

Proposed changes to the UI core curriculum (regulation J-3)

In consideration of the information gathered from across the university, the various public forums, the faculty survey, from the Steering Committee's review of core curricula at other colleges and universities, from the review of the research commissioned by the AAC&U, CCAS, and from other bodies of knowledge regarding best practices in core curricula today, the majority of the members of the UCGE concluded that the University of Idaho core curriculum would be strengthened by incorporating the following changes into it:

- A. Provide for the vertical integration across all four years of baccalaureate instruction for work in such areas as critical thinking, writing, communications, greater international understanding, and greater understanding of our own domestic diversity
- B. Year 1 (*Already a part of Core Curriculum*)
 - 1. Provide a robust, intentionally designed first-year experience with academic, co-curricular, and living community integration to connect students to the university. This seminar is a three-credit integrated seminar that integrates the university learning outcomes, offered in the fall and spring semesters, and is staffed primarily by faculty from the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences. Provide students the option of fulfilling this requirement in one of the following ways:
 - a) by completing a one-semester, three-credit integrated seminar that integrates the university learning outcomes, during the first semester (offered both fall and spring semesters)
 - OR
 - b) by completing an introduction to the major course required in the degree program the first semester AND completing the one-semester, three-credit integrated seminar that integrates the university learning outcomes, during the second semester.
- B. Year 2 or 3
Add a one-credit Great Issues Seminar, an interdisciplinary course linked with a university signature event (e.g., Bellwood Lecture, Borah Symposium, Runstad Lecture, Jazz Festival), that integrates the university learning outcomes and is staffed primarily by faculty from the Colleges of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Art and Architecture, Business and Economics, Education, Engineering, and Natural Resources.
- C. Year 4
Fully implement a senior experience requirement, minimum of 1 credit, that emphasizes the university learning outcomes and integrates general education and the major, offered in the major or the department or college within which the major resides
- D. Add a diversity-designated course requirement
- E. Continue the current international, communication, mathematics, and science (including integrated science) requirements not changed above as currently described in the university catalog
- F. Use all of the core courses listed above as opportunities to assess student learning (using both direct and indirect measures and student interviews) in years 1, 2/3, and 4, and using the data annually to inform recommendations for continuous improvement of the core
- G. Total credits required for general education remain the same as now required.

Proposed UI core curriculum

All students entering the University of Idaho with 14 or fewer transcribed college credits are to complete the following University of Idaho core curriculum. *(Those with 15 or above have the option to complete the Idaho State Board Core requirements.)*

Communication (at least 5 credits)

English 102 (3 credits)

Additional communication (at least 2 credits)

Natural and applied sciences (at least 7 credits, at least 1 course with a lab)

Integrated science course or a science course with a lab (3-4 credits)

A second science course (3-4 credits)

Math, statistics, or computer science course (at least 3 credits)

First-semester integrated/introductory experience (3 credits)

First-year Integrated Seminar (3 credits in the first year)

OR

First semester introduction to a major or college (3 credits in the first semester)

Additional social science course (at least 3 credits)

Additional humanities course (at least 3 credits)

One course designated as “International”

(This may be a core course (other than the integrated seminar) or a course in a major or an elective course.)

One course designated as “Diversity”

(This may be a core course (other than the integrated seminar) or a course in a major or an elective course.)

Great issues seminar taken in the 2nd or 3rd year (1 credit)

(Many of these will be designated as diversity or international)

Senior experience (1 credit)

(This may be an experience within a major, a college, or a university approved senior experience.)

Any additional approved core course work needed to equal a minimum of 33 core credits

Further Information

One important purpose of the General Education requirements here at the University of Idaho is to assist students in developing a solid foundation in critical thinking, writing, and communications. UCGE is proposing the vertical integration of core courses, focusing specifically on university learning outcomes, across all four years of baccalaureate instruction. The current university core includes a freshman level integrated seminar. The addition of a one-credit Great Issues Seminar in students' second or third year of study and a senior experience (minimum of one credit) will round out the vertical core integration as students move through their programs.

The Great Issues Seminars

Great Issues Seminars are university-wide core *interdisciplinary* course that integrates the university learning outcomes. These courses serve further to *integrate disciplines* and to *integrate core studies throughout a student's four/five years of study* at the university. This seminar extends efforts initiated in the first year to connect students to faculty and interdisciplinary ideas at important junctures in their academic careers. Great Issues will typically be related to a university-wide signature event (e.g., Bellwood Lecture, Austin Lecture, Borah Symposium, Runstad Lecture, the Jazz Festival, and VIEW business plan competition). They may also be connected to a contemporary issue.

The members of UCGE expect that the majority of Great Issues seminars will carry either the "international" designation and/or the "diversity" designation.

Seminars will be taught primarily by the faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Art and Architecture, Business and Economics, Education, Engineering, and Natural Resources. The Great Issues Seminars are not courses within the majors of those colleges. They are university-wide core courses taught primarily by the faculty of those colleges.

Senior Experience

The one credit senior experience will be taken by all students near the end of their undergraduate degree program(s). This experience serves as an important book-end to the first year and an opportunity for students to synthesize learning over all years of their undergraduate experience. The senior experience *integrates general education and skills and knowledge related to specific degree programs* and may be offered within the major or within the department or college within which the major resides. Senior experiences might include: capstone courses, internships, externships, student teaching, student research, and service learning.