PROPOSAL FOR 
CORE REVISION 

UNIVERSITY CORE OF COMMON STUDIES
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed framework is a two-tier Core designed to promote knowledge, competencies, interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, community, and Marquette’s Catholic, Jesuit identity.

- The initial tier, consisting of 18 credit hours, is based on the existing University Core of Common Studies, with an emphasis on the traditional foundations of Jesuit education. Unified by the theme of “Men and Women for Others,” it encompasses five knowledge areas. Integrated courses in theology, philosophy, and rhetoric contribute to a cohesive first-year experience, while introductory courses in mathematics and science allow students pursuing professional degrees in science and engineering to begin satisfying major requirements in their first year.

- The second tier consists of 18 credit hours spread across years 2-4. Unified by the theme “Agents of Change,” it encompasses five multidisciplinary competencies conceived to support and advance Marquette’s Jesuit mission: Diversity, Global Awareness, Ethical Citizenship, Environmental Justice, and Arts.

Throughout the Core, integration is achieved through a variety of methods, including paired courses, experiential learning, and advanced writing in the disciplines.
II. DESCRIPTION

STRUCTURE

The Core framework consists of two tiers, the first organized by knowledge areas and the second organized by competencies. This tiered arrangement allows students to begin establishing a strong liberal arts foundation in the first year of college and then, as they progress in their majors, to continue their Core studies in a manner that emphasizes interdisciplinary connections and the development of higher-order skills through the clustering of designated courses into five categories oriented toward various aspects of the Jesuit educational mission, including social justice, stewardship, and the arts. Each tier is loosely unified by an Ignatian theme that individual instructors can incorporate into their teaching of Core courses in ways appropriate to their disciplines and course curricula. At each stage of the Core, further integration is achieved through paired courses, experiential learning, and writing.

Tier 1: Men and Women for Others

In the first tier, corresponding to year 1, students complete introductory coursework in subject areas comprising the traditional foundation of Jesuit education, as articulated in the Ratio Studiorum: theology, philosophy, rhetoric, mathematics, and science. (History and literature—the “humane letters”—are incorporated into Tier 2.)

Knowledge Areas (18 credit hours across 5 disciplines)

The knowledge areas that comprise the first tier of the core are modeled on the existing University Core of Common Studies. Students in their first year of college would take introductory courses in the following disciplines. In the list below, courses that might easily be paired are grouped together by level of indentation. The linking of courses in Theology, Philosophy, and Rhetoric is currently being delivered by the Honors Program, which provides a model that could be implemented broadly.

- Theology (3 credit hours)
- Philosophy (3 credit hours)
- Rhetoric (6 credit hours)
  - Mathematics (3 credit hours)
  - Science (3 credit hours)

Upon completion of the first tier, students will have gained a solid foundation in several branches of the liberal arts and developed academic skills crucial to their success in upper-division coursework. In addition, because Tier 1 is only 18 credits, it allows students to make progress in their majors by taking an array of non-Core courses concurrently. At the same time, through the unifying theme of “Men and Women for Others,” students will gain a clearer sense of the role of higher education as an avenue for serving God by serving others.
Tier 2: Agents of Change
In the second tier, spanning years 2 through 4, the approach shifts from discrete knowledge areas to multidisciplinary clusters of courses in which students develop competencies in relation to subjects or topics oriented toward social justice, sustainability, and the arts. Courses offered under each heading would be a mix of introductory and upper-division courses. In many cases, students would be able to take courses that simultaneously move them forward in their majors: for example, the College of Engineering’s Engineering Ethics course could apply toward Ethical Citizenship, and their course in Sustainability could count toward Environmental Ethics.

In addition to classroom learning, students would be able to participate in a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities that could satisfy components of the second tier of the Core. Such opportunities include service learning (accumulating a certain number of hours), study abroad, internships, fieldwork, and sustained, documented extracurricular activities, such as Theater, Choir, and Student Government. Consistent with this emphasis on experiential learning, as well as interdisciplinarity, the unifying theme of this tier, “Agents of Change,” conveys to students their role as catalysts of change in the world.

Competencies (18 credit hours across 5 categories)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY AREAS</th>
<th>CREDIT HOURS</th>
<th>REPRESENTATIVE DISCIPLINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Many disciplines, including those currently offering Diverse Cultures courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Awareness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>History, Political Science, Social Sciences, Foreign Languages, Literatures, as well as specific courses in Education, Nursing, and other Colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Citizenship</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Philosophy / Theology + History, Political Science, Social Sciences, English, as well as specific courses in Engineering, Nursing, Communication, other Colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sciences, Social Sciences, Philosophy, English, Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theater, English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Haggerty Museum of Art, Performing Arts, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Tier Two Competencies

Upon completion of the second tier, students will have gained further knowledge and skills in connection with complex problems, goals, and forms of expression that are relevant to mission and identity. In addition, through the emphasis on experiential learning as well as “real-world” problems, applications, and creative solutions, students will gain a greater understanding of their potential and the capacity of higher education to function as “a leaven for good” in the world.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of Tier 1 students will be able to:

- Ask questions rooted in curiosity and identify answers based on systematic process of discovery.
- Engage in the scholarly exploration of religious faiths and explain how faith and reason are related in the search for truth.
- Communicate effectively in writing, speaking and artistic expression.
- Engage in evidence-based research by asking interesting and important questions, collecting and analyzing appropriate data, and considering the implications and limitations of the findings.
- Use quantitative and qualitative evidence in the evaluation, construction, and communication of arguments in public, professional, and personal life.

Upon completion of Tier 2 students will be able to:

- Engage in an examination of personal values and experiences in light of the Catholic, Jesuit traditions and integrate these understandings with the principles that guide their lives.
- Foster safe and affirming communities by celebrating difference and discouraging prejudice, violence, and intimidation.
- Engage in cooperative and cross-disciplinary problem solving to address real world challenges in sociable responsible ways.
- Develop creative, problem-solving strategies and critical thinking skills in the context of complex global issues.
- Apply an understanding of one’s identity and social difference to articulate how individual and institutional choices impact other people

INTEGRATION

Integration is achieved through several methods, including the following:

- Paired courses, particularly in Tier 1, where Philosophy, Theology, and First-Year Writing can be linked, as they are currently in the Honors Program.
- Experiential learning in Tier 2.
- Writing in the Disciplines in Tier 2.

MISSION

As indicated by the themes given to each tier, this framework for a revised Core curriculum makes apparent the transformative character of Jesuit education by training students to think of themselves as men and women for others and agents of change, emphasizing not only who we are but also what we do. Through the first tier, it gives every Marquette student a strong foundation in disciplines that traditionally form the heart of Jesuit education, while the second tier connects classroom learning to “real world” problems and imaginative solutions. To further support the Jesuit mission and the Ignatian potential of this framework, the University could provide additional resources to train faculty teaching Core courses in the methods of Ignatian pedagogy. Finally, this framework advances Marquette’s mission of Excellence, Faith, Leadership, and Service by encouraging curricular innovation in connection with the competencies comprising the second tier.
POTENTIAL FOR UNIVERSITY-WIDE APPROVAL

In order to accommodate the needs of students in all the Colleges, this model has been designed with a relatively modest foundation in the first-year and with the potential for varied coursework in every College to count towards Tier-2 Competencies. This includes courses that are required for majors. In addition, because it allows a variety of non-course learning experiences to count towards completion of the Tier-2 Competencies, it encourages students to pursue activities outside the classroom, including experiential learning that they may be doing in connection with their majors or vocations.

III. VISUAL REPRESENTATION

**Foundations (Knowledge Areas)**
- Rhetoric + Composition (2)
- Theology (1)
- Philosophy (1)
- Science (1)
- Math (1)

**Explorations (Competencies)**
- Diversity (1) courses in many departments, disciplines, colleges
- Global awareness (1) FOLA, History, Social Sciences, English, etc.
- Ethical citizenship (2) Phil/Theo + SOWL, Nursing, Education, Engineering, Comm.
- Environmental ethics (1) courses in many departments, disciplines, colleges
- Arts (1) Engl., FOLA, THAR, Haggerty, Music, Performance, etc.