individuals that can span the boundaries between people and

disciplines in order to address wicked problems or grand challenges. As part of the effort to internationalize the curriculum and enhance undergraduate education, both aspects of Bolder by Design, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Centers for Integrative Studies have been working on multiple aspects of integrative studies, including learning outcome assessment, faculty development, enhancing interdisciplinary teaching, and global-focus. However, although Integrative Studies continues as the common thread that binds the undergraduate experience together, playing a key role in advancing cultural understanding and deepening student's knowledge of and commitment to diversity and inclusion, these same concepts must also permeate learning experience across the curriculum.

Charge to the Group

How should the concept of diversity, defined broadly, be included in the MSU curriculum, and when discussed, are MSU instructors prepared to foster inclusive classrooms that support students' development of cultural understanding?