

Overview

In March 2016, Drs. James Lucas and Kirk Kidwell recruited a diverse pool of faculty, staff, and students (see Appendix A) to serve on the Ad Hoc Inclusive Curriculum Committee (ICC) established by the University Committee on Undergraduate Education per the request of the Steering Committee. They made a concerted effort to build a committee that represented the requested constituencies, ASMSU and CORES/COPS, as well as the broader campus in terms of diverse identity status, positionality, discipline, and job function.

As part of the recruitment, Drs. Lucas and Kidwell asked the participants to provide times to meet, with the best time being Fridays from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m. The committee met for five Fridays to discuss the current MSU diversity requirement and general education, diversity in the broader curriculum, and classroom climate issues (see Appendix B for more details). In addition to the face-to-face meetings, members had the opportunity to share their ideas and provide feedback via email.

The committee expressed concern about the lack of alignment and cooperation in the area of diversity. They noted multiple touch points for working with students and faculty about the topic, but they felt that, as a whole, the University did not take advantage of these opportunities in a coherent way. The committee advocates for a stream-lined messaging effort that, for students, would start at acceptance of admission to MSU, continue through AOP and e-learning efforts, with additional face-to-face follow-up during the welcome period in the residence halls and classes.

Second, the committee felt that more attention needed to be placed on the learning outcomes associated with cultural understanding and global learning—not as much on details such as the number of courses or credits. It also stated that diversity should not be an add-on class, but should be integrated across the curriculum in applied ways. Furthermore, it wanted to see students enacting or “doing” diversity, not just passively learning about diversity.

Third, the committee acknowledged the distinction and linkages between teaching about diversity and maintaining safe climate for diverse identities in the classroom. In both cases, the average faculty member often lacks the knowledge or background to handle well issues of diversity in the classroom. The committee suggested more support and incentives for faculty to build their skills, as well as increased partnerships with campus diversity offices and personnel.

Subsequent sections of this report will provide a summary of the committee’s discussions by meeting topic and details about their recommendations by themes that emerged from their ideas. The committee wanted to stress one recommendation in this summary: a call for enhanced collaboration between diversity units and more consistent messaging. As with other studies done on this campus, the committee found that MSU has all the right pieces to address diversity in the curriculum, but its collective efforts are not aligned to build across audience, time, and context.

Another theme from the discussion was that members questioned if the committee’s only purpose was to respond reactively to a set of students’ demands and check-off a box, or if its work would lead to actual change on campus. Generally, the committee worried that a distrust exists on campus amongst some students (and some faculty members) about what the administration says it values and what it actually does on a day-to-day basis. If real change is going to occur on campus, then this perception needs to be addressed and trust needs to be built.

On a final note, the committee members found the discussions helpful, and many participants are willing to continue on for further discussion and/or implementation work.

Integrative Studies and the I-D-N Requirement Discussion Summary

After reviewing the intent and subsequent implementation of the existing diversity requirement in integrative studies, the committee found the current framework to be conceptually dated, insufficiently communicated, and poorly executed. First, they found that parsing diversity between international (I) and national diversity (N) , with the other more generic diversity (D) category, did not reflect MSU's goals for global education and internationalization. Furthermore, the IDN labels implied that diversity was primarily defined by nationality or racial/ethnic identity.

Related to the communication with students, the students on the committee stated that many do not know about this requirement, and even if they did, no mechanism exists within the course to highlight its focus on diversity. If the diversity designation has a meaning, then both students and faculty should be clearly aware they are involved a designated course, and the course should have a unique set of outcomes and learning activities that set it apart from other course.

Placing the diversity requirement within general education is also problematic because many students and advisors view the integrative studies classes as unimportant and something to finish quickly, so they can take their major classes. Given the generally poor understanding of the purpose and value of general education, putting diversity in general education alone seems to relegate it to the periphery of the curriculum.

Related to implementation, the committee found that the current designation is linked to a course title and catalog description for IAH and ISS courses, not to the actual sections of the course, which vary by instructor. For example, in Spring 2016 specific sections of IAH 211C (a "D" course) focused on topics ranging Jewish American culture, to Native American cultures, to Latin American cultures, and to American protest literature. Given that no uniformity exists between sections of the same course, and many courses have multiple sub-themes, aligning the diversity designation to the overall course is misleading and inaccurate. The committee found that a course or courses with specific learning outcomes that pertained to MSU's diversity goals would be more beneficial, and in this model, all courses should have the same learning outcomes, even if the content varies by section.

After reviewing the current MSU system, the committee reviewed MSU's proposed Global Integrative Studies 2.0 model, as well as other CIC models for general education. The committee expressed support for a revamped integrative studies core curriculum that was focused on global learning outcomes, which allowed diversity to pervade the curriculum; an emphasis on learning outcomes and assessment vs. content and evaluation; vertical integration and integration with students' major curricula; and elimination of the alternative track for all students, except possibly honors students who would need to find substitutions based on learning outcomes associated with the integrative studies curriculum not course content associated with humanities, social science, and natural science.

In concluding this conversation, the committee signaled that diversity could not be related to a single course or requirement. Students need a foundation from general education, but they should also apply their learning in their major curricula. Diversity should not be put in the curriculum as an add-on requirement; it must be integrated through-out. This effort requires alignment and increased collaboration amongst MSU offices (e.g., Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Residential Education, Academic Orientation, Admissions, Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, Office of International Students and Scholars, etc.).

Diversity across the Curriculum Discussion Summary

Building off the former conversation, the committee advocates for a curriculum that reinforces and applied diversity education in a variety of contexts and a model that not only provides terminology, issues, and theories, but one that allows students to enact and engage with diversity. If an integrative studies core can provide a base-level of competency in cultural understanding and global learning, then the majors and co-curriculum can build-off, and expand upon, these knowledge, attitudes, and skills. A possible model for this progression is the existing rubric for MSU's Undergraduate Learning Goal of Cultural Understanding, which already suggests a developmental progression relative to diversity (<http://learninggoals.undergrad.msu.edu>).

The committee acknowledged that individual faculty members' willingness, ability, and/or comfort to discuss and/or manage diversity issues in the classroom varies. Some disciplines, such as STEM, might find it difficult to find ways to integrate diversity content into the classroom. The committee noted that, at a minimum, all faculty should be responsible for intentionally including diverse perspectives in the classroom; avoiding overt bias toward a single perspective, to the extent possible based on the context; and managing class discussion to ensure a safe place for multiple perspectives and identities.

As such, it discussed the need for faculty development sessions, curriculum experts willing to work with faculty and departments on these issues, and revised SIRS forms to better capture accurate data about classroom diversity issues. Faculty members expressed concern that in trying to incorporate more diversity into the classroom, they put themselves in jeopardy of making a mistake that could lead to student complaints.

On a final note, the faculty members in the room connected this work to the similar practices and efforts put into high quality teaching and learning practice. They stated that just as faculty members believe that the administration provides little incentive to improve their teaching as part of the tenure and promotion process, faculty most likely will not find benefit in putting time into reworking their classes in incorporate issues of diversity and inclusion. They equated the discussion about diversity to other "goods" at the university that are promoted, but not directly rewarded in meaningful ways. Beyond this sentiment, some individuals believe that senior faculty and administrators instruct junior faculty to avoid engaging in work not rewarded in the tenure process, which has the effect of rendering teaching excellence or engagement with diversity not a priority for faculty members.

Campus Climate Discussion Summary

As implied earlier, the committee distinguished between the inclusion of diversity content and the management of the classroom climate to support diverse students. Many important issues—such as academic integrity, grief absence, and disability accommodation—have clear policies set by the University and are often included in course syllabi. Similar policies relative to institutional equity, diversity, bias, and inclusion should have specific definitions and statements that could guide faculty members' classroom behavior and also provide information in the syllabi for students.

Part of this discussion focused on clearly defining terminology such as trigger warnings, implicit bias, climate, and micro-aggressions, and some of the discussion involved making sure that the entire campus population understand what these terms mean and use them consistently. Some committee members also warned that if we have too many policies in the syllabi, then syllabi become too overwhelming and students tend not read the document at all. Others acknowledged that misuses of the trigger warning and micro-aggression concepts could infringe on academic discourse.

In terms of having a consistent, clear alignment of key terms/messages, the committee noted that we have many different offices and efforts that lack connectivity with one another. One method for improving knowledge, while avoiding overwhelming faculty and students, would be to have a curriculum for diversity education that starts at acceptance to MSU (hiring), continues through orientation, eLearning, arrival on campus, and throughout the first-year on campus. The message of diversity should build overtime, permeating curricular, co-curricular, work, and living environments.

Finally, regarding comments about distrust between students, faculty, and administration, student members admitted that they have a limited understanding of what happens behind the scenes and the efforts that some individuals do put in to making the campus more inclusive. They would like more dialogue with faculty doing the work, as well as more positive stories about inclusion.

Recommendations

The recommendations fell into three large categories: curriculum suggestions, faculty development suggestions, and communication/policy suggestions. Some of the ideas presented are not new, and some of the ideas support existing reform efforts being considered at MSU.

Curriculum

1. Base integrative studies on a global-learning model that weaves “diversity concepts” throughout the entire integrative studies curriculum, including science courses.
2. Each integrative studies requirement should have a set of learning outcomes that is consistent across courses and sections within that requirement. Assessment should be done to ensure that courses achieve the stated outcomes; these learning outcomes should be highlighted on the syllabus or communicated to the students in some way.
3. All MSU courses should also be coded by learning outcome, allowing students to search for classes that deal with diversity, as well as allowing administrators to know how the MSU learning outcomes are woven throughout the curriculum.
4. General education should be constructed as a core curriculum that supports and interfaces with the major curriculum by introducing concepts that can be investigated more deeply in the major. No alternative tracks should exist for the core curriculum, except for (maybe) honors students who would make substitutions based on learning outcomes, not content.
5. If MSU continues with thematic course descriptions that offer sections with diverse topics, then all courses should be encouraged to use the comments section in the schedule of courses to state more clearly what each course section actually about.
6. Spread the integrative studies courses vertically throughout the students’ academic career, with a required first-year course and required experiential learning.
7. Consider implementing a model similar to the one proposed by MSU for AAC&U or one similar to University of Maryland (See Appendices 3 and 4).
8. When working to embed diversity across the curriculum, efforts should be to integrate diversity, not add it on as an extra class, requirement, unit, or reading.

Faculty & Staff Development

9. Make it clear that diversity, inclusion, and climate are an institutional priority and the responsibility of everyone on campus.
10. Create additional faculty development and support opportunities for teaching staff:
 - a. Continue and expand the number and types (i.e., introductory, mid-level, advanced) of workshops about teaching and inclusion.
 - b. Encourage more faculty to post example units and assignments on the MSU Undergraduate Learning Goals website.
 - c. Provide additional one-on-one support to help faculty develop or enhance their courses.
 - d. Generate a list of terms with a common definition for use across MSU and provide language for faculty to use in their syllabi, assignments, presentations, etc.

- e. Develop instructional guides for faculty on how to facilitate a difficult dialogue, how to create a safe class climate, etc.
 - f. Provide opportunities for practice engaging with diversity, not just passively listening about it.
 - g. Consider the creation of a mandatory eLearning or module for all faculty and staff similar to the one created for sexual assault or as part of a blended learning experience.
11. Engage college diversity representatives and/or faculty advocates in department meetings, curriculum workshops, and curriculum discussions.

Communication
& Review

Appendix A – Committee Membership

Last, First Name	Department
Abalo, Theresa	Student, Honors College/James Madison/CORES-COPS
Chambers, Glenn	Associate Professor, History/Director of AAAS
Egan, Leydi	Graduate Student, HALE/OISS
Gaines, Lauren	Specialist, Communication Arts and Sciences
Garcia, Jessica	Assistant Professor, Sociology/Office of Inclusion
German, Bess	Assistant Dean, Honors College
Horner, Pilar	Assistant Professor, Social Work
Jain, Raghav	Student, Honors College/Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Jeitschko, Thomas	Associate Dean, Social Science/Economics
Kidwell, Kirk	Director, IAH
Kraemer, Angelika	Specialist, Center for Language Teaching Advancement
Lange, Alex	Assistant Director, LGBT Resource Center/ AQAS Advisor
Lee, Jasmine	Specialist, James Madison College/BSA Advisor
Leonard, Kevin	Specialist, Multicultural Business Programs
Lucas, James	Assistant Dean, APUE/CANR
Mills, Nicholas	Student, English/RHA Representative
Metaj, Richard	Student, Political Science/RHA Representative
Miner, Dylan	Associate Professor, RCHAN/Director American Indian Studies
Qing, Simei	Associate Professor, James Madison College
Rachman, Steve	Associate Professor, English
Rao, Naina	Student, Journalism/CORES-COPS Representative (did not attend)
Rivera, Jennifer	Residential College Arts & Human Dean
Santavicca, Lorenzo	Student, International Relations/ASMSU Representative
Viau, Terry	Associate Dean, Nursing
Wehrwein, Erica	Assistant Professor, Physiology

Invited, but not participating

Carter, DeAndre	Neighborhood Success Collaborative – No response
Dearing, Spike	Honor's Student/James Madison – Could not attend meeting time
Elam, Kendra	Specialist, Nursing – On maternity leave
Frayser, Katie	Student, Mechanical Engineering – No response
Jiang, Xuefeng	Associate Professor, Accounting – No response
Makhene, Naledi	Student, Social Relations and Policy/CORES-COPS Representative – No response
Marin, Patricia	Assistant Professor, Educational Administration – Withdrew for family concerns
Pollock, Ben	Associate Professor, Religious Studies – No response
Wake, Naoko	Associate Professor, Lyman Briggs – On sabbatical

Appendix B – Meetings

Meetings

Date: March 18 and 25, 2016

Topic	Resources	Key Questions
On-board and overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Charge • Membership list • ASMSU resolution • Students Affairs website on Diversity & Inclusion • Faculty Focus: Diversity & Inclusion in the Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to introduce the committee, establish norms, and provide an overview of the three topics to come.

Date: April 1, 2016

Topic	Resources	Key Questions
Integrative studies and the IDN requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIC Diversity Requirements (two versions) • CRUE chapters establishing MSU diversity concept • Global Integrative Studies Proposal • Principles and Practices for Integrated Liberal Learning • Core Values: Infusing Global Awareness across the General Education Curriculum • MSU Integrative Studies student assessment data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the current diversity requirement in general education conceptually sound? • Is a two course requirement sufficient? • Should there be learning outcomes related to a diversity designation? • How do we communicate the diversity aspect of the class to instructors and students? • How does the diversity requirement connect with other ideas related to Gen Ed curriculum reform, such as the global focus?

Date: April 15, 2016

Topic	Resources	Key Questions
Inclusive curriculum outside of general education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSU learning goals and rubrics • MSU global competencies • Bolder by Design • 2006 Accreditation Report: Internationalization • Internationalizing the Student Experience report • It takes more than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success • The New Global Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should inclusion be embedded only in integrative studies or across the curriculum? • How do we support (or respond to) disciplines who see diversity as outside their expertise? • How should diversity be implemented across the major curriculum (i.e., in a class, units in multiple classes, integrated into units)? • What is the minimum expectation for cultural understanding and citizenship we expect at graduation? • How does this issue relate to our global competency and education efforts?

Date: April 22, 2016

Topic	Resources	Key Questions
Campus and classroom climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSU Office of Inclusion – Education page • Key definitions sheet • Overview of Inclusion and Diversity Efforts and Information by Academic Unit (2006 report) • Why engage in this work? • NYT – Why I use trigger warnings • The Atlantic – Coddling of the American mind • U of Illinois – Handbook on micro-aggressions • HuffPost – How to spot micro-aggressions • AAC&U Inclusive Teaching Framework • U of NC – Teaching for Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the balance between academic inquiry and a micro-aggression? • What is the role of faculty and students in creating a safe, inclusive classroom environment? • How do faculty balance supporting inclusion and students' identity development? • How do we build faculty and students capacity to create inclusive spaces; what resources are needed to do so?

Date: April 29, 2016

Topic	Resources	Key Questions
Wrap-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft summary of discussion and recommendations 	Fleshed out and verified key messages for the final report.

Appendix Three – MSU Global Integrative Studies (GIS) Model

This model for integrative studies developed during MSU’s involvement with the AAC&U global futures program. The model seeks to establish a new core curriculum for MSU that is vertically integrated across students’ academic career, has clear learning outcomes and assessment protocols for all courses, increases interdisciplinary and integration within courses, emphasizes disciplinary “ways of knowing” instead of disciplinary content, and focuses on global, grand challenges and enduring questions.

As the GIS would be required of all students (no alternative tracks except for possibility Honors College students), the final curricular model would be limited to 16 credits in total so as to not create additional credit burden on STEM disciplines. Ideally, GIS courses could be offered by any college, but that primary teaching and oversight will be maintained by the three core colleges: CAL, CNS, CSS.

Suggested model:

1. GIS 100 – Introduction to Inquiry (2 - 3 credits)
 - a. Introduction to global integrative learning and interdisciplinarity; analysis and evaluation of evidence; institutional student learning outcomes (Liberal Learning Goals/Outcomes & Global Competencies)
 - b. College and departmental first-year seminars may fulfill GIS 100 requirement provided they meet a set of curricular criteria yet to be determined.
 - c. Minimally, courses must offer interdisciplinary focus across two core colleges about a global issue or enduring question. For example, a focus on climate change and how climate change is studied by scientists and social scientists.
 - d. GIS 100 is a prerequisite to GIS 200/300 courses not so much in terms of course content but rather in terms of the methodologies of global integrative learning and interdisciplinarity as academic modes of inquiry
2. GIS 200/300 – (2 – 4 classes at 3 credits each)
 - a. Curricular distinctions amongst the 200-level and 300-level GIS courses need to be more fully defined but, tentatively, may be distinguished in terms of the breadth vs. depth distinction, experiential learning format, learning outcome focus, issue or theme (i.e., the health track, environmental track, technology track, etc.), or signature assignment (i.e., research paper class, service project class).
 - b. Each GIS 200 and 300 course must be transdisciplinary in the sense that the courses integrate disciplines from at least two of the “core” areas of academic inquiry: arts and humanities, natural sciences, social sciences.
 - c. GIS 300 courses would include a field/lab experience as an embedded component of the course
 - d. Courses could be coded (AH=arts and humanities, NS=natural science, SS=social science) with the requirement that of the 4 GIS 200 and 300 courses, students would need to have at least one of each coded courses.
3. GIS 400 – Global Integrative Studies Capstone (2 – 4 credit course)
 - a. Specifically designed to integrate the global integrative studies and major curricula.
 - b. GIS 400 courses would not focus on a single global theme; rather, GIS 400 is the space in the curriculum in which students team-up to integrate their knowledge and collectively address a series of global challenges or enduring questions.

Appendix 4 – University of Maryland I-Series

After reviewing several of the CIC schools general education requirements, the group quickly highlighted the University of Maryland as a school to emulate. Interestingly, they were our partners during the AAC&U grant program. Below is text describing the program adapted from the *Transforming General Education at the University of Maryland* document.

Program Goal

- To address important issues that spark the imagination, demand intellect, inspiration, and innovation and conclude where feasible with real-world implementation.
- Provide students with the basic concepts, approaches, and vocabulary of particular disciplines and fields of study as well as an understanding of how experts in those disciplines and fields employ terms, concepts, and approaches.
- Examine the ways in which diverse intellectual traditions and disciplinary protocols address such questions

Program Characteristics

- Investigate a significant issue in depth
- Examine and demonstrate how particular disciplines and fields of study address problems.
- Allow entering students to wrestle with big questions, and provide a mechanism for all Maryland students to glimpse the utility, elegance, and beauty of different disciplines and to appreciate how such areas of investigation might become the subject of extended study, as a concentration, a major, or even a lifelong commitment.

Sample Courses

- **Changing Climate, Changing Cultures-** Credits: 3
Explore past, present, and future interactions between humans and climate. Discussions, methods-oriented activities, and case study analyses provide students a foundation for appreciating the role of anthropology in understanding, responding to, and preparing for climate change.
- **Dangerous Art: Censorship or Subsidy** - Credits: 3
Combines a broad historical analysis of the relationship between art and authority with an examination of contemporary culture criticism and art practice. Explores the uses and abuses of art and culture in totalitarian and theocratic states as a prelude to a review of the role of official culture in the United States. Examines art and culture in the public arena and many related areas where the arts and policy interact.
- **Collisions in Space - The Threat of Asteroid Impacts** - Credits: 3
Worried? Can't sleep? Collisions in Space will evaluate the threat of asteroid impacts with the Earth using knowledge of asteroid characteristics and orbits. The merits of possible defense plans will be discussed, as well as the budgetary and political concerns associated with implementing any such plan.