



*Blurring and Crossing
Boundaries: A Four-year
Curriculum Tailored to Student
Needs*

Jeffrey Shultz

**Assistant Provost for Special Projects and Professor of
Education**

Norah Shultz

**Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies
and Professor of Sociology**

Arcadia University

Arcadia University

*Founded in 1853 as
woman's seminary in
Western PA*



Many transformations

*Main campus
located 12 miles
from center city
Philadelphia*

*Co-educational,
comprehensive*

*3600 students:
55% undergraduate;
45% graduate*

Previous General Education Curriculum: Implemented in 1994

***Two core courses:
one on domestic diversity and one on global justice***

Traditional distribution requirements

Two composition courses

Two lab sciences

Intermediate level of language

One course with international content

Very traditional course counting:

“1 from column A” approach

Early Discussions

In the late 1990s a committee was formed to review the general education requirements in relation to the university's mission



The result was the creation of the [“Preamble to the General Education Requirements”](#) which was submitted to and approved by the faculty during the academic year 1999-2000

The Arcadia Promise

New President arrives on campus in July 2004



Created strategic plan which led to The Arcadia Promise



An Arcadia University Education should include:

*Integrative Learning
Global Perspectives
Personal Attention*

The Process of Reform

Spring 2006 task force convened: "The General Education Principles and Components Group"



Prepared framework of General Education program



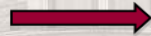
Reaffirmed the tenets of the preamble yet suggested new curricular elements



Comprised of the Provost and 10 faculty members (across ranks and disciplines)

The Process of Reform

May 2006: a committee is formed consisting of a member of faculty council, a member of the spring task force, and the chair of the undergraduate academic programs committee.



The committee brings the Spring Task force report to departmental meetings across campus in order to allow faculty members to make suggestions and raise concerns.



Begins a process of transparency and inclusion.

The Process of Reform

**Summer 2006:
Expanded Task
Force created.**

Charge



To revise some of the current general education requirements that Arcadia students must fulfill in order to more effectively align them with the goals of the General Education Preamble and the Arcadia Promise.



Composition

14 faculty and two members of President's Executive Council (the Vice President for Information Technology and the Vice President for Student Affairs)

To create new, required curricular experiences throughout an Arcadia student's four-year education that would directly fulfill the goals of the Preamble and the Promise; and incorporate the Required Curricular Experiences proposed by the General Education Principles and Components Group and approved by the full faculty at the May faculty meeting.



The Process of Reform

The Task force used the following documents:

Preamble to General Education

The Promise

Mission Statement

Knowledge and materials from participation in [AAC&U's Shared Futures Project](#)

The Process of Reform

Results of the summer committee

Created a series of intellectual practices and areas of inquiry which mapped onto the preamble of the General Education Preamble

Example from Preamble:

Develop critical and analytical reasoning skills

How addressed in new curriculum:

Natural and Physical World Area of Inquiry

Quantitative Reasoning Intellectual Practice

Writing-Intensive Requirements Intellectual Practice

The Process of Reform

Example from the Arcadia Promise:

A global perspective that emphasizes both local and international interconnections and differences

Fulfilled by the following new curriculum components:

Experiential Reflection requirement
Global Connections Intellectual Practice



Arcadia Promise

***An Arcadia University Education
should include:***

***Integrative Learning
Global Perspectives
Personal Attention***



The Process of Reform

**Fall 2006:
Implementation
Team formed.**

Charge

Incorporate departmental and other feedback to redo and “flesh out” the document.

Continued earlier process of transparency and inclusion.



Composition

Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Chair of the summer committee and three other faculty from the summer committee (one the chair of the Undergraduate Programs Committee, a second undergraduate faculty member, and one graduate faculty member).



The Process of Reform

Fleshed out the proposal and went back through the departments to obtain feedback for final revisions.



Final version presented at March 2007 faculty meeting.



Approved by just over 90% of the faculty after the second reading at the April 2007 faculty meeting.

The Undergraduate Curriculum Steering Committee

A steering committee was then appointed to take the proposal and create a “working” curriculum to be in place for the incoming class of 2008.



Major change during this process was to remove the concept of General Education and to move to the idea of a completely integrated undergraduate curriculum.