Dual Integration Model

Executive Summary

This model promotes both vertical and horizontal integration throughout the core. Vertical integration begins with the “Marquette Seminar,” a common first semester course that will draw on educational research and Ignatian pedagogy to help each student develop a question or set of questions that he or she wishes to pursue at Marquette. Subsequent courses in the core will introduce students to distinct methods of inquiry, providing the tools to evaluate their unifying questions from diverse disciplinary perspectives. These courses will be horizontally integrated by a common focus on methodology and a consistent incorporation of a student’s unifying question(s). Finally, a Senior Seminar provides additional vertical integration during the last semester, explicitly asking students to apply the different methods of inquiry to their unifying questions and to unite this process with their professional training to create a clear sense of the contributions they might make to social transformation after Marquette.

Description of the Model

Structure and Student Experience

This proposal responds to the president and provost’s charge by incorporating both vertical and horizontal integration. Vertical integration would be achieved through two seminars, one during the first semester and one during the last semester of a student’s career at Marquette. The first semester “Marquette Seminar” would provide integration by introducing a common narrative for the core as a distinctive feature of Marquette University designed to form students 1) as learners and 2) as persons. First, drawing on educational research indicating that the students who learn the most in college are those
who have a unifying question or set of questions, the Marquette Seminar would help each student develop his or her own unifying question(s). Highlighting Marquette’s heritage, the process of developing these questions could be based on the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm—asking students to reflect on their own context and experience—in dialogue with the university’s Four Pillars: faith, service, leadership, and excellence. Ideally, the context of the Milwaukee community—both its challenges and its resources—would enter into the conversation, so that students can consider how their questions might have real world impacts. Second, the Marquette Seminar would further connect this process of learning to the University’s Jesuit mission by situating the core within a larger context, potentially including: a) the core learning outcomes, b) the Preamble to the Core of Common Studies, c) the university’s Mission Statement, d) the university’s Guiding Values, e) the global project of Jesuit (and Catholic) higher education, and/or f) the Ratio Studiorum.

Building on the Marquette Seminar, the remaining core courses (excluding the final Senior Seminar) would introduce students to diverse methods of inquiry from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. These courses would be clustered around four or five “methods of inquiry,” and each student would take courses in all of the methods. These core courses would be horizontally integrated by a common emphasis on methodology—the process of inquiry—and a common point of reference for each student—the unifying question(s) she or he developed during the Marquette Seminar. The exact nature of these courses and their distribution can still be determined, but ideally they would be influenced by the historical priorities of the Jesuit liberal arts tradition and designed to give students a broad understanding of inquiry. Thus, our workgroup considered a set of
methods that would include A) Quantitative Inquiry (incorporating mathematics and data driven inquiries in the natural and social sciences), B) Qualitative or Narrative Inquiry (incorporating literature, history, and qualitative research in the social sciences), C) Expressive Inquiry (incorporating fine arts, rhetoric\(^1\) and writing, and potentially foreign languages), and D) Reflective Inquiry (incorporating theology and philosophy). We also discussed a possible fifth method either as a means to split philosophy and theology into distinct methods of inquiry or as a means of introducing ethical analysis as its own method of “Enacted Inquiry.”

The core would culminate during a student’s final semester with a Senior Seminar. The Senior Seminar would reintroduce vertical integration, asking students to reexamine their unifying questions from the Marquette Seminar in light of the different methods of inquiry studied during the core. In addition, this seminar would emphasize the Jesuit tradition of holistic education by requiring students to incorporate their major course of study as well in order to generate concrete plans for how their personal and professional formation at Marquette will be embodied in a commitment to social justice after graduation.

*Content and Delivery*

The dual integration core could be modeled on the existing requirements of 12 courses. The seminars would constitute two courses and the methods of inquiry would constitute the remaining ten. Those ten courses would be divided into four or five methods of inquiry (all of which would be required competencies), but the final divisions

\(^{1}\) The breadth and impact of the rhetoric component of the current core (ENGL 1001, ENGL 1002, COMM 1100) suggest that these courses might serve well as interdisciplinary seminars to engage students in philosophy, ethics, and critical self-reflection. Although we have categorized rhetoric as Expressive Inquiry, it might be conceptualized as bridging across multiple methods of inquiry. Because of this, rhetoric courses would be best to sequence during the first year, so as to coincide with the Marquette Seminar.
remain to be determined at a later stage in the revision process. The division of the course among the various methods of inquiry would, however, impact sequencing. At the very least, there will be sequencing in the seminars: the Marquette Seminar during the first semester and the Senior Seminar during the last semester, after all other core classes have been completed. In addition, our workgroup saw value in at least some sequencing within the methods of inquiry by requiring a common initial course (e.g., the equivalent of the current core’s requirement that all students take ENGL 1001, PHIL 1001, PHIL 2310, and THEO 1001) for one or all of the methods. Even with this model, there would be flexibility, since the subsequent course(s) in each method could be elective.

The specific learning outcomes for the core would logically follow from the dual integration structure of this model. Consequently, students would need to 1) identify a unifying question with reference to Ignatian pedagogical principles; 2) distinguish different methods of inquiry; 3) articulate the strengths and limitations of each method of inquiry; and 4) apply different methods of inquiry to address a unifying question. Additional learning outcomes, if desired, could be designated for each method of inquiry. In this way, the core could incorporate a number of the learning outcomes identified in campus survey #2. Specifically, three of the top ten speak directly to the overall learning objectives of this model: “Purposefully connect and integrate knowledge and skills from across disciplines to solve problems in socially responsible ways” (no. 4), “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” (no. 7), and “Ask questions rooted in curiosity and identify answers based on systematic process of discovery” (no. 8). If the methods were to have their own learning
outcomes, some of the other highly voted learning outcomes could be incorporated in this fashion. Thus, “Communicate effectively in writing, speaking, and artistic expression” (no. 1) could be the common learning outcome for the expressive method of inquiry.

Feasibility

In terms of implementation, the dual integration model has both strengths and weaknesses. Beyond one common course at the start and one common course at the end, the model can preserve integration with maximum flexibility in the middle, meeting the various needs of Marquette’s undergraduate colleges. In addition, since the methods of inquiry are united by an emphasis on methodology and an incorporation of students’ unifying questions, the majority of the core’s courses could come from faculty teaching within their disciplinary expertise. Of course, these courses would need to be specifically designed for the core and its learning outcomes if a truly common experience is to be realized.

The major challenge would be staffing the core’s two seminars. Ideally, the Marquette Seminar and the Senior Seminar would operate as core courses, bringing students from a variety of disciplines together at the beginning and end of the core. Given the challenges associated with this, our workgroup envisioned some flexibility. While we still believe the Marquette Seminar should be a common course with one (mostly) common syllabus, we can imagine the Senior Seminar as a) an interdisciplinary seminar across the university, b) an interdisciplinary seminar within each college, or c) a discipline-based seminar operated by each department for its graduating majors, depending on logistical requirements.
Visual Representation of the Model