

Developing an Integrated Core Curriculum: The Example of Seton Hall University

Workshop Facilitators:

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This proposed workshop session will address Theme Five: Integrating general education, the majors, the co-curriculum, and effective educational practices to achieve essential learning outcomes as identified in [College Learning for the New Global Century](#). Seton Hall University's new core curriculum, six years in the making, is designed to provide an integrated four-year experience for all undergraduates. It specifically addresses the "Essential Learning Outcomes" identified in the AAC&U's *College Learning for the New Global Century*. Beginning with a pair of Signature courses (interdisciplinary seminars taught by full-time faculty from across the university), two composition classes, and a University Life course, the new core will also incorporate ongoing instruction over the course of a student's four years at the university in five Proficiencies (Reading/Writing, Numeracy, Information Fluency, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking) and six Literacies (Scientific/Mathematic, Ethical, Religious, Aesthetic, Quantitative, Multicultural). The final pieces of the core are a third-year Signature course developed within departments, a senior capstone experience for students in their majors, and an e-portfolio that will be used for assessment of a student's achievement at the end of his or her university experience. The process of designing and implementing this interdisciplinary and four-year-long educational experience will be the subject of this workshop. We will lead students in an interactive session designed to offer ways this process could be replicated at other institutions.

We will begin the workshop with a brief overview of the Seton Hall core curriculum, both its content and its organizational plan. We will then illustrate the process by which the core was created: how the various constituencies were brought together; how faculty were involved in the process from the outset; and how existing campus models for funding and faculty development were used as models. Given this set of information and some guiding questions, we will then break the participants into small groups, based on institutional similarity, and ask them to consider the following in their own possible development of a comprehensive educational experience for their students: what essential learning outcomes they hope to achieve; what constituencies need to be involved in the process and how that might happen; how existing models (for faculty development, curricular change, and so on) can be utilized; some of the challenges, especially those specific to their campus, they can anticipate while trying to bring about curricular change; and what areas/individuals they can look to for support, especially financial incentives for faculty, who must be at the forefront of such change if it is to be achieved. The final part of the workshop will be an open discussion that allows participants to ask questions, hear from one another, and consider how this model can achieve specific student learning outcomes.

While Seton Hall University is a four-year, research institution, the core curriculum model we developed and implemented could be adapted for any size institution, from a

small, liberal arts college to a two-year community college. This session is geared for those either considering or just beginning the redesign of their general education program or core curriculum. Materials and information pertaining to Seton Hall's core curriculum can be found at <http://www.provost.shu.edu/senate/core/index.htm>

We believe this workshop will be an important addition to a conference dedicated to exploring integrative designs for general education and assessment, and that the experience at Seton Hall can provide a model for institutional change.