

Standing Committee on the Curriculum
Olympia Undergraduate College Model Workgroup
Prepared for a first discussion at the February 9, 2021 faculty meeting

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What we are presenting:

A model in process to strengthen clarity, coherence, and equity across the curriculum.

What we are asking for:

Approval from the faculty to move forward on foundational plans for this model.

Foundations:

- The Olympia Undergraduate College will be one integrated college with coordinated support structures for all students. It will not be divided into schools.
- Three Curricular Areas will be student-facing entities, named and organized to be easily recognized by a diverse student population, and prospective students and their families.
- Students will be able to earn upper division credit in each Curricular Area.
- Students will have the option to plan for an interdisciplinary emphasis in Arts, Social Sciences, or Humanities, reflected on their transcript.

OUR MODEL

1. ONE COLLEGE

The Olympia Undergraduate College will be organized and run as one entity.

A vote to approve this model allows us to plan the Olympia undergraduate curriculum as a whole, establishing all learning modes and schedules under one integrated rubric, which is how students already understand it.

2. CURRICULAR AREAS

The Olympia Undergraduate College will be represented to students as three broadly-conceived and instantly recognizable Curricular Areas which lead students to Paths, programs, courses, and all other learning modes and opportunities at any and all times of day. We propose that they be built around broad concepts, as suggested by the following (actual names to be decided):

- Interdisciplinary Scientific Inquiry
- Community Studies, Justice, and Social Sciences
- Arts and Humanities: Knowledge and the Human Condition

Even though it's represented this way, faculty can and ought to plan programs that combine Curricular Areas.

A vote to approve this model will allow us to create three Curricular Areas. These areas will become the structures which contain Paths, programs, and courses, coordinate new learning modes, support First-Year Programs, and oversee the new optional emphases in the Bachelor of Arts degree (see below).

New Learning Modes

The vote enables us to develop a vision for day, evening, and weekend curriculum as coordinated and integrated in the Olympia Undergraduate College as a whole, and to assess, plan for, and implement a range of new learning modes (remote, hybrid, low residency). We envision the Curricular Areas and Academic Leadership coordinating the shift in ways that expand and adapt our day, evening, weekend, and online offerings to meet a broad array of students' academic needs and practical circumstances.

First-Year Programs

Faculty across the Curricular Areas share responsibility for First-Year Programs. Strategic planning ensures First Year offerings across the Curricular Areas at a scale that meets Evergreen's proportion of first year students and that prepares students for work across the curriculum.

3. UPPER DIVISION CREDIT AND DEGREES WITH EMPHASIS

Faculty within Curricular Areas are responsible for ensuring sufficient upper division offerings to enable students to opt to pursue alternatives to the current BA in Liberal Arts. Based on the model of the current BS, students would have the option to earn a Bachelor of Arts with an emphasis in either the arts, the humanities, or the social sciences (requirements for the current BA in liberal arts would remain unchanged). These emphases are much broader than disciplinary majors, and acknowledge a student's decision to achieve interdisciplinary depth in a specific academic division of their choice.

A vote to approve this model will move the College toward more equitable opportunities for all students across the curriculum. It will allow us to work with curricular area teams to develop and plan implementation of BA degrees with the internal designation of an emphasis in a division of knowledge (Arts, Social Sciences, or Humanities).

Conclusion

Based on Institutional Research data and surveys, conversations with students, feedback from CATs and CAT leaders, and discussion with advising and admissions staff, the SCC is persuaded that a vote to approve this three-part model will enable us to enact our commitment to equity, improve recruitment and retention efforts across the college, and contribute to a more integrated experience for all students.