Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning
CONTENTS

Vice President for Policy and Public Engagement
Debra Humphreys

Editor
Shelley Johnson Carey

Associate Editor
Wilson Peden

Design & Production
Darbi Bossman

Cover Illustration
David Cutler Studios

Editorial Advisory Board
James A. Anderson
Fayetteville State University

Randy Bass
Georgetown University

David A. Berry
Community College Humanities Association

Norman Coombs
Rochester Institute of Technology

Peter Ewell
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

Ann S. Ferren
Association of American Colleges and Universities

Mildred Garcia
California State University–Fullerton

Richard Guarasci
Wagner College

Elise B. Jorgens
College of Charleston

Adrianna J. Kezar
University of Southern California

Ann Leffler
University of Maine

Donna Maeda
Occidental College

David E. Maxwell
Drake University

Catherine Hurt Middlecamp
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Chandra Talpade Mohanty
Syracuse University

John P. Nichols
Saint Joseph’s College

G. Roger Sell
Missouri State University

Joan Straumanis
Association of American Colleges and Universities

Beverly Daniel Tatum
Spelman College

Peer Review
Emerging Trends and Key Debates in Undergraduate Education

VOL. 16, NO. 4/VOL. 17, NO. 1 | FALL 2014/WINTER 2015

Published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities ©2015
1818 R Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009
202.387.3760 • www.aacu.org
ISSN: 1541-1389

FALL 2014/WINTER 2015
From the Editor ...................................................... 3

ANALYSIS
Interrogating Integrative Learning
Ann S. Ferren, AAC&U; Chad Anderson, Georgetown University; and Kevin Howland, NAFA: Association of International Educators .................. 4

PRACTICE
Our Beloved Journey: Using Storytelling to Foster Faculty Community
Karen Brakke, Michelle S. Hite, Azaria Mbughuni, Opal Moore, Bruce H. Wade, and Mona Taylor Phillips; all of Spelman College .................. 7

Opening the Doors for Faculty Collaboration: The Case of the Allegheny Gateway
Eric Boynton, Lee Coates, and Laura Reeck; all of Allegheny College .......... 10

Integrative Learning in the First-Year Program
Patricia Tooker, Nick Richardson, Stephen Preskill, and John Esser; all of Wagner College .......... 12

Creating a Culture Conducive to Integrative Learning
Louis E. Newman, Scott Carpenter, Nathan Grawe, and Susan Jaret-McKinstry; all of Carleton College ................. 14

Creating “Connections 3.0”
Linda Eisenmann, Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus, Lisa Gavigan, and Kathleen Morgan; all of Wheaton College .................. 16

Facilitating Campus Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning
Nancy Budwig, Sarah Michaels, and Lisa Kasmer; all of Clark University .......... 19

Integrative Learning Pathways at Bard College: Connecting Core Experiences
Susan Merriam, Eric Trudel, Simeen Sattar, Maria Sachiko Cecire, and Michelle Murray; all of Bard College ................. 23

Making the Lynk at Mount Holyoke: Institutionalizing Integrative Learning
Eleanor Townsley, Becky Wai-Ling Packard, and Eva Paus; all of Mount Holyoke College .......... 26

RESEARCH
Collaborative, Faculty-Led Efforts for Sustainable Change
Ann S. Ferren and Rebecca Dolinsky, both of AAC&U; and Heather McCambly, Office of Community College Research and Leadership ............... 30

AAC&U Work on Integrative Learning ..................... 36

REALITY CHECK
Negotiating Different Perspectives
Beau Breslin, Michael Arnush, and Peter von Allmen; all of Skidmore College .......... 38

Annual subscription rates are $35 for individuals and $45 for libraries. Single issues are $8/$10; bulk discounts are available. For additional information or to place an order, visit us online or call 800.297.3775.

www.aacu.org/peerreview

Peer Review (ISSN:1541-1389) is published quarterly by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009-1604. Annual rates are $35 for individual subscriber and $45 for libraries. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2014. All rights reserved. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Peer Review, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009-1604.
Today, liberal arts colleges are setting the pace for creative reinvention by connecting the liberal arts and sciences to the world’s most important challenges.

Carol Geary Schneider

Coherent curricular pathways rich with integrative liberal learning are key to developing the skills and knowledge students need for life and work in the twenty-first century. From 2012–2014, with grant support from the Teagle Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, AAC&U has worked with fourteen liberal arts colleges in the Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning (FLILL) project to advance comprehensive approaches to integrative liberal learning. This project explored how to improve the coherence and integration of learning for all students. Participating teams from Allegheny College, Babson College, Bard College, Carleton College, Clark University, Colgate University, The College of Wooster, Mount Holyoke College, St. Olaf College, Skidmore College, Spelman College, Wagner College, Wellesley College, and Wheaton College worked with AAC&U Senior Fellow Ann Ferren and Vice President for Integrative Liberal Learning and the Global Commons David Paris to establish principles and practices for effective integrative learning, to conceptualize best practices for fostering faculty leadership, and to implement and sustain integrative learning campus wide and in both general education and majors.

At the recent AAC&U Annual Meeting, Ann Ferren moderated a session on how integrative liberal learning programs strengthen the work of liberal arts colleges and higher education. Reflecting on her work with the FLILL campus teams, she noted that when she initially met with teams, “Everyone understood the first three LEAP Essential Learning Outcome categories (knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, intellectual and practical skills, and personal and social responsibility), but when it got to the integrative and applied learning outcome, things became a little less clear.” After multiple meetings and discussions on this topic, here are some of her key takeaways:

1. Integrative learning is not a common term for faculty. Faculty more often use “interdisciplinary,” “connected,” “synthesis,” “application.” Only after considerable time working together did “integrative” become part of everyday language.
2. It is far easier to describe structures or forms for integrative learning—such as writing across the curriculum, first-year seminars, interdisciplinary team-taught seminars, and internships—than it is to write and assess clear learning outcomes. Just having a learning community does not guarantee that students share perspectives or learn to use a variety of methods in analyzing an issue.
3. Integrative learning is a developmental process and requires repeated practice at increasingly more challenging tasks to solve complex problems.
4. Integrative learning is a creative process and thus highly personalized. It is only in the reflection on and articulation of the story of one’s intellectual and personal growth that one truly gains the integration of formal learning with informal experiences and connects professional and personal goals.
5. If we are to provide the tools and inspiration for students to develop the capacities required for an increasingly complex world, the work we encourage them to do must be open ended, challenging, and problem based. The inquiry process is often messy and requires patient faculty who are slower to answer questions and who reward student answers.
6. If faculty do not integrate and align their work, it is very unlikely that students will be able to do so on their own—thus faculty development, collaboration, and communication are essential. Faculty need to move from “my work” to “our work.”

This issue of Peer Review, also sponsored by the Teagle and Mellon foundations, features the perspectives of faculty and campus leaders at FLILL institutions. Project leaders share a variety of approaches to promoting and sustaining integrative liberal learning. In each campus example, authors share not only their experiences in extending integrative learning but also the important role faculty play in sustaining that work.

Collaborative faculty work is key to implementing successful campus integrative learning programs. In Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain, Mary Taylor Huber and Pat Hutchings reminded us ten years ago that “Campuses need to work together, share what they know about integrative learning, developing new ideas about assessment, and learning from each others’ designs. Local efforts can be reinvigorated through participation in a community of educators working toward similar goals, and that community, in turn, can contribute to building knowledge that can inform efforts to foster integrative learning at colleges and universities around the country and around the world.”

SHELLEY JOHNSON CAREY

FROM THE EDITOR
Interrogating Integrative Learning

- Ann S. Ferren, senior fellow, AAC&U
- Chad Anderson, project manager, Designing the Futures Initiative, Georgetown University; former program associate, AAC&U
- Kevin Hovland, senior director, academic programs, NAFSA: Association of International Educators; former director of global learning and curricular change, AAC&U

In light of economic and political pressures—cited by practically every media source covering higher education—the nation is deeply engaged in a common conversation about the goals of an undergraduate education and what it takes to achieve them. A particularly challenging task for many institutions of higher education is clarifying for all stakeholders that in order to get the most out of an undergraduate education, students need to connect, reflect on, and apply learning so that “the whole becomes more than the sum of the parts.” This task of integrating learning is especially challenging for the many students who complete their education at more than one campus and over the course of more than four years, and who may not have structured opportunities to mentally connect their myriad experiences and reflect on the whole. Many faculty recognize that just counting credits and leaving it to students to make connections on their own does not lead to high-quality education. Even small residential campuses—often known for transformative educational experiences—recognize that their students can benefit from more intentional curricula rich with integrative and applied learning.

With funding from the Teagle Foundation, AAC&U launched a multiyear project with nine liberal arts colleges to explore both the various forms of integrative learning and the leadership strategies faculty use to advance and sustain this curricular and pedagogical work. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, five additional campuses joined the project at the midpoint. This issue of Peer Review chronicles some of these teams’ work and offers insights about the central role of faculty in galvanizing the necessary experiences that cross disciplines, units, and campus boundaries to promote integrative learning.

At the outset of the project, integrative learning was broadly described as a type of learning that cultivates essential student capacities, skills, and values; engages students with significant questions through multidisciplinary lenses and methodologies; fosters strong connections between academic learning and community-based and cocurricular learning; strengthens the connections between educational outcomes and career expectations; and uses assessment tools that provide evidence of applied integrative learning. Over the course of the project, however, our lively conversations revealed that integration is more complex than just countering disconnects between general education and the major, between academic affairs and student affairs, or between theory and practice. The student experience, more than curricular structures, came to frame our inquiry, expectations, and questions. What problem-centered experiences challenge students’ intellectual and personal capacities without overwhelming them so that they become resilient, adaptable, creative, and confident about their futures? What types of interactions with faculty, advisors, or professional staff provide students with guidance but do not usurp agency? Are our practices of integrative liberal learning inclusive and supportive for all students? While this group of short case studies emphasizes change processes and faculty roles, their major theme is student success.

INVENTORIES OF CURRICULAR PRACTICES

The Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning (FLILL) project began with participants conducting a campus inventory of the integrative learning practices at their institution. Each campus had several exciting examples of integrative learning to share but soon realized that (1) many of the practices had grown up organically and relied on the interest of a few faculty, (2) in many cases not all students participated, and (3) to a large extent, standard quality assurance processes such as assessment, program review, and accreditation had limited impact in evaluating and/or strengthening the integrative learning experiences.
Strategic planning and faculty interest were noted as the most important impetuses for creating courses with a multi-disciplinary lens or strengthening the connection between classroom and community. However, as participants reviewed where integrative learning experiences were anchored, they noticed that most of the integrative learning was front-loaded into first-year seminars and general education requirements before it tailed off in subsequent years with faculty being less explicit about integrative outcomes in either the major or in capstone work. As a result, several projects addressed the importance of understanding integrative learning as foundational. The Wagner College case study highlights its effort to provide additional follow-up to their strong First-Year Experience, thus filling a gap in what is a carefully constructed, longstanding four-year program. Spelman College joined the project midway, just as the college was preparing to implement a four-year developmental curriculum called My Integrative Learning Experience (MILE); Spelman’s case illustrates the importance of preparing all faculty in order to help them empower the whole student.

Even though the project teams identified missed opportunities, the inventories were also reassuring because they revealed many positive, previously established curricular elements that fostered integrative learning and only needed strengthening or connecting rather than requiring an entirely new initiative. The Wheaton College case study describes the college’s work to refresh its signature interdisciplinary program, Connections, by providing students with additional structured opportunities for applied work and experiential learning to cultivate their capacities for analyzing and acting in a complex world. The Bard College team members describe their intention to connect five powerful core experiences, in which all students and all faculty already participate, through a cumulative portfolio that will strengthen reflection on academic and personal growth. Of particular note is the value placed on faculty guidance so that students are more aware of their own goals and progress and consequently take greater responsibility for their education.

As the FLILL project progressed, our discussions moved from a focus on the forms and process of integrative learning to an exploration of integrative outcomes. What began as an effort to create more coherent curricular designs and assignments that emphasize interdisciplinary work and progressively challenging opportunities to practice skills in diverse settings, for example, was enhanced by a growing appreciation of education as a creative experience for each student. These experiences allowed students to draw upon previous learning to address complex problems and develop new insights. Any formulaic list of structures, outcomes, assignments, and pedagogies intended for promoting integrative learning cannot fully capture the spirit of inquiry, discovery, and personal connections that are necessary for deep and meaningful learning.

COLLABORATIVE FACULTY LEADERSHIP

In addition to developing a better understanding of the forms and approaches to integrative learning, the FLILL project focused on how this work is initiated and nurtured. Faculty leadership is key to curricular change processes, and we assumed that small campuses had an easier time of engaging their faculty in conversations that would connect their work. Despite surface similarities among the participating institutions, context, campus culture, and timing emerged as critical variables. In some instances, new administrative leadership prompted intensive rethinking of the undergraduate experience as part of a new strategic plan, whereas for others, the stability of the administration and curriculum called for a strategy to overcome inertia. The Mount Holyoke College curriculum-to-career case study describes a well-developed strategic process for engaging all stakeholders in the future of the institution and its students. Thoughtful braiding together of multiple conversations created momentum to institutionalize integrative learning and rebrand its liberal arts curriculum.

For some campuses, a long history of faculty learning together was already in place to support a new conversation, whereas for others creating new formal and informal learning spaces would be necessary for their projects. Clark University and
Allegeny College represent two different approaches and contexts for making visible the time and place for faculty learning. Indeed, a careful reading of all of the cases reveals important lessons about the role of administrators, how faculty take ownership of projects, and the importance of a supportive faculty community. Many of the “lessons learned” can provide guidance to all types of campuses, especially the recognition that faculty cannot do this work alone. The Reality Check by Skidmore College participants highlights several strategies to establish common ground so that administrators and faculty—who by definition operate with different perspectives—can work together.

Although faculty typically claim sole ownership of the curriculum, the initial campus inventories also pointed to important roles for professional staff in connecting classrooms to cocurricular requirements, community projects, and work experiences—all opportunities for integrative learning. As campus teams shared their work over the course of this project, the traditional definitions of “curriculum” and “faculty” changed significantly. Almost every article in this issue suggests that an inclusive community of faculty, staff, and administrators modeling integrative work is an essential foundation for students’ integrative learning. Equally important, participants concluded that not only do students need more experience with synthesizing knowledge, addressing complex problems, reconciling contradictory points of view, and engaging in personal reflection, but, also, so do those who educate and support them. Yet, as noted in the Carleton College case study, learning together, sharing expertise, questioning assumptions, and constructing creative approaches takes time, trust, and risk taking. While there are no shortcuts, both the Spelman and Clark cases demonstrate how shared texts and tools can facilitate collaborative faculty work.

**APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING FACULTY LEADERSHIP**

This project revealed some of the challenges in both extending integrative learning as well as developing and sustaining faculty leadership. Whereas hundreds of campuses have adopted some version of the AAC&U LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes—knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility, and integrative and applied learning—somehow, integrative learning often lacks the specific curricular frameworks, centers, or leadership needed to make it evident on campuses.

In addition, there are some invisible barriers that do not exist for implementing the other outcomes. First, despite having been identified as institutions where integrative learning was taking place, participants in this project realized that the term at best had multiple meanings on their campus and at worst had no meaning at all. Faculty were more comfortable with terms such as interdisciplinary, connected, and experiential. Several of the cases demonstrate the importance of clear communication and common language. Second, it was not clear who “owns” integrative learning, and participants often questioned whether they had the authority to cross boundaries of disciplines and units. And yet boundary-crossing is essential for extending integrative learning beyond a few isolated initiatives. Ultimately, the faculty in the project saw themselves not as leaders but as facilitators or co-learners in working with their colleagues, and consequently they were able to promote collaboration outside of traditional hierarchical and department-bound relationships.

When describing their collaborative approach, several of the cases reveal the value of diverse membership in work groups. Broad participation, however, calls for skilled leadership or facilitation to encourage careful listening, negotiate differences of opinion, and support relationship building in order to accomplish designated tasks. The case studies illustrate how essential personal relationships are for introducing new ideas and creating safe spaces for faculty learning in addition to the more formal professional development opportunities designed to build faculty capacities. Furthermore, as the participating teams move forward with their respective projects, they understand the need for their institution and their colleagues to adapt—including by developing clearer communication strategies and more innovative faculty leadership—because the challenge of sustaining the work is just as great as getting it started.

Ultimately, we learned that providing more opportunities for more students to understand their education as a whole does not mean campuses have to start from scratch. Institutions that are built on the enduring premise that liberal education prepares students for active and meaningful citizenship, careers, and lifelong learning often have strong foundations of integrative learning already established. What is crucial, however, is what administrators, faculty, and staff do with what they have, and how they see themselves in relation to the students they serve. One key lesson is that faculty should model integrative learning for students in order to define it and sustain it across the institution. Developing faculty’s capacity for leadership in integrative learning, then, is not just about working with other faculty for institutional change, but also demonstrating for students what this form of leadership looks like: adaptive, collaborative, inquisitive, reflective, and boundary-crossing. The process of implementing integrative learning on a campus becomes a teaching tool, a means of modeling for students how to engage thoughtfully and actively in their communities toward a common purpose.
Our Beloved Journey: Using Storytelling to Foster Faculty Community

Karen Brakke, associate professor of psychology, Spelman College
Michelle S. Hite, assistant professor of English, Spelman College
Azaria Mbughuni, assistant professor of history, Spelman College
Opal Moore, associate professor of English and director of the honors program, Spelman College
Bruce H. Wade, professor of sociology, Spelman College
Mona Taylor Phillips, professor of sociology, former director of the Teaching Resource and Research Center, and coordinator of the Ida B. Wells-Barnett Collaborative, Spelman College

“After situating herself on a huge flat-sided rock, Baby Suggs bowed her head and prayed silently. The company watched from the tree. They knew she was ready when she put her stick down. Then she shouted, ‘Let the children come!’ and they ran from the trees toward her.

‘Let your mothers hear you laugh,’ she told them, and the woods rang. The adults looked on and could not help smiling. Then, ‘Let the grown men come,’ she shouted. They stepped out one by one from among the ringing trees.

‘Let your wives and your children see you dance,’ she told them, and groundlife shuddered under their feet.

Finally she called the women to her. ‘Cry,’ she told them. ‘For the living and the dead. Just cry.’ And without covering their eyes the women let loose. It started that way: laughing children, dancing men, crying women and then it got mixed up. Women stopped crying and danced; men sat down and cried; children danced, women laughed, children cried until, exhausted and riven, all and each lay about the Clearing damp and gasping for breath.”

—From Toni Morrison’s Beloved

In response to changing higher education landscapes, as well as our perceived need to develop a signature program, members of the Spelman College faculty have been undergoing an extensive re-imagining of our general education and major curricula as well as our approaches to teaching. Our emphasis has been on experiences that promote integrative learning and the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Broadly conceived, we call our core initiative the Spelman MILE (My Integrated Learning Experience).

The Spelman College MILE was developed to address the difficulties that students encounter in knowledge transference between disciplinary contexts. The MILE includes initiatives designed to strengthen the extended orientation for first-year and sophomore students; develop interdisciplinary and “Free-Thinking Woman” seminars; promote quantitative literacy, service learning, and writing across the curriculum; and implement research-based capstone experiences within each major. It also implements the electronic portfolio (SpEl.Folio) assessment tool that permits each student to assemble artifacts and reflections from courses over time, thereby creating a “story” of her academic and personal progress throughout her years of college study. Ideally, the electronic portfolios provide students with improved understanding of their own learning processes and a mechanism for establishing greater clarity about how their skills and abilities fit with their goals.

The Spelman MILE emphasizes integrated learning as a key component to improving student learning outcomes and assessments over the next decades. However, in order to bring more students to a place characterized by integrative and critical thought, some of the faculty realized that we would need to invite teaching scholars to come along the same path. It was necessary to create structures that would allow faculty to engage in conversations that were not limited to teaching tasks, academic production, and advancement in our discrete disciplines.
We needed to rediscover what had originally brought us into the academy—curiosity, surprise, and connection. Below, we share our experiences of using storytelling as means to build an intellectual commons among our faculty, which in turn supports integrative learning in our students.

**STEWARDSHIP AND LEADERSHIP**

In 2008, Spelman was awarded a Mellon Foundation grant that emphasized interdisciplinarity, integrative learning, and the incorporation of quantitative reasoning throughout the core curriculum and across disciplines. One outgrowth of this grant was the establishment of the Teaching Resource and Research Center (TRRC) as a site of interdisciplinary faculty development and activity. The TRRC offered the programmatic and physical space to intellectually engage faculty across disciplines. It also provided a steward for our efforts. Instead of relying on charismatic leadership with its top-down structure as a driving force toward the goal of commons-building, Ella Baker’s philosophy of “group-centered leaders” best characterizes the TRRC director’s approach (Carson 1981, 30). Group-centered leadership, in our case, involved marshalling small groups of faculty with common interests, who then organized their own structures and purposes through participatory democracy with little hierarchy (Carson 1981, 30).

A summer workshop steering committee formed, which included faculty members from English, sociology, psychology, and art. This steering committee engaged in wide-ranging discussions on interdisciplinarity and ways to engage faculty in interdisciplinary approaches to integrative learning in their teaching methods. These free-wheeling meetings were the first steps in creating our intellectual commons. Our first strategic decision was to use storytelling as a common pedagogy. The members realized that storytelling could ground our affiliation and offer a common framework for advancing the realization of integrative learning at Spelman College. We understood that integrative learning is heavily dependent on the use of storytelling to create informative narratives that weave personal, community, and academic frames of meaning. As such, this use of story is adaptable to any discipline and essential to addressing far-reaching questions. Given its suppleness, story operates through multiple languages of narration—text, numbers, maps, the arts, and digital rhetoric. Importantly, then, story allows us to integrate reflection, technology, collaboration, and interdisciplinarity in ways that are both focused and open-ended.

Since 2011, storytelling has provided an axis for developing summer workshops designed to build an intellectual commons among our faculty by engaging colleagues from diverse disciplines in cross-disciplinary conversations and interdisciplinary projects. We theorized that these workshops would facilitate new collaborations and raise questions that would lead to the adoption of integrative practices. We envisioned the intellectual commons as an artifice that, like a good story, would engender its own conversations, excitements, and revelations. As a model articulation of an intellectual commons, these workshops offered occasions for exchanges of ideas that would suggest new pedagogies. As an extension of their involvement, we anticipated that workshop participants would move logically toward interdisciplinary approaches by modifying existing courses, developing new courses, and restructuring student-learning outcomes.

The 2012 and 2013 workshops applied a multi-disciplinary approach to the re-reading of Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved*, bringing together modes of inquiry from several disciplines. Set during the 1870s, *Beloved* imagines the psychic, physical, and spiritual journeys taken by a formerly enslaved community. The novel’s investment in the lives of those seeking renewal through different ways of knowing and being provided a context for examining community formation among a diverse constituency, approaches to leadership in the character of Baby Suggs, and surprisingly robust language for communicating the nature and process of such work.

**THE CLEARING AND THE COMMONS**

In reviewing the *Beloved* workshops, the TRRC steering committee decided that the ‘Clearing’ (described as an intellectual and experiential space in *Beloved*) would serve as a metaphor for an intellectual commons on our campus. Morrison’s Clearing is a place that stands apart from other spaces. It is a space reserved for communion with members of the community, with oneself, or with the intangible. It is a space of self-affirmation, discovery, and challenge. We realized that faculty needed to create such a space, and needed (like *Beloved’s* Baby Suggs) to enact pedagogy that could translate and engage students in the possibilities of their own intellectual space (the Spelman MILE). Over the years faculty had been focused on the business of teaching and producing work. What we missed were those conversations with our colleagues that made the “groundlife shudder under [our] feet” through shared intellectual exchange (Morrison 1987). We realized that in order to bring more students to a place characterized by integrative and critical thought, faculty must travel the same path and join one another in our Clearing.

Summer workshops gave participating faculty undistracted time and space; they brought unusual conversation partners into a common space; they disrupted the faulty premise that we were engaged in tasks designed to teach students who need “fixing.” The workshops re-situated the liberal arts tradition in the foreground of our work and muted the significance of disciplinary boundaries. The organic, creative sharing of ideas and exchanges of teaching practices cleared a space for free-flowing ideas, collegiality, and mutual respect for our different “eyes.”

The inaugural Digital Storytelling Workshop in summer 2011 presented technol-
ologies as story modes. We discussed the power of story to transmit academic content as well as the use of one’s experiences in intellectual sharing with students, and the relevance of faculty members’ research and professional identities. Faculty members from several disciplines worked to capture the “stories” or narratives within their own lives and to look for the significance of those narratives in their teaching practice. In doing so, participants created and shared autobiographies using digital media (in our case, Microsoft Photo Story). Later, many participants reported gaining insights from this workshop that benefited their teaching and scholarly practice.

**FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT**

The workshops, mentioned earlier, proposed a common question focused around Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987) as an anchor text. The use of an anchor text was not meant to be a weight or a restriction, but an intersection—a proposed meeting at the crossroad of disciplines. In our *Beloved* workshop series, faculty participants brought their specific disciplinary perspectives and pedagogies to the reading of Morrison’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. This novel was selected as an anchor text given the many themes it raises in relation to biography, history, migration, literary and spatial analysis, and quantitative reasoning.

One of the benefits of using *Beloved* as described above is that it presented an opportunity for interdisciplinary engagement with the numerous ways we confront catastrophe and change as humans, as citizens, as victims, as perpetrators, and as scholars. *Beloved* as anchor text suggested the broad theme of “Documenting Moments of Crisis and Change” as the center of the workshops’ conversations. Pedagogically speaking, the idea of crisis and change informed our ultimate interest in helping students understand processes of social change in relationship to narratives within the scope of the African Diaspora and the United States. We explored the significance of letters and numbers in *Beloved* as well as other relevant stories. We incorporated multiple digital visual technologies and archival sources into our approaches to story. We shared our own intellectual journeys, told through these multiple languages. This series of workshops resulted in several faculty members discovering that introducing *Beloved* as a text, or other uses of story, into their syllabi exposed opportunities for their students to deepen their own practice in the social and natural sciences, the arts, and humanities, and also fostered engagement across disciplines and the college’s divisional structure.

Then, as we worked for two years on our project, we discovered that *Beloved* offered alternative ways for us to name and contemplate the project itself. The characteristics that Morrison assigns Baby Suggs suggest a model of leadership that resists dictatorial mandates, rejects a demand for organization that forecloses on the possibility for flux and fluidity to occur within communion, and refuses to belittle the needs or devalue the contributions of those gathered. Through a metaphorical consideration of Baby Suggs’s leadership, we recognized the enactments of our faculty workshops. We found communion with the invitation to engage one another through an array of expressions. Beyond learning new pedagogies, we learned to make connections across disciplines and within ourselves; we learned that commons-building is most effective when it is organic, when the focus is on faculty community rather than ‘development,’ when ideas, creativity, and expertise are valued, and when faculty embrace a generative model of intellectual stewardship.

**A CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

Our project has affirmed the importance of maintaining a rich and engaged faculty culture (through interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary engagements) as requisite to integrative teaching–learning strategies and of fostering a culture of curiosity among students. Journeying beyond disciplinary boundaries has enhanced faculty relationships and respect for work being done within the disciplines, and for diverse methods. Our modeling of intellectual exchange contributes in important ways to the expression of faculty leadership as shared commitment to student learning, as well as the emergent properties of an organic, self-organizing system primed for explosive creativity.

Even as we join with other faculty in our Clearing, those gathered must work seamlessly with campus administrators and technology units that comprehend the value of interdisciplinary work and the subtle yet meaningful changes that result. Marshalling resources—both financial and human—that support gathering in these ‘clearings’ is an important part of this effort. Faculty incentives and workshop funding are critical to sustainability, of course, and are primarily funded through grants such as those sponsored by the Mellon Foundation. However, equally important is a shared vision of community that will withstand potential disruptions such as changes in administrative leadership or gaps in grant funding. Only with this vision shared by all stakeholders can efforts such as this thrive.

As we have taken this path, we have learned much about our community and the nuances of the language of leadership when building intellectual commons among our peers. We believe that faculty who model integrative learning influence how students embrace its spirit and practice. As we move forward through the proverbial Clearing, we are confident that we will continue to lift our voices together and do so in the spirit of inquiry that embraces its delight.

**REFERENCES**


Opening the Doors for Faculty Collaboration: The Case of the Allegheny Gateway

Eric Boynton, associate professor of philosophy and religious studies, Allegheny College
Lee Coates, associate professor of biology and neuroscience, Allegheny College
Laura Reeck, associate professor of French, Allegheny College

At the beginning of Allegheny College’s strategic planning process in 2010, President Jim Mullen asked the campus: “What do our students need to know and be able to do to thrive in the twenty-first-century world they will encounter upon graduation from Allegheny?” Motivated by this question for the past four years, members of the Allegheny College community have been engaged in a strategic planning process anticipating the college’s bicentennial in 2015 and the strategic plan’s culmination in 2020. We have committed to a strategic learning goal that seeks to provide Allegheny students with the knowledge, competencies, and practical skills to think and act as citizens of a diverse, complex, and interconnected world. In order to support them as they meet that goal, the college has launched the Allegheny Gateway—a new campus space that will become “a portal to communities, cultures, and careers.”

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATIVE LEARNING
Located in the remodeled and well-trafficked first floor of Allegheny’s Pelletier Library and opening in January 2015, the Gateway will house the offices of civic learning, diversity learning, global learning, and career education in a single location. At its core, the Gateway will be a site of integrative thinking and cross-disciplinary communication, which will allow opportunities to emphasize and extend points of contact between faculty and staff, the curriculum and cocurriculum, and classroom theory and practice.

Civic Learning
The Gateway will enhance the visibility of our civic engagement initiatives and programs, improving communication and creating efficiencies. By weaving together curricular and cocurricular initiatives and offices—such as service-learning, community-based teaching and research, Project Pericles, the Center for Political Participation, and the Bonner Program—the Gateway will help students to increase their sense of responsibility to their community/ies as agents of change. Within the Gateway, students will identify the challenges, goals, and opportunities for participatory democracy, engage in active citizenship, and develop collaborative skills to effectively navigate complex community issues involving civic life and responsibility.

Diversity Learning
Providing an intentional and strategic integration of academic areas dealing with diversity (such as black studies, women’s studies, gender and sexuality studies, and community justice studies) and student affairs offices focused on multiculturalism and religious diversity, the Gateway will create opportunities for shared learning and teaching for faculty, staff, and students. Through course work, professional development, community building activities and civic engagement, we seek to critically interrogate the construction of difference and the implications for power and privilege. Our goal is to advance learning in general and create a community that is more aware and inclusive.

Global Learning
By internationalizing our campus through both curricular and cocurricular initiatives, programs such as internationally focused short courses, international internships, and short-term and long-term study away, the Gateway will provide opportunities that challenge students’ assumptions and expectations about the world.
We want students to develop the ability to examine critically and with sensitivity issues from multiple perspectives and to make connections between local and global contexts.

The Gateway builds upon the success of the Allegheny College Center for Experiential Learning (ACCEL), founded in 1999, which brought our experiential programs (pre-professional advising, career education, community service and service learning, and international education) together into one space. One of the obstacles that ACCEL historically has encountered is how best to involve faculty. ACCEL has come to represent the cocurricular domain, while faculty have remained focused on the curriculum. Indeed, in this context, some faculty members have expressed skepticism regarding the faculty’s contribution to the emerging Gateway, whose mission may well extend beyond their disciplinary training as well as a certain traditional understanding of academic rigor.

**Bold Educational Goals**

Allegheny today faces a challenge in cultivating a climate in which the curricular and cocurricular can be understood as mutually beneficial when properly integrated. For this reason, in a meaningful and unforced way, faculty must be brought into the Gateway’s initiatives and activities if it is to succeed and if Allegheny is to meet its bold educational goals. Two components, in particular, have been designed to encourage faculty to participate in the work of the Gateway: the Collaboratory and the Gateway Fellows programs. These two components will provide faculty the opportunity to participate in interdisciplinary, integrative, and collaborative multi-year projects and, in particular, to develop innovative ways to weave civic learning, diversity learning, and global learning into their teaching and research.

The Collaboratory is designed to involve faculty in the life of the Gateway and its integrative mission by serving as the facilitating institutional structure for innovative faculty teaching and research.

Selected projects will be integrative and interdisciplinary in nature so that fellows’ work will necessarily involve faculty, staff, students, and community partners. Fellows will model for the academic community the Gateway’s mission of engagement with complex social and global issues and support faculty development initiatives fostering their exploration and examination.

Ultimately, faculty leadership and collaboration in the Gateway will be essential in bridging what often has been seen as a divide between curricular and cocurricular learning on campus and in the community more generally. Undoubtedly, an important shift in perspective is afoot: through the work of the Gateway, faculty will begin to consider the student experience and collegial collaboration (with staff and faculty) before their own disciplinary training. Just as the Gateway will serve as a portal for students, faculty will be encouraged to travel beyond the boundaries of their disciplines and engage in new partnerships and pedagogies that promote integrative learning for both faculty and students.

**Through course work, professional development, community building activities and civic engagement, we seek to critically interrogate the construction of difference and the implications for power and privilege.**

Gateway, the Collaboratory will become the symbolic and physical space where problems are defined and where Gateway Fellows, students, faculty, community partners, and staff come together to begin to address complex issues. These projects will be linked to the curriculum and specifically with first-year seminars, junior seminars, senior projects, and faculty research programs to build problem-based pedagogy that is civic-minded, globally responsive, and sensitive to difference.

The Gateway Fellows program, the second initiative, supports ongoing and substantial teaching and research projects related to the integrative mission of the Gateway. Fellows receive a reduced teaching load (or the equivalent for a non-faculty fellow) for a two-year term to work on research or teaching in one or more of the three Gateway foci (civic learning, diversity learning, and global learning).

[216x83]substantial teaching and research projects [216x96]second initiative, supports ongoing and [216x122]and sensitive to difference. [216x135]that is civic-minded, globally responsive, [216x148]grams to build problem-based pedagogy [216x161]senior projects, and faculty research pro- [216x174]with first-year seminars, junior seminars, [216x187]be linked to the curriculum and specifically [216x200]will begin to consider the student experi- [216x213]will begin to consider the student experi- [216x226]an important shift in perspective is afoot: through the work of the Gateway, faculty will begin to consider the student experience and collegial collaboration (with staff and faculty) before their own disciplinary training. Just as the Gateway will serve as a portal for students, faculty will be encouraged to travel beyond the boundaries of their disciplines and engage in new partnerships and pedagogies that promote integrative learning for both faculty and students. •
Integrative Learning in the First-Year Program

- Patricia Tooker, dean for integrated learning, Wagner College
- Nick Richardson, associate professor, chemistry, Wagner College
- Stephen Preskill, professor of civic engagement and leadership, Wagner College
- John Esser, department chair of sociology, Wagner College

In 1998, Wagner College launched the Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts, which encompasses multiple successive learning communities (LC). The first-year and senior LCs feature an experiential learning component and a reflective tutorial. At the heart of the first-year experience is an interdisciplinary and themed set of three courses taught by two full-time faculty in different disciplines. A cohort of twenty-four to twenty-eight students take two content classes, each taught by one of the two faculty, and a reflective tutorial (RFT) where the focus is on writing, critical reflection, and experiential learning. This introduction to the processes of liberal learning aims to connect foundation skills, inquiry, and experience beyond Wagner.

ADDRESSING NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the success of this plan, three converging circumstances led to a strong desire to extend the best elements of the first-year program (FYP) into the second semester of the first year. These issues include a strong commitment to promoting the overall well-being of students and faculty. First, the literature indicates that a focus on supporting development of the whole person, including social and emotional well-being, is critical, both to maintain retention and to ensure that students graduate feeling confident and fulfilled. Secondly, engagement with the community has grown increasingly important since the formation of the Port Richmond Partnership in 2009. This partnership, with its four aligned and distinctive initiatives—health, immigration, education, and economic development—has resulted in a variety of collaborative projects that have deepened student learning and contributed significantly to community betterment. Lastly, a freeze in faculty hiring has reduced the number of full-time faculty who usually serve in the FYP, spurring interest in creating alternative opportunities for faculty to mentor incoming students in the areas of expository writing, close reading, critical thinking, and community engagement.

The Wagner Plan has remained successful and engaging over time because the Learning Community Committee meetings and annual retreats have been inclusive of all important personnel (faculty, campus life, academic advisement, and administrators) and have been spearheaded by strong connected leadership within the faculty and across the campus. Under the Wagner Plan, the idea has been constantly reinforced that faculty need to feel ownership of the program and be empowered to develop strategies for change. Thus, to ensure that both faculty and administrative staff were an integral part of the process to consider strengthening and extending the FYP, the faculty members in the FYP Review Committee conceived a Wagner Plan Summit.

WORKING TOGETHER TO EXTEND INTEGRATIVE LEARNING

The goal of the summit was to develop and implement a pilot program for the second semester and was open to all. Interested participants were asked to complete an application that included two questions: (1) What aspects of the FYP should be extended into the second semester? (2) Without considering logistical implications, what would you like the FYP to look like in the second semester?

The core leadership group consisted of ten faculty members, four administrators, and one representative from various campus life offices. Those chosen to participate in the summit shared a commitment to the FYP and the Wagner Plan and were also concerned that many of its goals could not be sustained without further expansion and enrichment.
Discussion led to these agreed-upon student learning outcomes:

- Reinforce skills of writing, information literacy, research;
- Reinforce social cohesion and connection;
- Explore spectrum of disciplines/relations to possible majors;
- Reinforce skills and knowledge of internationalization/diversity/interdisciplinary exposure;
- Develop the whole student (personal, professional, interpersonal and life skills);
- Articulate the value of a liberal arts education; and
- Enhance experiential learning.

Participants shared and discussed several proposals, and two proposals were selected for pilot testing in spring 2014. One approach was based on modifying two or three existing courses reserved for first-year students to include additional components, including programs from campus life offices, academic-cultural lectures, and structured writing assignments addressing critical thinking and research.

The second proposed approach built on the team-taught spring semester learning community by creating an integrative opportunity in the second year. Sophomore year students will take a one-unit practicum, supervised by campus life and civic engagement administrators, incorporating experiential learning and emphasizing theory and practice.

For both of these proposals, plans were developed to create a lab for all participating students, that will meet one hour per week, and will be instructed/facilitated by staff from the Center for Academic and Career Engagement (CACE). Summit participants identified a variety of topics students should address including professional/career development, diversity/intercultural competence, health and well-being, leadership, civic engagement, the arts, and the New York City experience.

These two approaches share the goal of deepening and extending the learning that had already occurred in the areas of reading, writing, critical thinking, research, and civic engagement in the FYP. In addition, this extension intentionally connects personal, social, and intellectual development by addressing topics about student well-being and healthier adjustment to Wagner’s academic culture and by providing students with strategies for applying classroom learning to real-world community problems.

COLLABORATIVE FACULTY AND CAMPUSS

A decade ago, faculty, administration, and staff created Wagner’s FYP through shared governance, and in the ensuing years they sustained it through a structure that brings stakeholders together regularly to plan and assess the program. The leadership structure within the Learning Communities has brought forth a general expectation of involvement with great potential for results. This natural leadership has grown accustomed to being productive and influential across the curriculum and campus.

More than ten years later we looked to reinvigorate the FYP through collaboration among a committed group of faculty and staff. We believe our recent redesign is working well because it grew out of integrative communication and collaborative strategies. Faculty at Wagner can and do promote change. As we think about liberal education for the future, the deeper integration of engagement with communities raises important questions about the knowledge, skills, and capacities needed by all to respond to pressing needs. An enriched Wagner Plan offers an opportunity to explore how educational innovation can integrate academic, cocurricular, and community learning.

AAC&U MEETINGS

SUMMER INSTITUTES

Institute on General Education and Assessment
June 2–6, 2015
University of Central Oklahoma

Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success
June 9–13, 2015
University of Wisconsin-Madison

PKAL Summer Leadership Institute for STEM Faculty
Institute I: July 14–July 19, 2015
Institute II: July 21–July 26, 2015
The Cagget Center, Adamstown, Maryland
Institute III: July 25–30, 2015
The Baca Campus of Colorado College

Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments
July 14–18, 2015
University of Delaware

NETWORK MEETINGS

Global Learning in College
October 8–10, 2015
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Crossing Boundaries—Transforming STEM Education
November 12–14, 2015
Seattle, Washington

www.aacu.org/meetings
Creating a Culture Conducive to Integrative Learning

Over the past decade, Carleton College has fostered several interdisciplinary, integrative curricular initiatives. This article will focus on three initiatives, past and present, and will provide recommendations to help faculty develop and sustain similar programs.

Visualizing the Liberal Arts (Viz), a three-year initiative that culminated in a national conference in 2012, aimed to foster the distinctive skills needed to create, interpret, and employ visual images, media, and models across the curriculum. Viz succeeded in integrating visual learning throughout the curriculum and influenced new initiatives.

QuIRK (Quantitative Inquiry, Reasoning, and Knowledge) aims to cultivate numeracy in students by fostering the use, analysis, and communication of quantitative evidence. QuIRK faculty have collaborated on the creation of learning goals and detailed rubrics for assessing quantitative literacy. Students are required to take three QRE (Quantitative Reasoning Encounter) courses in order to graduate. More than two hundred such courses are offered each year.

The Carleton Global Engagement Initiative (GEI) encourages awareness of global issues and facility in thinking across boundaries (both geographical and metaphorical). It integrates foreign language study, area studies, and off-campus study through interdisciplinary capstone projects, internships, and civic engagement opportunities in global contexts.

AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND INTERCONNECTED WORLD
Despite their external differences, these three initiatives sprang from similar motivations. Most fundamentally, our educational mission is to prepare students to understand and contribute to a world that is increasingly complex and interconnected. The range of skills they need to navigate that world includes competence in analyzing quantitative data and using that data to construct arguments; the ability to understand, create, and interpret visual representations of knowledge; and an appreciation for cultural diversity and comprehension of issues that transcend national borders.

But there have been pedagogical motivations, as well. The intellectual skills at the heart of a liberal arts education must be developed in, and then applied across, multiple contexts—in different courses, in a variety of disciplines, using a range of modalities. Just as students do not learn to become effective writers by taking a single “first-year comp” course, they will not learn to be numerically, visually, and culturally proficient unless these skills are modeled and reinforced throughout the curriculum. Students will not really appreciate the power of quantitative reasoning if they think it only matters in their math classes; so too, if they think visual learning is only for the artistically inclined and cross-cultural literacy only for those studying foreign languages. These exercises in integrative learning encourage students to reflect on how and why they should learn these skills, as well as how they might apply them in novel contexts.
A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG FACULTY AND STAFF

There are some factors specific to Carleton that have spurred this work and contributed to its success. Carleton has a robust and highly respected learning and teaching center (LTC). The LTC sponsors weekly lunch programs and occasional book groups at which faculty and staff gather to learn with and from one another. Faculty members involved in Viz, QuiRK, and GEI have all presented at LTC sessions, which served to inform colleagues of their work and promoted further involvement. In general, the LTC fosters a sense of community among the faculty and staff that encourages people to take an active interest in one another’s work and nourishes a sense of common purpose.

For many years Carleton’s extended December break has been a time when we have held multi-day faculty development workshops. This is the venue where much of the work associated with Viz, QuiRK, and GEI has been planned and where faculty and staff have become engaged. Faculty participation in these workshops is extremely high; well over half of all regular faculty members attend at least one workshop each December, and many attend two or more.

CREATING POWERFUL INTEGRATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Each of these initiatives has been successful—as measured by the assessment of student work, the diffusion of quantitative reasoning and visual learning throughout the curriculum, and the extent and depth of faculty engagement. Collectively they highlight certain aspects of the faculty culture that are both preconditions for and fruits of this integrative learning. Overall, Carleton faculty see themselves as responsible for providing a liberal arts education, not solely for teaching their specific disciplines. The late Shelby Boardman, professor of geology and former dean of the college, said he had the privilege of teaching the liberal arts in the context of geology. That perspective underlies the desire to create powerful integrative learning experiences for our students. It also reinforces three activities that we regard as essential to successful integrated learning.

Collaboration. Integrative learning depends on integrated teaching. Each of these initiatives began when colleagues across disciplines talked with one another about what and how they were teaching, to gain skills and then expect them on their own to integrate what they have learned in different places.

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

We are proud of these initiatives, but we are keenly aware that sustaining this work remains challenging. First, this sort of creative and integrative work is very time-intensive for both faculty and staff. Integrative initiatives do not simply remain in motion after they are launched; they must be nurtured over time.

Moreover, we need to remain nimble and responsive—to changing student needs, evolving educational goals, developing technologies, and personnel changes. Integrative learning projects are thus inherently unstable insofar as they depend upon particular configurations of people with particular interests and commitments and particular institutional structures.

Finally, assessing the educational outcomes for these integrative projects is especially difficult. No one metric would completely capture the combination of reflective, applied, cross-disciplinary, creative work that we identify with integrative liberal learning. How and where we measure the success of these efforts remains somewhat elusive.

Our experience has reinforced one overriding lesson: integrative learning is as much about pedagogy as about curriculum, as much about the culture of learning and collegiality as about specific programs. At Carleton, integrative learning thrives when faculty and staff working collaboratively and with strong administrative support see themselves as collectively responsible for the learning of their students in ways that transcend specific courses, departments, or programs. The distinctive practices of integrative learning are not self-sufficient or easily transferable from one institutional setting to another. They thrive only in a context where collaboration, risk taking, and modeling are actively fostered and rewarded.
Creating “Connections 3.0”

- Linda Eisenmann, provost, professor of education, and professor of history, Wheaton College
  - Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus, professor of religion; chair, department of religion; program coordinator, Jewish studies; Wheaton College
  - Lisa Gavigan, director, career services, Wheaton College
  - Kathleen Morgan, associate professor of psychology, Wheaton College

Participation in the Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning (FLILL) project both recognized Wheaton College’s past strengths in integrative learning and prompted us to deepen our approach. Currently, our faculty is revisiting our twelve-year-old Connections curriculum by adding the option of a three-point curricular/applied learning Connection that would include two courses from different disciplines and a connected integrative experience (i.e., internship, service learning, research, cocurricular activity). This idea has been dubbed “Connections 3.0,” following a much smaller change (“Connections 2.0”) in 2011.

We believe a revived and re-envisioned focus on integrative learning combined with applied learning suits Wheaton’s innovative curricular history while advancing the potential to inspire faculty, staff, and students. At the same time, Connections 3.0 has proceeded slowly while we build support from the ground up, changing an ongoing curricular structure rather than crafting a wholly new effort. As such, it offers an example of how to support faculty as they initiate and develop a new idea.

Origins of the Connections Curriculum

In 2002, dissatisfied with traditional curricula that failed to integrate general education with the major and electives, the Wheaton faculty crafted the Connections curriculum to help students explore how different disciplines create knowledge and use it to identify and approach problems. Situating itself across the curriculum (rather than simply in the first two years), Connections links introductory or advanced courses across any two of six academic areas: creative arts, humanities, history, math and computer science, natural science, and social sciences. Through Connections, students experience a more integrated curriculum, where elective and major courses connect to each other more intentionally.

Students must complete two sets of Connections before graduating, offered in two ways. The first, faculty-created Connections, organizes courses around a common theme. For example, the African Worlds Connection links Anthropology 225 (African Cultures in Transition) with several possibilities, including English 245 (African Literature) and/or Music 212 (World Music: Africa and the Americas) and/or History 143 (Africans on Africa) and/or Political Science 203 (African Politics).

The second type is the student-initiated Connection, created through a student’s proposal in concert with the professors of the two courses. Student-initiated Connections must be approved by a faculty curriculum committee. Although most students complete faculty-created Connections, we have discovered that inviting students to discover their own linked courses and write a proposal produces an intentional, reflective exercise that strengthens students’ understanding of the Connections philosophy and outcomes.

Current Issues

Over the last dozen years, the Connections curriculum has become a major focus of Wheaton’s identity, providing fertile ground for faculty conversations, organizing curricular thinking, distinguishing the institution to prospective students, and gaining attention from our peer institutions. Yet, as new challenges face liberal arts education, we wonder whether we are doing enough to prepare students...
for the world they will encounter, and whether Connections is as effective as we have hoped in supporting students’ integrative learning. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) demonstrate some strong results for students’ interdisciplinary critical thinking, but we would like to see those results outpace our peers to a greater extent, given the strong commitment to Connections.

Recently, students have begun to raise questions about Connections, suggesting that their peers’ understanding and appreciation of the program is less strong than faculty assumed. In 2012–13, the student members of our Educational Policy Committee brought results of their brief survey of their classmates’ understanding of Connections and its goals. Their data suggested that first-year students did not evince deep understanding of the value of Connections, tending to view it simply as a requirement. Upper-division students, too—who presumably had fulfilled one or both Connections—failed to articulate cross-disciplinary learning and application. These findings struck a chord with faculty who worry that Connections may have become stale, turning into “just a requirement” rather than an organizing principle for the way we want students to experience and analyze the world around them.

Concurrent with this reexamination is a growing interest in enhancing students’ opportunities for applied learning, whether as internships, practica, or individualized experiences. Applied learning has a long history at Wheaton. In the late 1990s, Wheaton created the “second transcript”—an official record, parallel to the curricular transcript, of students’ applied learning experiences. Officially called the Wheaton Work and Public Service Record, this document allowed students not only to chronicle their applied learning experiences, but also to engage in guided reflection on them. The second transcript was an excellent complement to classroom work, but after several years, it founded under the weight of administration, lack of commitment by some students, and failure of deep integration with classroom learning.

Although the college continues to value applied and integrative learning, the curricular aspect of students’ work has become increasingly distanced from the classroom experience. In fact, participation in the AAC&U project on integrative learning has revealed on our campus a frequent separation between the work of faculty and staff, even when they are both working on applied and integrative learning.

**CONNECTIONS 2.0**

The original Connections curriculum was created in 2002 and a small revision in 2011 produced Connections 2.0. Recognizing some dissatisfaction with Connections’ results, the provost initiated a call for proposals that would expand Connections with curricular or programmatic innovations that could prompt deeper integration. A few strong projects resulted. For instance, a new Peace and Social Justice minor brought the opportunity to apply classroom learning to an external social justice issue. A multidisciplinary center called the Wheaton Institute for Interdisciplinary Humanities helped students apply their classroom-based knowledge to professional fields, which provided deeper connections with experts. A cross-disciplinary “makerspace” provided technology playground where students (and faculty and staff) could apply their own problem-based learning skills. Yet, while these projects have added creative integrative elements to the campus, they have not deeply affected Connections as a whole.

**THE GENESIS OF CONNECTIONS 3.0**

Although a few faculty members took up the challenge of fortifying Connections 2.0, others sought additional ways to enhance the integrative power of Connections. In 2012, a senior faculty member partnered with career services on a workshop exploring various ways that academic departments were preparing students for life beyond the classroom. Their mutual goals were, first, to show how integrative learning was already happening across campus, even when it was not explicitly framed as such, and second, to help faculty learn from each other. The sharing of ideas at that workshop sparked discussions about integration throughout the next year, coinciding with participation in the FLILL project.

The Wheaton FLILL team decided to build on the enthusiasm generated by the workshop, even as we observed several disconnected ideas about integrative learning being discussed around campus. For instance, we saw growing attention to how career services can help students enhance their liberal arts educations. This observation led to an idea for Faculty Fellows to work with career services. Simultaneously, faculty debated the question of whether to grant academic credit for internships—an issue that provoked considerable disagreement. Even when faculty valued internship outcomes, they differed on whether participation in these experiences always merited academic credit.

As the FLILL project played out, our team undertook discussions across campus, both officially and unofficially, hoping to bring together the ideas around integrative learning. We visited the Educational Policy Committee to discuss the project, and later presented it to the entire faculty. We coordinated efforts with a faculty/staff group that had been convened by our dean of Spirituality, Service, and Social Responsibility to discuss AAC&U’s civic responsibility initiative, and together we sponsored a faculty/staff lunch to brainstorm ideas. Out of these efforts came an important recognition: our campus has frequently presumed
that learning occurs only in classrooms under the guidance of faculty members, often ignoring the contributions of staff who support students in cocurricular and applied settings. This recognition prompted another May workshop in 2013 to explore building applied learning more intentionally into the curriculum, using staff as partners. That workshop produced the idea now called “Connections 3.0.”

The proposal for Connections 3.0 asserts the value of applied activities in expanding the learning potential of connected courses. In doing so, our team recognized the Wheaton faculty’s preference for building on its strengths; so, rather than create a new structure, Connections 3.0 takes advantage of the power of the extant Connections curriculum and the faculty’s commitment to it. The proposal would create a new type of Connection with a third element added to connected classroom courses: a related applied learning activity.

To spark the project, the provost provided seed money in summer 2014 for six projects planning to build applied Connections. For instance, a Connection course titled Race as a Social Construct will pair traditional courses with dialog groups on race conducted at the Multicultural Center. Exploring the Human–Animal Bond will add an internship at an animal sanctuary to the connected religion and psychology courses. Student leadership experiences as resident advisers, team captains, or student government leaders will become the applied element in the Modeling Leadership in Theory and Practice connection.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

**Lesson 1—Develop Your Idea out of Campus Experience**

Although there are times when a completely new idea can invigorate people’s thinking, our campus finds that initiatives succeed best when they resonate with campus values and past experience. In this case, the addition of an applied learning experience to Connections harkens back to the “second transcript,” which recognized the value to students of practical work related to classroom learning.

**Lesson 2—Embed Your Idea within Existing Structures**

Applied learning is easily fostered by service learning offices, internships through career services, undergraduate research with faculty, and other settings. At Wheaton, joining applied learning to the mainstay of the curriculum—Connections—gives it an integrative force and a curricular prominence that bodes well for its strength and continuity. Embedding applied learning in the curriculum encourages faculty oversight, even as it invites staff colleagues more formally into the teaching role. Yet, the new idea will succeed only if it is vetted and approved by appropriate faculty committees.

**Lesson 3—Build Consensus for Your Idea**

Each campus understands the variety of settings and structures needed for vetting new ideas; curricular innovators must attend to each of them. Repeated iterations of the conversation—although clearly an impediment to quick success—will improve both the effort and the product, enhancing the chance of adoption and support.

**Lesson 4—Empower as Many People as Possible to Contribute to the Idea**

On a campus that values grassroots initiatives, the team must allow others to explore, alter, and expand the idea. At Wheaton, athletics staff, junior faculty, and student affairs deans all contributed widely to our integrative learning reforms. If a curricular idea truly represents integrated learning, it can be owned by many people and enacted in different but complementary ways.

**Lesson 5—Recognize Staff as Co-Educators**

Since a liberal education philosophy stresses that students learn in many settings, faculty must recognize that potentially everyone on campus is an educator. Students rarely isolate learning that occurs for them in the classroom, on the field, in the work–study job, or in the practicum. When staff as well as faculty stand ready to respond to students’ puzzles and inquiries, integrative learning occurs more easily and widely.

**BRINGING CONNECTIONS TO FRUITION**

Connections 3.0 is a work in progress on the Wheaton campus. Although the project was initially sparked by our FLILL participation, we realized we were engaged in something bigger: efforts to influence campus culture and to model new Wheaton-appropriate strategies of leadership around integrative learning. Curricular ideas at Wheaton succeed best when they develop organically from the faculty, rather than being presented through administrative recommendation; because this idea was developed outside the usual committee structure, the FLILL team has had to move deliberately. We do have some recent successes: the faculty voted to grant Wheaton internship credit for certain applied experiences, and six Connections 3.0 proposals are moving forward. Even so, the larger discussion about experiential learning continues.

Because of our experience in this climate, Wheaton’s story may offer lessons for other campuses where curricular change faces structural challenges. Thus, we articulate here our best practices and principles for implementing curricular change.
One of the key goals of Clark’s Liberal Education and Effective Practice (LEEP) initiative is to help students be more reflective, intentional, and self-directed about their learning. Aligned with AAC&U’s commitment to integrative learning, we believe an important outcome of a Clark undergraduate education involves students learning to draw connections at four levels: (1) within coursework in their major, (2) between their Program of Liberal Studies courses and their major courses, (3) among their curricular and cocurricular activities, and (4) across disciplines and contexts (often beyond the campus gates).

As we have spent the last half decade designing college environments that help students integrate their learning, we also have been designing environments that instill in Clark undergraduates the increasing capacity to make such connections on their own. The aim of this developmental framework is to ensure that by graduation Clark undergraduates demonstrate the ability to engage in integrative learning for themselves across multiple levels.

While our aims have not changed much over the past five years, the nature of our work has. In asking that students learn differently, we have come to realize that faculty, staff, and administrators will not be able to facilitate this change without learning to be more intentional and integrative themselves. New kinds of professional learning need to take place, and new structures and tools are required to guide this process.

In this case study, we share aspects of Clark’s efforts to undertake the most significant curricular reform effort our university has ever initiated. This work has transitioned from the use of standard faculty governance and ad hoc committee structures to the more intentional and sustained use of learning communities (Brown 1984). In charting out this course, we have drawn significantly from the learning and developmental science literature. While it is well known in the literature that learning communities are powerful sites for professional development (Del Prete 2013; Lave and Wenger 1991), we have come to see the need for a strategy for scaling the work and a core set of resources that are necessary to drive and sustain authentic change. The primary lesson we have learned is that without significant attention to thinking freshly about mechanisms of campus leadership for this work, and without significant attention to professional development in support of campus leaders learning to be more intentional and integrative themselves, these important initiatives will fail.

INITIATING A MAJOR REVIEW

In 2008, Clark’s faculty decided to undertake a major review of its undergraduate curriculum, something that had not undergone substantial review for several decades. A faculty task force on undergraduate education was formed to rethink what it means to be liberally educated in the twenty-first century. The task force recommended a set of five university-wide learning outcomes. Four of these outcomes were adapted from the AAC&U’s LEAP Essential Outcomes. A fifth learning outcome focused on what we call “capacities of effective practice,” including creativity, self-directedness, resilience, adaptive expertise, and the ability to collaborate.

In addition to shared learning outcomes, the Undergraduate Task Force proposed a new model of learning that draws upon Clark’s distinguished history in the learning and developmental sciences. The Undergraduate Task Force report proposed shifting the relationship between general and specialized education.
Instead of taking breadth and depth as two relatively separate aspects of the undergraduate experience (and something separate from cocurricular activities), the aim was to see academic progress over time as a single arc of development. This holistic view of student learning identifies three phases. A first orientation phase marks entry to college; a second phase invites growth and exploration; and a third phase, enactment, calls on students to show their progress by enacting and demonstrating what they know (see Budwig [2013] for a fuller description of this work). The task force’s work was presented to the faculty assembly and by 2009, the five learning outcomes were adopted by a vote in the Faculty Assembly. With a nod to the acronym for AAC&U’s signature initiative LEAP, we call Clark’s framework LEEP—Liberal Education and Effective Practice.

**This holistic view of student learning identifies three phases. A first orientation phase marks entry to college; a second phase invites growth and exploration; and a third phase, enactment, calls on students to show their progress by enacting and demonstrating what they know.**

**NEW MODELS FOR CAMPUS LEADERSHIP OF INTEGRATIVE LIBERAL LEARNING**

Our early work on implementing the LEEP Curricular Framework drew upon existing structures and faculty governance channels, such as our Undergraduate Academic Board and Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, but this work did not fully live up to the goals articulated by the Undergraduate Task Force. These efforts were primarily organized at the level of individual courses, and were hardly integrated into larger structural units beyond individual faculty, which led to minimal curricular or institutional-level change. To implement this curricular framework beyond the individual course level, we realized faculty learning communities, as well as tools and templates to guide these communities, needed to be established.

**Novel Forms of Campus Leadership: The Important Role Learning Communities Play**

**The Effective Practice Faculty Fellowship.** Recognizing the need to create a shared vision for weaving integrative learning and effective practice into the undergraduate curriculum, we sought a process that would be transparent, inclusive, iterative, and sustainable. This led us to form the Effective Practice Faculty Fellowship, a group of approximately a dozen volunteers who came from various disciplines. The fellowship faculty met regularly as a learning community and planned a semester-long salon series open to all faculty that took place once a month. The goal of the salons was to generate ideas from a large group of faculty on campus who worked in breakout groups over lunch around a series of topics, such as building a collective faculty vision for LEEP, developing shared goals, and shaping curricular strategies for integrative learning and effective practice.

As the effective practice work moved forward, faculty deepened their knowledge of curricular work beyond their major and gained a noticeable sense of community. Nevertheless, faculty outside the fellowship had a more difficult time thinking about models that offered bold solutions for integrating Clark’s curricular elements beyond a set of classes or the major.

There were three takeaways from the Effective Practice Faculty Fellowship efforts. First, we came to recognize the power of learning communities for breaking down university silos. Second, we realized that in order for students to learn differently and in an integrative fashion, faculty, staff, and administrators need to be organized and have professional development to do the same. Third, we received a suggestion from the faculty Undergraduate Academic Board that encouraged leadership to begin work in the major, given that these curricular units were where faculty felt most comfortable. While counterintuitive at first, this turned out to be a powerful recommendation.

**The Exemplar Learning Communities Project.** This project was designed to foster professional development, bringing together faculty representing several distinct majors, with each exemplar group including five to ten faculty, staff, and one academic administrative leader responsible for the LEEP Curricular Framework efforts. Through iterative cycles of working with membership from different majors on campus and staff from cocurricular units, each exemplar group works as a learning community to support the efforts of individual departments and programs. The goal of the Exemplar Learning Communities Project is to develop department plans for implementing two of the five LEEP learning outcomes, including consideration of the developmental pathways of (1) expected student behaviors at each of the three...
developmental phases—orientation, growth and exploration, and enactment; (2) the foundational learning and high-impact experiences provided to help students meet these expectations; and (3) plans for assessment of the selected outcomes.

Over the past eighteen months, two iterations of exemplar learning communities have taken place with a third community—focused on our First Year Intensive seminar courses—having started in fall 2014. The first community worked with four different majors (biology, economics, music, and screen studies), while the second group includes four other majors (computer science, cultural studies and communication, English, and management). Clark’s new LEEP Center—a support structure on campus integrating all academic support services and providing students with LEEP advising—also has participated in the learning communities to help foster discussion of linkages between the majors and the academic support services and cocurricular activities available on campus.

While currently the first two learning communities have focused on the major, and this work will continue iteratively, our newly formed third learning community brings together faculty and staff involved with the first-year experience to consider ways first-year programming can assist students not only transition into college, but also help them link their first-year experiences to other curricular elements. To help ensure learning is transferred between work going on in the major and the first-year programming, cross-membership between the second and third learning communities was set up. Each learning community spends a semester or more working together formally, though an aim is made to recognize the need for ongoing reflection and iterative cycles of improvement back at the department level for this work.

A second important goal of the exemplar learning communities has been to develop a set of professional tools and public resources that help guide learning that goes beyond simply participating with other peers in the learning community. Building off learning and developmental research (Budwig 2013, Windschitl et al. 2012), we believed that these tools could have a particularly important role to play in our LEEP initiative in that they not only might build individual capacity, but also could be a great resource in making departmental thinking visible—public and available (to self and others)—facilitating organic change in ways that support institutionally agreed upon goals.

Novel Forms of Campus Leadership: Tools and Artifacts to Guide and Share Learning

At Clark we came to realize how challenging it was for departments to think intentionally and specifically about the separate learning outcomes and how they each linked up with expected student behaviors and high-impact experiences. It also was difficult for departments to focus their work on developing pathways of expected student behaviors across time. This led to the creation of a learning outcomes template, which helps departments systematically inquire and reflect on these issues. Another important tool has become the poster template, a device that assists departments in sharing work on their learning outcomes template with other curricular units in a public way. The poster template allows units to share information about the department, two of the learning outcome templates that describe developmental pathways, and gives insight into department plans for next steps. What is critical is that these tools guide inquiry—both at the level of the individual unit, as well as facilitating cross departmental conversations. These tools do not prescribe. The templates allow units to create unique plans and outcomes.

The tools and artifacts are deeply connected to the work of the learning communities. The templates are provided to augment the work, with each learning community not only utilizing these tools, and seeing the results of others’ use of them, but also contributing to their further development. A Moodle site houses the work of each of the learning communities, organized longitudinally. A section of the Moodle site also holds the most recent poster drafts of each department so each department can work on their own plans but also draw upon the work of others. Members of each individual community provide peer feedback both formally and informally in the context of the learning community meetings. A resource section also holds the latest version of the common templates. We have found that the pace of work of the learning community speeds up with each iteration, largely due to the improvements in the templates and resources supporting their use. In winter 2015 these tools will be available to faculty and staff at Clark as part of a new webpage that describes this work.

The benefit of these learning communities then lies not only in developing professional leadership for intentional integrative learning, but also in strengthening this leadership through the process of rich documentation. The posters provide a mechanism to share the work of learning community members with departments that have yet to participate. This past spring, Clark’s Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning hosted an afternoon session that allowed departments to share posters with faculty and staff. These sessions both inspire future work and also show the diversity of ways departments across campus are implementing integrative learning.
and effective practice, countering any concern that a one-size-fits-all model is expected.

**WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED**

While there is general consensus on campus that integrative learning and effective practice are critical to liberal learning, implementing the ambitious goals of Clark’s LEEP initiative has been more complex than we originally thought. Clark’s Undergraduate Task Force Report created a general buzz of excitement. Much of the reform efforts were designed to ensure that all undergraduates found transformative. Instead of developing completely new curricular elements and experiences, much of the proposed curricular change involved more intentionally organizing student learning. One of the key findings of our work related to implementing the LEEP framework is that faculty and staff also need to become more intentional and integrative in their efforts. Helping students coordinate pathways that integrate their learning across curricular and cocurricular experiences, and allowing students to take on increasing agency and intentionality for their integrative learning, require faculty and staff to do the same.

Learning communities have been central to the professional development work we have described. They provide an open and supportive environment that facilitates professional development. Faculty and staff feel comfortable in professional learning environments designed to allow members to co-create integrative learning pathways for students. But we have found that learning communities do not simply develop organically. They need strong support and nurturing. Significant design goes into their formation, and continuous leadership that scaffolds learning is imperative. In such contexts, tools and artifacts become powerful resources that foster enhanced professional development. We have found two features that have improved the success of learning communities: first, the individual learning communities need to be networked or linked together over time in planned and sequenced ways; second, learning communities depend on tools and artifacts that serve as important scaffolds that encourage disciplined and collaborative inquiry.

One challenge for our community has been a tension in this work between totally organic work on the part of faculty and staff and significant leadership from the academic administration—individuals who typically carry broader institutional vision and time commitment to the LEEP implementation initiative. We have landed in a spot that is neither top down nor bottom up. Drawing from literature in the developmental and learning sciences, we have coined a term, *guided emergence*, to characterize this approach (see Budwig 2013; Budwig and Elsass 2013). Guided emergence sees the role of campus leadership as one that designs environments and provides and assists with the creation of tools and artifacts that allow individuals and broader learning communities unique opportunities for authentic engagement and the chance to flourish. We believe guided emergence provides a conceptual tool for rethinking the role of faculty and academic leadership in facilitating new forms of campus leadership for the integrative liberal learning we know is central to the educational outcomes we desire for our students.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This work benefited from Clark’s participation in the AAC&U consortium on facilitating faculty leadership for liberal learning and we acknowledge the active engagement and feedback our project received from many of the other consortium school participants and AAC&U consortium leadership. The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations also provided generous support to the Exemplar Project work for which we are grateful.

**REFERENCES**


Integrative Learning Pathways at Bard College: Connecting Core Experiences

Susan Merriam, associate professor of art history, Bard College
Eric Trudel, associate professor of French; chair, Division of Languages and Literature, Bard College
Simeen Sattar, professor of chemical physics, Bard College
Maria Sachiko Cecire, assistant professor of literature; director, Experimental Humanities, Bard College
Michelle Murray, assistant professor of political studies, Bard College

In the early stages of working with the concept of integrative learning under the auspices of the Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning Teagle grant, our team quickly recognized that a number of integrative learning practices were already in place at Bard College. Perhaps most important among these is Bard’s set of core experiences, all of which incorporate or are defined by integrative learning practices, and all of which are required of all students and involve almost the entire faculty at least at some point in the process. Given this rich environment, we were struck by the lack of awareness about integrative learning and by the extent to which the concept is unknown or misunderstood on campus. Integrative learning practices had emerged over time either organically, by virtue of individual faculty initiative, or from the top down—from an administrator who wished to develop a particular aspect of the curriculum. Given that our goal was—and remains—to develop both integrative learning and faculty leadership, we realized that the most effective approach to the Bard situation would be to work with the set of core experiences that involve almost the entire college.

Even though this approach is tied to Bard’s particular set of core experiences, the possibility that integrative learning can be found in existing practices, and then teased out or foregrounded, offers other institutions an elegant and economical approach to building a more integrated curriculum and a more informed and engaged faculty. In other words, all changes do not need to involve re-thinking the curriculum from the top down, but may come from change generated in smaller, more incremental ways.

THE BARD CORE EXPERIENCES

All Bard students engage in five fundamentally important core experiences during their undergraduate career:

(1) Three weeks before the academic year begins, first-year students arrive to take Language and Thinking, an intensive course in textual analysis and writing. Central to this program is a series of lectures, performances, and workshops designed to resonate with the material students encounter in class.

(2) Once the regular semester begins, first-year students begin the first of two semesters of First Year Seminar, a course centered on close reading and discussion of canonical texts. Students participate in two symposia in which they present work they have prepared with a group of faculty mentors to the public.

(3) In January, first-year students spend about three weeks on campus engaged in Citizen Science, a program designed to involve students in the practice of science through intense focus on a particular problem (currently infectious disease). Additionally, the entire first-year class is involved at that time in a civic engagement project in which they teach science literacy in local K–12 schools.

(4) Second-semester sophomores participate in “Moderation,” a transitional process by which Bard students enter their chosen field of study. Students are required to write two short papers (one retrospective, one prospective) reflecting on their academic career and choice of major and post-graduation plans, as well as prepare an academic paper (the topic of which is selected by the individual program), a performance, or an exhibition. Students then meet with a board of three faculty members to discuss their past work and plans for the future.
By using a portfolio to connect the five core experiences on campus, we strengthen the student experience and raise faculty awareness about the concept of integrative learning.

which would function as a link in a chain to those experiences preceding and following it. The assignments would require students to reflect on their academic and personal growth at each stage of the five core experiences, and would function cumulatively. Seniors, for example, would have the opportunity to look back on four years of reflective assignments and measure the extent to which they had been transformed; administrators and faculty could use the portfolio for assessment purposes.

THE PORTFOLIO
Once we committed to working with our core experiences, we began developing future plans for a portfolio that will provide a deeper and more integrated four-year arc for students, and simultaneously will generate a conversation among the faculty about integrative learning. Any faculty member involved in one of the core experiences (and that would be the majority at Bard) will necessarily be involved in a discussion of integrative learning. Given Bard’s culture, we believe that this level of faculty involvement will generate more interest in integrative learning and lead to individual faculty initiatives. Even though the portfolio is not yet in place, a number of conversations about integrative learning have begun to occur, both at the level of faculty to faculty and at the level of programs. Additionally, early discussions about the portfolio with faculty and staff have generated interest from the staff of the writing center, which has led to a discussion about workshops involving faculty in reflective writing practices. From our experience, it seems evident that one way to generate faculty interest in, and therefore engagement with, integrative learning is relatively simple: develop ways to encourage conversations about the subject to take place.

In response to our suggestions, the directors of each first-year experience (Language and Thinking, First Year Seminar, and Citizen Science) now work together to devise a series of prompts, each of which links their program to the others and emphasizes the continuity of the core. These assignments should help students connect their experiences; therefore they are distinct from writing assignments that students normally complete in class.

The Moderation process, we thought, could be strengthened by sharpening the questions given to the students as they prepare their short retrospective and prospective essays. The senior project experience/portfolio should be an assignment asking the student to reflect on the process of researching and writing or creating the senior project. All senior projects are reviewed by a three-member faculty board, which offers another opportunity for the faculty to be involved in a discussion of a student’s portfolio as it nears completion.

ENGAGING THE FACULTY
Last spring, we presented our plan to create the portfolio to a number of faculty members, including, most importantly (and formally), the four directors of the first-year experience, and the Blended Learning Committee. It quickly became apparent in conversations with the directors of the first-year experiences that they were onboard—important “early adopters” whose engagement was crucial to our plan.

The Blended Learning Committee comprise about ten faculty and staff commissioned by the dean of the college to create a white paper about blended learning at Bard, and it is in this context that we presented the portfolio. The committee was receptive to our portfolio plan, and gave us advice about portfolio programs we might adopt once we move forward. Additionally, simply by virtue of explaining the portfolio to the committee, we increased the number of faculty at Bard who are now conversant with integrative learning.

Before the start of the fall 2013 semester, we talked to the entire fall First Year Seminar faculty (roughly thirty-one people) about the portfolio project at
their semester orientation workshop. In this meeting the faculty review their plans for the semester, which include looking over the common syllabus, planning the symposia, and preparing for the first few weeks of class. Our aim was to initiate the portfolio in First Year Seminar, and to ease it in over the course of the next year by engaging Citizen Science and Language and Thinking. We explained the concept of integrative learning, and emphasized that one of the key aspects of the portfolio in this context is the importance it places on reflective writing since our main goal is to help the students develop a sense of the relationships between the discrete experiences. Faculty members, some of whom had worked with this type of writing before, were receptive to the concept and developed a portfolio for use in their classroom.

In addition to formal discussions with the first-year directors and the Blended Learning Committee, we have talked more informally with a number of faculty members about the portfolio plan. This more informal discussion has generated interest among the faculty about integrative learning—specifically, how Bard might be more deliberate about the practice. This emphasizes the extent to which cultural change might be generated by creating discourse.

**PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS**

At different moments we have encountered problems, the biggest of which was determining the type of portfolio that would be best for Bard. Currently, a variety of portfolio platforms are available, ranging from simple to complex. We considered whether it might be worth adopting a sophisticated platform that would allow students to curate their own portfolios, but ultimately decided to stay with our original idea to use a basic blog program or cloud-based service. We recognized that our relatively straightforward and inexpensive plan was easy to implement, distinctive, and would have much greater personal meaning for the students. We are convinced that the portfolio gains its value because it is driven by students’ reflections on their experiences at a specific moment—by their progression through the series of events that shapes their four-year arc. It is therefore distinct from many portfolios, which are intended to function as archives or presentation tools.

Another problem we have struggled with is how to develop sufficiently high stakes so that the students will be invested in the portfolio. A number of people who have been engaged with portfolios at other institutions have noted that the portfolio fails if students see it as a series of assignments, merely to be completed or checked off. Keeping their experiences in mind, we will choose the prompts with extra care and solicit input from students as to whether the questions motivate them. Some of this work is currently under way.

We also encountered difficulties in our discussion with the First Year Seminar faculty, who raised concerns about students’ privacy and access to the portfolio. We decided that a simple resolution would be to make the portfolios available only to those faculty and administrators who have ordinarily had access to these materials. Even though the discussion raised a few red flags about the portfolio, about fifteen faculty members agreed to do a “test” portfolio in their class. This pilot program was launched in fall 2014 with a limited number of students.

**CONCLUSION**

Our efforts to implement the portfolio are facilitated by the centrality of the core experiences to Bard. Both the students’ and the faculty members’ time is shaped by these five processes. We believe that we made the right decision to work with what we already have—to bolster and more clearly define one of the institution’s strengths in terms of integrative learning. We are also helped by the fact that faculty recognize that although the core experiences are important, they can be reinvigorated. As they take up such a tremendous amount of faculty time and energy, it is crucial that they fulfill their intended purpose.
Making the Lynk at Mount Holyoke: Institutionalizing Integrative Learning

This case study tells the story of how Mount Holyoke College developed a “curriculum-to-career” project to institutionalize integrative learning on our campus. Our goal was to create conditions for learning in which students could connect multiple experiences, disciplines and interests, and translate those experiences in confident, adaptive, and flexible ways.

The central goal expressed in our 2011 strategic plan was to better connect a liberal arts education to career preparation and life goals. However, the details of how to implement this goal were not immediately obvious. Different stakeholders expressed specific aspirations around learning goals, curricular renewal, student employment, and the college’s reputation. They asked: Would more career-focused elements appeal to prospective students? Would these elements replace the liberal arts with vocationalism? How should we best deploy alumnae mentors and employers and manage expectations in this effort? Parents and students asked if the college could guarantee the quality of internships. Trustees and administrators argued that a new curriculum would help solve financial challenges. The faculty was split. Some said, “Don’t we already do this?” Others said, “That’s not my job.”

The big question was, could we aim for a transformation of our liberal arts model to “shift the needle” on student development and career outcomes? We aimed for a cultural shift rather than a small tweak. We knew that we already offered extremely high-quality experiences for students in some programs, but our goal now was to find a way to offer these transformative experiences to all of our students. In a series of summits, faculty seminars, and planning reports in the 2012–13 academic year, we imagined curriculum-to-career as something that was not just an add-on that was delivered beyond the faculty—parallel to the regular curriculum—or in one specialized program serving a few students.

The vision, as it developed, was an ambitious plan to embed the resources for career preparation directly into the liberal arts core for every student. Our argument was that if we could foster the skills of lifelong goal setting and reflection for integrative learning, and if we could scaffold academic, internship, and career choices with enhanced advising in a way that was perceptible to students over the four years of their undergraduate career, then our graduates would be better prepared to translate their learning into postgraduate career entry.

Challenges and Opportunities

Our big aspiration faced big challenges. Most daunting were the sheer number of moving pieces and the scale of the change imagined. As it was envisioned, a curriculum-to-career approach would touch every major stakeholder, every student, and every part of the curriculum. There was a curricular plan, an enrollment plan, an alumnae plan, a communications plan, an institutional development strategy, and an advising initiative. Few of these plans were explicitly coordinated with each other, and various stakeholders expressed quite specific, even conflicting, goals. An immediate question then was how to connect disparate conversations to manage expectations and to work together to deliver on our promise.

A number of faculty also asserted that Mount Holyoke was, in many ways, already doing curriculum-to-career. There was truth in this. Mount Holyoke offered many programs with a curriculum-
to-career focus. These included traditional career advising in the Career Development Center, the Community-Based Learning Program, and our interdisciplinary Nexus Program, which harnessed hands-on learning through internships. We offered a substantial set of global programs too, with a robust study abroad program and a flourishing international internships program. A vibrant and quickly growing Center for the Environment sponsored high-end internship opportunities that are part of a critical pipeline for women into STEM fields. We have similarly distinguished lineages in the performing arts and in areas of applied policy, international relations, and government.

Given this curricular richness, why did we need a curriculum-to-career program? Did we just need to repackage what we already did? Or, was the challenge of a curriculum-to-career program an unprecedented opportunity to come together and align our efforts to deliver on the college’s promise: namely, that the liberal arts offer the best possible preparation for careers and citizenship in the twenty-first century?

THE PROCESS

Although the curriculum-to-career idea had many antecedents at Mount Holyoke, it was the strategic planning process led by the new president and board chair that provided a mandate for creating a new agenda. The strategic plan was grounded in the work of four fast-track task forces. The curriculum-to-career task force reviewed institutional data about student outcomes and placed those in the context of institutional challenges and trends in the wider landscape of employment and higher education. This process was the basis of a renewed commitment to better prepare our students for career entry.

Following creation of the strategic plan, we conducted a careful audit of existing resources and programs with a curriculum-to-career profile at the college. This audit was an important part of building the project. It produced actionable findings and also helped us to understand what we were doing as a community, and where the challenges might lie. In a range of subsequent events and programs, we cast the net widely and brought people together for discussion, not only within the academic division but also across student affairs, enrollment, the Alumnae Association, and many other offices.

On the faculty side, in the fall 2012 we formed a group entitled Preparing Students to Learn Beyond the Gates: A Faculty Seminar on Integrative Learning. The focus was student preparation for experiential learning at Mount Holyoke. The goals were (1) to create more individual courses or units in courses that intentionally prepared students for different kinds of applied experiences, (2) to build a cohort of faculty who thought about how to support students’ experiential learning, and (3) to make recommendations about experiential learning to the college. The seminar drew together twenty faculty and staff from across many academic programs and from every division—career development, library and technology, community-based learning, and global initiatives. Participants received a stipend.

The seminar produced substantial payoffs in both the short and long term. In the short term, our dynamic (sometimes heated) conversations revealed to each of us that individually we held only a piece of the overall puzzle. The need for better coordination and internal communication was palpable. The seminar also focused attention on the lack of financial support to meet student demand for internships, and the fact that students lacked understanding about how academic skills acquired and practiced in the liberal arts classroom were directly relevant to career preparation.

The longer-term payoffs included the creation of three curricular groups that focused on the first-year experience, sophomore programming, and capstone moments. Each of these curricular groups has since produced new or revised programming. In addition, most of the people who participated in the original seminar went on to serve in a range of other roles where they supported curriculum-to-career initiatives. Other participants in chemistry, geology and geography, environmental studies, and history have developed new pre-internship courses, organized regular alumnae career events, sponsored new internship opportunities, or developed new capstone courses. We refer to this as spontaneous curricular innovation.

Several lessons emerge from this experience. One is that building faculty leadership for a new initiative takes time, but it’s worth it. An iterative process of communication among faculty increases the likelihood that the final language of change is spoken in an authentic community voice. Trusted faculty voices are important, and it is helpful when they come from a broad array of departments and disciplines.

Connected to this is the importance of harnessing existing faculty culture: Mount Holyoke has a tradition of convening faculty seminars to engage faculty across divisions and programs. This is why we chose to use the seminar format to invite colleagues into the conversation, to listen, and to learn from one another. This appeared to slow us down in a context of administrative pressure for fast results, but we knew we had to keep building buy-in as we moved forward.

BUILDING CAMPUS SUPPORT FOR THE CURRICULUM-TO-CAREER PROJECT

The other curriculum-to-career agenda-setting event held in the fall 2012 was an Internship Summit that collected thirty key professionals, faculty, and staff from
across every major division of the college, including the president. Participants were asked to analyze a case study and engage in a visioning project around internships. The summit was an important moment when many staff and faculty from across the campus met for the first time to discuss internships. In fact, the summit became a popular event. Coordinators of what had started out as a small group event were swamped by requests to attend. This indicated enormous appetite for the curriculum-to-career discussion among college staff and administrators in particular.

There were several payoffs from this event. One immediate effect was a clearer understanding of what was needed to execute the curriculum-to-career agenda administratively—resources, new administrative processes, and most challengingly, better data and technical support. This group also took away a message about the need for alignment across the college, which was an important consideration given our widely distributed internship offerings (see fig. 1).

What helped to sustain forward momentum following the fall 2012 was a set of critical administrative decisions that supported the curriculum-to-career agenda. These included the decision to assign a dedicated administrative dean in academic affairs to coordinate the curriculum-to-career initiative, a decision to place curriculum-to-career at the center of the rebranding process, and the choice to connect our pre-existing enhanced advising initiative to curriculum-to-career as a way to support a robust environment for integrative learning (see fig. 2). By mid-2013, the decision was made to move the Career Development Center into the Academic Division. Finally, in June 2013, the president approved financial support for one qualified internship for every Mount Holyoke student, to be taken in the summer of the sophomore or junior year. This became a major focus of Institutional Advancement in 2013. All of these decisions provided concrete and also symbolic support for the curriculum-to-career agenda, which in June 2013 was renamed the Lynk.

**IMPLEMENTING THE LYNK**

In summer 2013, the college began to implement the Lynk by embedding practical experience in the liberal arts core. This involved reorganizing the educational requirements in our internship application, enhancing our career and academic advising, and creating other student-facing programs around internships—all of which involved an extremely high degree of cooperation among offices and units, as well as faculty leadership and participation.

Second, we began a communication rollout that presented the Lynk to students as the umbrella for our many existing opportunities—a task in which we are still engaged. We have learned that while communication with students about new opportunities is paramount, it is also critical to speak the language of the Lynk in the same words with faculty, staff, trustees, and alumnae.

Third, we have built new programming and connected it with current offerings to support the Lynk. We are particularly focused on enhanced advising, around which we organized another faculty seminar in the spring 2014. Borrowing lessons learned in the first year of our curriculum-to-career project, we identified facilitators for this seminar who either taught in the first-year program, our post-internship course, or who were leaders in defining the new Sophomore Focus Program offered this year.

Last, but most important for building faculty engagement and leadership, the incoming dean of faculty proposed a four-year department strategy to connect the Lynk with every academic major at the college. The Lynk department strategy is a clear statement of the centrality of curriculum-to-career as an intellectual project embedded in the liberal arts core of Mount Holyoke. A quarter of all departments sign up each year and they are provided a budget to conduct research, build databases, develop new courses, or otherwise engage in the Lynk. In return, Lynk departments are the first to see academic renewal on the college website as we move to a new relational architecture. The first cohort of Lynk department faculty has found this to be
exciting work. Lynk departments are also called first into college-wide assessment initiatives, as we move towards our ten-year reaccreditation by NEASC, and also into ongoing discussions of how we will collectively deliver on the promise of our recently passed college learning goals. In all these ways, the curriculum-to-career idea is embedded strategically: in assessment initiatives, communication plans, staffing and infrastructure decisions, alumnae relations, and ongoing curricular development.

**ASSESSING THE LYNK**
Two years into Mount Holyoke’s curriculum-to-career project, what have we learned and what is our plan for assessment?

---

**FIGURE 2. THE LYNK: LEVELS OF CURRICULUM-TO-CAREER PROGRESS**

1. **Goal Setting.** To foster a culture of intentional goal setting, reflection, and action over the full arc of an academic career
   - Examples: Sophomore Networking Institute, internships advising appointment

2. **Professional Development.** Building skills and savvy and getting connected
   - Examples: post-internship class; MakerJam (where students spend 24–36 hours to create new practical solutions to real-life problems); pitch competition

3. **Practical Experience.** Learning through experience in internships, community organizations, research labs, and field work
   - Examples: internships across fields, site visits, community engagement courses and fellowships, research immersion, paid campus positions

4. **The Launch.** Telling your story, defining the next step, and launching your career
   - Examples: mock interview sessions, Alumnae Career Networking Fair, LEAP Internship Symposium

---

We know that an important indicator of the success of any project is when other people genuinely take up your ideas and speak them in their own voices to express a common agenda. This has occurred at several important points in the curriculum-to-career process at Mount Holyoke. For example, faculty and staff have voluntarily brought existing programs into alignment with the Lynk. Many members of the faculty have signed up to engage the Lynk at the level of the major, and others have proposed courses, events, institutional partnerships, and research opportunities that are explicitly connected to the Lynk. Alumnae also seek to connect with the Lynk in large numbers. Most important, the college’s leadership and many donors have made a substantial financial commitment to support up to $3,000 (domestic) and $3,600 (international) for one summer internship for every student, a decision that signaled to every stakeholder the seriousness of the institution’s commitment to the Lynk. This pattern of doubling down on our original investment in curriculum-to-career is the first and most important indicator of success.

The second indicator of success is the extent of faculty buy-in to the Lynk and curriculum-to-career more generally. What we have proposed, after all, is a substantial shift in curricular emphasis. To be an authentic expression of the liberal arts project, the Lynk requires the broad support of the faculty. What we have found is that faculty leaders emerge precisely in the process of communication, and it is important that communication is iterative and open, and that a wide array of stakeholders is included. At Mount Holyoke, the curriculum-to-career agenda benefited from the involvement of influential members of the faculty who stepped up and made the case for the project as one that would genuinely benefit our students. We also benefited from a process that offered opportunities for creative Lynk-related faculty development over time. As members of the AAC&U’s Teagle Project on Faculty Leadership for Integrative Liberal Learning, we charted faculty participation from the beginning of the 2012 academic year, and saw a slow building of faculty support for curriculum-to-career: between the fall 2012 and the fall 2013, 60 percent of our faculty (107 of 180) participated in Lynk-related activities in a sustained way—and the numbers continue to grow.

The final indicator of success will be to “shift the needle” on student outcomes. Short term, this means increasing the number of students in internships and other hands-on learning opportunities while they are at Mount Holyoke. As of the date of writing, we have seen a 55 percent increase in students in Lynk-funded summer opportunities.

We also hope to see more students engaging in multiple opportunities for research, community-based learning, study abroad, work, and internships, and we have altered our assessment instruments to capture this goal. We will also assess the number of students presenting internship findings at the post-internship LEAP Symposium and our research-focused senior symposium. We believe we will see more students able to demonstrate integrative learning—as evidenced by their ability to translate and narrate their story for diverse audiences with confidence. We also expect to find more students making connections with faculty, staff, and alumnae around academic planning and career choices. Finally, we expect that students will report more successful post-graduation outcomes: more students will graduate with a good fit job or another opportunity in hand, and a greater number of recent graduates will enter a challenging job market with confidence in their ability to excel and to adapt in the face of change.
Collaborative, Faculty-Led Efforts for Sustainable Change

As higher education institutions respond to numerous challenges and opportunities—from new technologies to changing student demographics—their efforts to adapt depend on faculty and staff collaborating across departments and divisions. In this shifting environment, some faculty focus solely on what is under their immediate control: their own courses and research. In contrast, other faculty recognize that, in an inevitably evolving environment, their front-line perspective can influence campus change efforts as a shared responsibility. As the projects described in this issue of Peer Review unfolded, we identified several theories of organizational change that help explain why the campus initiatives took root: collaborative leadership, team-based learning, social network theory, and resilient capacity. These themes are also evident in a number of other projects carried out as part of AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative over the past decade. Understanding and applying these interconnected theories can guide faculty as they help shape and lead the transformation of higher education.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP ACROSS DEPARTMENTS AND DIVISIONS

Much of the research on effective leadership focuses on positions of authority—the university president or company CEO, for example. Because colleges and universities are relatively flat organizations, somewhat fragmented by departmental boundaries, leadership is distributed. As such, top-down change has limited appeal for faculty and is often unsustainable. Faculty who want to make a difference often find it challenging to accomplish institutional change without formal leadership authority, sometimes facing colleagues’ resistance or indifference. Formal governance structures framed by committees and by-laws are generally inflexible and offer meager ground for innovative change. Instead, institutions need informal, inclusive processes, such as working groups and faculty learning communities, to enable those without formal authority to shape new initiatives. Establishing “collaborative and participatory” relationships may take more time than top-down mandates, but it allows for the iterative process through which ideas are tested and refined, group trust is established and membership is expanded, and initiatives become embedded and sustainable (Watson and Watson 2013, 45).

Faculty leaders often emerge because they have a good sense of common interests and work well with colleagues. For instance, change efforts typically start with “high-participating faculty”—those who actively engage in initiatives to strengthen student learning and connect with other equally invested faculty (Rutz et al. 2012, 42). Knowing how and with whom to start a change process “in order to make the greatest impact and build the most momentum” pays off during implementation (Watson and Watson 44). Although it is easier and safer to start with more experimental faculty who are familiar with the work and who are willing to try something new without a guarantee of success, including skeptical faculty too can bring a productive tension to the effort and potentially better results. Once “high-participating faculty” begin to establish the work, engaging skeptical faculty can help change leaders “identify patterns of concerns” ahead of implementation (Duffy 2010, 11). It takes both types of faculty to effect institutional change.

An inclusive process that is not only open to but actively seeks out diverse practitioners is also essential to building a collaborative process. Research on creativity, innovation, and problem solving describes the importance of exploring, experimenting, and including...
a diverse group of outsiders who can ask questions, provide different perspectives, and offer additional expertise (Lehrer 2012, 112-135). Not only are assumptions tested, but also “the benefit of such horizontal interactions—people sharing knowledge across fields—is that it encourages conceptual blending, which is extremely important to the insight process” (Lehrer 2012, 37). Business leaders often cite office products—such as masking tape and post-it notes—that resulted from failure while pursuing another goal: due to collaboration and sharing, individuals with no stake in the original goal saw the potential of the “failed” initiative. In this way, inviting a diverse group of participants into change work not only creates a more inclusive campus culture, but also creates opportunities for repurposing “failed” or unlikely ideas from a fresh perspective.

INITIATING AND DIFFUSING CHANGE THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS

In any change endeavor, faculty leaders rely on a foundation of social capital and a broad network of expertise built over time through other successful projects. Social capital here can be defined as the goodwill and trust that faculty accumulate across campus relationships. This broad network creates “expertise transparency,” or an environment in which faculty know about and can leverage expertise and connections across campus networks (Daly 2010). For example, particular departments or campus leaders may be highly skilled in community engagement, while multicultural centers, student affairs offices, and race or gender studies departments may have valuable expertise in creating an equitable and inclusive environment for student and faculty success—but are campus leaders collaborating across a full range of expertise?

In higher education, leaders often believe that if faculty are faced with evidence from an external reform expert, they will support change, when in reality “new strategies are more likely to be adopted from a trusted colleague than from an unfamiliar expert” (Daly 2010, 2). But how strong are the links within and across departments, campus divisions, and even institutions that share students, problems, and funding streams? If Daly’s (2010) reading of organizational change is correct and “informal webs of relationships are often the chief determinants of how well and quickly change efforts take hold, diffuse, and sustain,” then campuses may have some work to do.

Change built on durable social networks “can persist over time, even when specific funding is exhausted,” with the establishment of an institutional culture that centers faculty work, student learning, and “the development of skills that support reflective teaching based on observations of student learning” (Rutz et al. 42, 47). Sustainable change in higher education must be built on meaningful, collaborative projects that fosters a common language and a shared vision for student learning through repeated, intentional, formal and informal interactions. This collaboration among faculty and professional staff creates lasting communication channels and interpersonal trust, and builds expertise transparency (Lengnick-Hall and Beck 2005). Without trust and collaborative work that crosses departments, divisions, and institutions, new initiatives will not take hold.

TEAM-BASED LEARNING FOR INNOVATION AND ACTION

Ultimately, lasting institutional change requires faculty to adjust their practices. Leaders can tap both current expertise and build additional institutional capacity through team-based learning aimed at generating new ideas, perspectives, and skills. Many curricular design projects, relying on working groups or task forces, flounder because participants do not realize that they are having dissimilar conversations due to their different disciplinary training and previous experiences (Stark et al. 1990). Communication requires more than just using the same vocabulary; change leaders must create rich team learning experiences that support the formation of shared meaning and the clarification of unintentional distortions or misunderstandings within and across divisions and departments (Hill 2006).

To develop as a team, faculty can invest time together to set collective goals, determine processes for collaboration and conflict management, and meet regularly to move from ideas to action. Creating this “shared sense of purpose makes a group a team as opposed to a collection of individuals.” Highly developed teams become self-directed, capable of adapting to new challenges, recruiting new members, and sharing their knowledge with the potential for real innovation (Adams, Kayes, and Kolb 2005). But competing demands, ineffective leadership, and traditional views about inclusion keep many projects from achieving significant change.

Efforts to identify faculty facilitators for team-based learning primarily lead only to tenured and tenure-track faculty. Campus change leaders understandably are concerned that contingent faculty are unavailable to participate in such efforts, since many hold multiple and/or disparate employment positions. Additionally, contingent faculty are often disconnected from institutional and departmental learning goals and relevant professional development opportunities (Kezar, Maxey, and Eaton 2014). Yet, it’s becoming increasingly unrealistic to keep contingent faculty on the margins of sustainable campus change efforts. They are the new faculty majority, and their commitment to student success is evident in their determination to teach under primarily insecure employment circumstances.

Research on faculty development programs provides some insight on the value of including contingent faculty in sustainable change efforts. Rutz et al. (2012) found in their assessment of faculty development programs that faculty off the tenure track were deeply engaged, especially at a campus with a significant number of contingent fac-
Resilience in the Face of Disruption

Carefully planned and systematic change has long been characteristic of higher education, but it is insufficient given today’s highly dynamic environment where disruptions abound, such as new learning technologies, diverse student needs, changing faculty roles, and unremitting public attention. Indeed, the public has criticized higher education for not changing fast enough. A new theory of change might frame these “disruptions” as critical moments for faculty to reassert the purposes and processes of their work. For example, rather than resist the call to increase completion rates and close achievement gaps, many campuses implemented useful, evidence-based practices for enhancing both completion and student learning. Institutions and faculty reframed this disruption as an opportunity to deepen understanding and reassert a shared vision of equitable learning for successful individuals, citizens, and employees. This response demonstrates resilience in adapting to change.

Resilience is not the capacity to withstand disruption in order to stay the same. Rather, it is the capacity of a community or organization to adapt or transform its structure and processes to sustain its most fundamental purpose (Brand and Jax 2007; Adelman and Taylor 2003). The first step an organization must take to act and think resiliently is to separate its fundamental purpose from the entrenched processes that have traditionally supported it. For example, in response to climate change, a community might decide to adapt food production practices in order to ensure food security (McCambly and Brown 2014). In response to the many disruptions facing higher education institutions, campuses must reimagine higher education in order to deliver learning experiences that lead not only to degrees, but also to proficiencies all students need to succeed and thrive. Defining and committing collectively to a shared vision is a key asset to resilient behavior, including rapid and long-term responses for change (Kimberlin, Schwartz, and Austin 2011).

As institutions and faculty adapt in the face of disruptions, they experience a variety of challenges. Effective educational innovations tend to remain in small and even temporary “islands” of change. Despite initial enthusiasm, faculty work groups are not always harmonious, reflecting some of the messiness of working out the implications of any new initiative. The implementation phase for a new curricular design can be further destabilizing when the work is publicly scrutinized. Most faculty have been part of a project that lost steam as a result of staff turnover, the end of grant funding, or “initiative fatigue.” Even a strong, evidence-based campus initiative can quickly dissolve, “becoming yet another layer of sediment in the sea of change” (Daly 2010, 2). Skilled faculty leaders understand the phases of change and attend to building and maintaining relationships as well as accomplishing the task and adjusting their behavior as the situation demands.

Conclusion

Collaborative leadership, social networks, and team-based learning are important assets for organizational resilience. Higher education’s capacity to adapt relies on each institution’s capacity to mobilize its faculty as critical sources of both expertise and resources. Ultimately, transformation will require strong bonds and commitment beyond individual institutions and extend to external stakeholders, including accreditors, legislators, and policy makers, as essential partners for sustainable change.

References


The AAC&U Centennial—2015
Celebrating 100 Years of Leadership for Liberal Education

AAC&U thanks our members, friends, and colleagues for helping us launch our Centennial in January 2015 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery.

AAC&U’s Centennial Year
The Association will devote the entire Centennial Year to a far-reaching exploration of the connections between high-quality liberal learning and Americans’ global future.

We call your attention to the new LEAP Challenge, which calls on colleges and universities to engage students in signature work that will prepare them to integrate and apply their learning to a significant project.

Complete information, including how to obtain a complimentary copy of The LEAP Challenge: Education for a World of Unscripted Problems, is available at www.aacu.org/leap/challenge.

More information about AAC&U Centennial activities and publications is available at www.aacu.org/centennial.
**Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric**

VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) is a campus-based assessment initiative sponsored by AAC&U as part of its LEAP initiative. VALUE provides needed tools to assess students’ own authentic work, produced across their diverse learning pathways and institutions, to determine whether and how well they are progressing toward graduation-level achievement in learning outcomes that both employers and faculty consider essential.

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all sixteen of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAPSTONE</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONNECTIONS TO EXPERIENCE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge</td>
<td>Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to <strong>deepen understanding</strong> of fields of study and to <strong>broaden own points of view</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONNECTIONS TO DISCIPLINE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives</td>
<td>Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSFER</strong>&lt;br&gt;Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations</td>
<td>Adapts and applies, independently, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to <strong>solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION</strong></td>
<td>Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) in <strong>ways that enhance meaning</strong>, making clear the interdependence of language and meaning, thought, and expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFLECTION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT</strong>&lt;br&gt;Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflective, or creative work)</td>
<td>Envisions a future self (and possibly makes plans that build on past experiences that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can by shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

**DEFINITION**

**Integrative Learning** is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and cocurriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Download this and other VALUE Rubrics at www.aacu.org/value/rubrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MILESTONES</strong></th>
<th><strong>BENCHMARK</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to <strong>illuminate</strong> concepts/theories/frameworks of fields of study.</td>
<td><strong>Compares</strong> life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and <strong>acknowledge perspectives</strong> other than own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.</td>
<td>When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to <strong>solve problems or explore issues</strong>.</td>
<td>Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to <strong>contribute</strong> to understanding of problems or issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to <strong>explicitly connect content and form</strong>, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience.</td>
<td>Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a <strong>basic way</strong> what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluates changes in own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity and risk, deals with frustration, considers ethical frameworks).</td>
<td>Articulates strengths and challenges (within specific performances or events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AAC&U Work on Integrative Liberal Learning

The LEAP Challenge

Liberal education prepares students to understand and manage complexity, diversity, and change. As in past periods of societal change, new forms of liberal education are emerging today—approaches that recognize the value of focusing more explicitly on specific twenty-first-century learning outcomes, and integrating high-impact educational practices while also requiring in-depth study. As it marks its Centennial, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) introduces the LEAP Challenge. The LEAP Challenge is to make Signature Work a goal for all students—and the expected standard of quality learning in college. To learn more, see www.aacu.org/leap/challenge.

Signature Work

The goal of Signature Work is to prepare students to integrate and apply their learning to a significant project completed across a semester of study or longer. Signature Work can be pursued in a research project, in a capstone experience, in thematically linked courses, in a practicum, or in service learning settings. Signature Work will always include substantial writing, reflection on learning, and visible results. Many students will use e-portfolios to present and explain their Signature Work and related learning outcomes.

Signature Work is designed to prepare students—both at the community college and bachelor’s levels—to work with unscripted problems. Directly influenced by research on “high-impact practices,” Signature Work is a centerpiece of AAC&U’s LEAP Challenge effort to set twenty-first-century standards for quality learning in college. At their best, Signature Work projects are related to a question or problem that is important to the student and important to society. For many, these projects will be career related; for others, they will be related to significant societal challenges such as health, literacy, sustainability, or human dignity. For all, Signature Work allows students to connect liberal and general learning with the world beyond college.

In doing Signature Work, students take the lead—with faculty guidance and supervision—and produce work that expresses insights gained from the inquiry. Signature Work also can help students demonstrate achievement of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and their ability to integrate learning from multiple sources. In 2015, in the context of its Centennial Year, AAC&U will select a set of institutions—public and private, two-year and four-year—that want to remap their own curricular pathways to engage their students in Signature Work. Some may work on redesigning general education programs or capstone requirements. Some may work to create curricula and teaching practices that prepare students for Signature Work. To learn more, see www.aacu.org/signaturework.

General Education Maps and Markers (GEMs)

General Education Maps and Markers (GEMs) is a project designed to significantly improve the quality of undergraduate education, increase student success rates, and chart a new course for general education curriculum design that is aligned with twenty-first-century goals for learning. GEMs draws upon AAC&U’s long-standing work in the area of curricular reform in order to develop an adaptive and proficiency-based framework for general education. The initiative foregrounds problem-centered inquiry as the touchstone for quality in twenty-first-century undergraduate learning. Through the GEMs initiative, AAC&U seeks to ensure that all students, particularly those from groups that have been traditionally underserved by higher education, are engaged in deep, inquiry-based learning and have multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills, and ethical responsibilities to complex problems and questions. To learn more, see www.aacu.org/gems.

Scientific Thinking and Integrative Reasoning Skills (STIRS)

The Scientific Thinking and Integrative Reasoning Skills (STIRS) project aims to help all undergraduates use evidence-based thinking in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. The LEAP Challenge encourages institutions to use the STIRS evidence-based thinking framework and learning outcomes in cornerstone-to-capstone curricula and as a pathway to Signature Work.

To become engaged and productive citizens prepared to address the critical challenges of the twenty-first century, college graduates in all fields of study need to be able to (1) Apply study design and statistical reasoning principles, or other relevant frameworks, to obtain and evaluate evidence; (2) Discuss how evidence can be used to advance knowledge and/or to inform subsequent research; (3) Apply an evidence-based problem-solving approach which moves from problem identification, to identification of causal factors, to evidence-based recommendations for solutions, to evaluation of outcomes; (4) Apply an evidence-based decision-making approach, identifying elements which frame and drive decision making for problems in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities; (5) Analyze the operation of complex systems using evidence and systems thinking; and (6) Analyze the ethical issues inherent in research and use of evidence.

As part of the LEAP Challenge, selected institutions will develop plans for integrative curricula in which the STIRS framework is extended throughout the degree program, providing opportunities to utilize high-impact practices, e-portfolios, and AAC&U’s VALUE rubrics. Cornerstone curricula will provide foundational knowledge and skills that can be connected with disciplinary study in the major. Capstone curricula leading to Signature Work will serve as culminating experiences allowing students to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings. To learn more, see www.aacu.org/stirs.
Publications on Integrative Learning

**Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain**  
*By Mary Taylor Huber and Pat Hutchings*  
This paper explores integrative learning’s long tradition and rationale within a vision of liberal education. In outlining promising directions for campus work, the authors draw on AAC&U’s landmark report, **Greater Expectations**, as well as the Carnegie Foundation’s long-standing initiative on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Readers will find a map of the terrain of integrative learning on which promising new developments in undergraduate education can be cultivated, learned from, and built upon.

**Peer Review Fall 2013: Capstones and Integrative Learning**  
Senior capstones and other culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. This issue shows examples of learning outcomes and best practices for capstone courses and programs.

**Peer Review, Fall 2008**  
**Toward Intentionality and Integration**  
Intentionality and integrative learning, captured in the LEAP vision of **Essential Learning Outcomes**, have been themes in AAC&U work for decades. This issue features articles about institutions that are aligning institutional practices with educational goals, making clear to students what the important outcomes of college are, and developing opportunities for them to integrate and apply what they are learning. The full contents of this issue are available online as a PDF.

**General Education Maps and Markers: Designing Meaningful Pathways to Student Achievement**  
Written for faculty members, academic leaders, and policy makers, **General Education Maps and Markers: Designing Meaningful Pathways to Student Achievement** provides clear principles and guidelines to ensure that general education fosters the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and key proficiencies important for long-term success and flourishing, enriches students’ learning in the major, and prepares college students to successfully tackle complex problems. Recognizing that general education remains essential but too often underperforms, the authors of these principles and guidelines directly address this long-standing disconnect between the crucial goals we set for general education and the outdated practices that too often stand in the way of achieving these goals. Excellent resource for general education committees and undergraduate curricular reform efforts.

**General Education & Liberal Learning: Principles of Effective Practice**  
*By Paul L. Gaston with J. E. Clark, A. S. Ferren, P. Maki, T. L. Rhodes, K. M. Schilling, and D. Smith*  
General Education and Liberal Learning explores elements common to strong general education programs and examines how strong programs support liberal learning outcomes essential to success in the twenty-first century. The publication surveys the changes that have occurred in general education programs—and more broadly in higher education—since AAC&U’s **Strong Foundations: Twelve Principles for Effective General Education Programs** was published in 1994. It also discusses how institutions may improve their general education practices and provides numerous examples of successful practices. Chapters include, “Imperatives for and Drivers of Change,” “Principles of Strong General Education Programs,” “Intentionality,” “Alignment with the Majors,” “Effective Pedagogy,” “Assessment,” and “Institutional Commitment.” This publication is ideal for use by curriculum committees and groups working on reviewing, revising, or assessing general education programs.
At a time when the very model of liberal education is under increasing attack, the importance of an education that "empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change" (AAC&U 2007) could not be greater. That is why stakeholders from all corners of America’s colleges and universities—faculty, staff, students, governing boards, alumni, and so on—are so fiercely engaged in debates about the future of our collective mission. We see governing boards take dramatic (and puzzling) steps such as the one at the University of Virginia when it fired its president and then reversed course sixteen days later by reinstating her. Consider also the myriad debates in the last several years between students, faculty, and administrators over commencement speakers. And it doesn’t stop there. How many schools have witnessed instances of divisional disruptions: between academic affairs and student affairs, advancement offices, and financial affairs?

And yet perhaps no tension is more disruptive on our campuses than when faculty are pitted against the administration. Disagreements about the direction of the institution—the very soul of the institution—arise among these stakeholders for very legitimate reasons. For one, faculty and academic administrators are equally passionate about the value of our students’ educational experience and, as a result, are reluctant to concede territory when they believe they occupy the moral high ground. This is even more acute when the disagreements are about the curriculum, personnel, resource allocation, and similarly high-stakes issues. Second, expectations about appropriate consultation, collaboration, and transparency often depend on where one stands. Faculty expect—rightly so—to be consulted all along the way and in ways that are deep and meaningful. Administrators, on the other hand, are paid to move ideas through the system as efficiently as possible. The pressure on administrators to consult widely is further complicated by the push from governing boards to implement change swiftly.

But it does not have to be this way. There are several keys to negotiating differences between faculty and academic administrators, most of which are startlingly obvious but difficult to put into practice. From the administrative side it begins with “being present.” Administrators must recognize that when a disagreement over the soul of the institution emerges, all other tasks and responsibilities can wait. They must be present and hyper-responsive, inviting faculty representatives to meet with them immediately to defuse the situation. It is often wise to gather together at the faculty’s “home turf” (her or his office) rather than in the academic administrator’s to reduce the power differential.

Such conversations are made more challenging by the reality that faculty and administrators communicate in very different ways, especially when doing so in public or through widely accessible means. When administrators weigh in, they are always at risk of having the process appear “top-down.” When faculty do so, they may be characterized as “sounding off” without full information. Faculty are able to say virtually anything in a public setting; administrators are not. Administrators are constrained by the very nature of their position. Differences between faculty and administrators are in fact exacerbated precisely because faculty often instinctually resort to public debate when administrators must do most of their work behind closed doors. The venue for discussion and eventual resolution is important, and yet the preferences of each party are often incompatible.

From the faculty side, the very nature of a scholar’s and instructor’s professional life hinges on the vibrant exchange of ideas within an
atmosphere of transparency and constructive criticism. While at one time the faculty role in institutional management was more comprehensive, today faculty focus primarily on advancing scholarship, on innovating pedagogical strategies, and on managing the curriculum. With the evolution of professional management at our increasingly complex institutions, the boundaries between the purview of the faculty and the administration have become more uncertain and continue to evolve. This ambiguous situation leaves faculty questioning where the line is drawn between their own work and the work of the administration. Each side must appreciate that there are boundaries that frame exclusive territory for each, as well as a substantive middle ground. Indeed, to address the myriad challenges to higher education requires respect for different views, different roles, and different ways of working together.

REFERENCES

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)
(1) Title of Publication: Peer Review. (2) Publication no. 3334. (3) Date of Filing: 10/1/14. (4) Frequency of issue: quarterly. (5) Number of issues published annually: 4. (6) Annual subscription price: individual, $35; libraries, $445. (7) Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (8) Complete mailing address of the headquarters of the publisher: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (9) Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; Editor: Shelley Johnson Carey, Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; Managing Editor: none. (10) Owner: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (11) Known bondholders, mortgagors, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgagors, or other securities: none. (12) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during preceding 12 months. (13) Publication title: Peer Review. (14) Issue date for circulation data below: Spring 2014. (15) Extent and nature of circulation (the first figure indicates average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months; the second number indicates actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date): (A) Total no. of copies: 9,383/9,305. (B) Paid and/or requested circulation: (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 546/218. (2) Mail subscription: 8,245/8,201. (C) Total paid and/or requested circulation: 8,791/8,419. (D) Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means—samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 332/385. Free distribution outside the mail—carriers or other means: 171/70. (E) Total free distribution: 503/455. (F) Total Distribution: 9,294/8,874. (G) Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 89/431. (2) Returns from news agents: 0/0. (H) Total: 9,383/9,305. (1) Percent paid: 95%/95%. (16) Electronic Copy Circulation (A) Paid electronic copies: 1.5 average; 0 copies of Single issue published nearest to filing date (B) Total Paid Print copies plus paid electronic copies: 8,792.5/8,419 (C) Total Print Distribution: 9,295.5/8,874. (D) Percent paid (Print plus electronic): 95%/95% (17) This statement of ownership will be printed in the Fall 2014/Winter 2015 issue of this publication. (18) I certify that all information furnished is true and complete (signature and title of editor, publisher, business manager, or owner): Shelley Johnson Carey, Editor.

New AAC&U Publications

America’s Unmet Promise: The Imperative for Equity in Higher Education
By Keith Witham, Lindsey E. Malcom-Piqueux, Alicia C. Dowd, and Estela Mara Bensimon
This publication makes the case for the urgent need to expand access to and success in high-quality educational programs for students traditionally underserved in higher education. Addressing students’ access and success in terms of college completion as well as indicators of educational opportunity such as participation in high-impact practices, the authors present an equity-minded guiding framework that can be used throughout higher education. This publication is an excellent resource for launching conversations among educational leaders and practitioners about diversity, equity, and institutional change.

$15 members/$25 nonmembers/GMSAUM

The VALUE Breakthrough: Getting the Assessment of Student Learning in College Right
Through the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education initiative (VALUE), AAC&U is working to focus assessment on students’ best work. By focusing on the work produced in courses and programs rather than on standardized tests, VALUE has become a national movement to change the way we envision and approach student learning assessment. Author Daniel Sullivan tells us how VALUE relates to the larger aims of a high-quality liberal education, to the capabilities employers seek and reward, and to current public policy pressures. This publication is an excellent resource for campus, accreditation, or board discussions about learning outcomes assessment and accountability.

$12 members/$20 nonmembers/GMSVALUE
AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,300 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, research universities, and comprehensive universities of every type and size.

AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education and inclusive excellence at both the national and local levels, and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

Information about AAC&U membership, programs, and publications can be found at www.aacu.org.

### AAC&U Membership 2015

(1,345 members)

- Masters 31%
- Associates 12%
- Baccalaureate 24%
- Res & Doc 17%
- Other* 16%

*Specialized schools, state systems and agencies, and international affiliates

---

### Quantitative Reasoning

**Summer 2014**

### Gender Equity in STEM

**Spring 2014**

### E-Portfolios: For Reflection, Learning, and Assessment

**Winter 2014**

### Capstones and Integrative Learning

**Fall 2013**

---

**Single Issues: $8/$10**

The first price listed is available only to individuals on AAC&U member campuses (www.aacu.org/membership/list.cfm). Discounts are available for quantities of 11 or more. Subscription information can be found online at www.aacu.org/peerreview; annual rates are $35 for individuals and $45 for libraries.

To place an Order or Request More Information:

www.aacu.org/peerreview | 1.800.297.3775 | pub_desk@aacu.org

For additional information, including the full table of contents and selected articles from each issue, see www.aacu.org/peerreview.