BRIDGING TRADITIONAL CAMPUS DIVIDES WITH A COLLEGE-WIDE TRANSFORMATIVE INTEGRATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

Eric Eliason, Joan Kopperud, Mark Krejci, Nathalie Rinehardt
WHY INTEGRATIVE LEARNING AT CONCORDIA COLLEGE?

- Refines and enhances Concordia’s commitment to educating students to become responsibly engaged in the world
- Creates educational experiences that prepare students for the 21st century
- Provides a distinctive liberal arts experience that prepares students to lead lives of purpose
- Aligns with other integrative learning initiatives in higher education, e.g., AAC&U LEAP initiative
DEVELOPMENT: PHASE 1

- Summer working group (2014) proposed integrative learning (IL) model
  - Established 5 IL criteria
  - Recommended incorporation of IL over 4 years
FIVE INTEGRATIVE LEARNING CRITERIA

1. Venture beyond the classroom

2. Encounter and work alongside persons or groups wrestling with complex situations, problems, questions, or challenges

3. Construct meaningful, interdisciplinary responses to these encounters, taking seriously the perspectives of diverse others.

4. Discover questions, perspectives, and problems not necessarily scripted in a course syllabus and work through ambiguity, frustration, and disequilibrium

5. Sharpen and apply skills and competencies that flow out of a liberal arts education and are relevant to future employment
INTEGRATIVE LEARNING OVER FOUR YEARS

- Introduce integrative learning in first-year seminar
- Encourage core courses to include IL
- Expand fall break to 1 week to facilitate IL
- Require two in-depth IL experiences
- Require departments and programs to develop an IL plan
DEVELOPMENT: PHASE 2

- Senate endorsed IL model (Fall 2014)
- Governance committees and division chairs charged to develop IL
- Curriculum committee clarified the 5 IL criteria
- Senate approved IL criteria & requirement of 2 intensive IL experiences (Fall 2015)
- Concordia established an IL task force
DEVELOPMENT: PHASE 3

- Task Force converted criteria into Pivotal Experience in Applied Knowledge (PEAK) framework (2015 / 2016)
- Proposed implementation timeline for PEAK
- Offered IL/PEAK workshops to faculty and staff
Senate established Integrative Learning Committee (ILC)

Senate approved PEAK graduation requirement for all students matriculating in Fall 2017

- Two PEAKs required for graduation
- One must be completed during junior or senior year
- Do not have to be taken in the major
- Are not credit-bearing
- Graded as “S” or “U”
# PEAK Framework

## Level I

### Criterion 1 | Venture beyond the classroom.
- a. The experience is structured within a typical college classroom.
- b. Time inside the classroom is largely controlled by the schedule on the syllabus.

### Criterion 2 | Encounter and work alongside persons or groups wrestling with complex situations, problems, questions, or challenges.
- a. Students primarily work on simulated projects or assignments.
- b. Resulting student projects are intended for the classroom context.

## Level II

### Criterion 1 | Venture beyond the classroom.
- a. The experience includes time outside of the classroom.
- b. The time outside the classroom is periodic or limited.

### Criterion 2 | Encounter and work alongside persons or groups wrestling with complex situations, problems, questions, or challenges.
- a. Students engage with a real, non-simulated challenge that requires exploring multiple perspectives.
- b. Resulting student projects are intended for an audience beyond the classroom.
- c. Students engage in dialogue with persons vested in the issue or problem.

### Criterion 3 | Construct meaningful, interdisciplinary responses to these encounters, taking seriously multiple perspectives.
- a. The experience focuses on a single discipline and/or perspective.
- b. Students create meaningful multidisciplinary responses.

## Level III

### Criterion 1 | Venture beyond the classroom.
- a. The experience includes extensive time outside of the typical college classroom.
- b. The time devoted to the experience is intensive.
- c. The learning experience allows students to become intellectually immersed in their projects.

### Criterion 2 | Encounter and work alongside persons or groups wrestling with complex situations, problems, questions, or challenges.
- a. Students engage with a real, non-simulated challenge that requires exploring multiple perspectives.
- b. Resulting student projects are intended for an audience beyond the classroom and have potential for direct impact on a community outside the classroom.
- c. Students work collaboratively and engage in dialogue with persons vested in the challenge.

### Criterion 3 | Construct meaningful, interdisciplinary responses to these encounters, taking seriously multiple perspectives.
- a. Students engage with people who hold different points of view on an issue or problem, and, by doing so, students develop an understanding of multiple perspectives.
- b. Students create tangible and thoughtful/interdisciplinary responses to new understanding of issues, problems, and perspectives.
- c. Students recognize the perspectives and assumptions they bring to addressing the issue or question.

### Criterion 4 | Discover questions, perspectives, and problems not necessarily scripted in a course syllabus and work through ambiguity, frustration, and disequilibrium.
- a. Students connect theoretical perspectives and practical applications as they engage in scripted problems.
- b. Students identify and explore ethical issues through multiple perspectives.

### Criterion 5 | Sharpen and apply skills and competencies that flow out of a liberal arts education and are relevant to future employment.
- a. Students make clear, if any, connections between the liberal arts and future employment.
- b. There are limited, if any, opportunities for students to make intentional connections to personal, professional, or civic education.

### Criterion 6 | Demonstrate the skills and competencies of liberal learning that are directly relevant to future employment.
- a. Students demonstrate the skills and competencies of liberal learning that are directly relevant to future employment.
- b. Students will articulate how the skills, competencies, and knowledge gained in their experience transfer to personal, professional, and civic endeavors.
- c. Students engage purposefully with community members related to their future career paths and/or civic engagement.
- d. Students examine their own values and assumptions with regard to responsible engagement in career, work, community, and personal life.
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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>c. The learning experience allows students to become intellectually immersed in their projects.</td>
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TYPES OF PEAKS

- ILC begins approving various types of PEAK proposals

- Course (required or optional)
- Internship or Co-op
- Research experience
- Independent study
- Study away
- Service project
- Co-curricular
- Student-proposed

WHO CAN PROPOSE A PEAK?

- Faculty
- Staff
- Students
COURSE REQUIRED

PUBLIC RELATIONS

COM 403
COURSE PEAK
PEAK REQUIRED

Student groups partner with area nonprofits to assist with the public relations needs of the organizations. The students produce materials such as campaign plans, social media plans, media kits, websites, promotional videos, press releases, and other items for the nonprofits.
DIRECTED RESEARCH

MAYO INNOVATIONS SCHOLARS PROGRAM

BIOL 480, NEU 487, BUS 487 (OPTIONAL) RESEARCH PEAK

Students accepted for this opportunity attend an orientation at the Mayo Clinic in the fall and work as an interdisciplinary team evaluating an assigned biomedical innovation developed at the Mayo Clinic for viability and market potential. They present their formal recommendation to Mayo professionals and program participants in Rochester by giving an oral presentation and submitting a written report.
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP PEAK
PEAK OPTIONAL

Students selected for certain campus leadership positions engage in leadership development through readings, assignments, and reflection, with an emphasis on leading as a way of learning.
STUDY AWAY

NATURE AND CULTURE:
ENCOUNTERING LANDSCAPE THROUGH NATURE WRITING AS PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE ART OF THE AMERICAN WEST

ENVR/PHIL/ART 380
COURSE PEAK
PEAK REQUIRED

Students travel, camp, and create written and photographic work exploring the relationship between nature and culture in places such as the oil fields in the Bakke, Yellowstone National Park, Arches and Canyonland National Parks, and Earthship Community in Taos, NM.
SCIENCE FOR EVERYONE: CREATING POSITIVE SCIENCE EXPERIENCES FOR NONTRADITIONAL INDIVIDUALS

RESEARCH/COLLABORATIVE PROJECT/LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
STUDENT PROPOSED

Robin is focused on developing and implementing hands-on science experiences for individuals with special needs at a local high school, where she will work in collaboration with a special needs support team.
PEAK RECOGNITION
INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE SHIFT

- Staff
- Students
- Faculty
- Advancement
- Board of Regents
- External Grants
- Alumni Relations

Integrative Learning/PEAK
OPERATIONALIZING PEAK

- Department Integrative Learning Plans
- Interdisciplinary Programs Integrative Learning Plans
- Enrollment/Marketing
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Registrar’s Office
DEVELOPMENT: PHASE 5

- Departments and programs develop IL plans to facilitate campus-wide conversation and strategic thinking; plans address
  - how IL aligns with department/program mission/vision and student learning outcomes
  - how department/program will incorporate IL across the undergraduate curriculum
The Major

Do we need to change our program goals & student learning outcomes?

Has Senior Seminar outlived its usefulness?

Should we require PEAKs in the Psychology major?

PEAK Development

Should we offer course-based PEAKS? If so, how many and how often?

Should undergraduate research be a PEAK? Should cooperative learning be a PEAK?

What changes need to be made to make UR/Co-Op a PEAK?
Department discussions leading to revised program that incorporates PEAKs
The psychology department changes the major, develops new courses and creates non-course PEAKs.
ASSESSMENT

**Started By**

- Consulting AAC&U and other resources for assessment planning.
- Working with Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop assessment plans.
- Coordinate assessment planning with Office of Community Engagement.
- Consulting campus Assessment Committee to offer IL/PEAK assessment workshops.

**In Progress**

- 12 question survey, went out Fall 2018 semester to students enrolled in a PEAK.
- Informal faculty focus group to talk about PEAK process.
- Longitudinal study.
### EARLY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- 12 question survey distributed to all students enrolled in a PEAK experience in Fall semester 2018

<table>
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<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Results: Agree or Strongly Agree (combined)</th>
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<td>This PEAK helped me <strong>connect</strong> what I learned in a classroom (research, readings, discussions, etc.) to the <strong>real world</strong>.</td>
<td><strong>99.1%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>This PEAK helped me examine <strong>my own values and assumptions</strong>.</td>
<td><strong>91.7%</strong></td>
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<td>This PEAK helped me gain skills and competencies that will be <strong>relevant to my future employment</strong>.</td>
<td><strong>93.6%</strong></td>
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WHAT STUDENTS SAID

“This experience put me out of my comfort zone and forced me to learn in a way that is more realistic to how I will continue to learn after I graduate.”

“Doing a PEAK with my SGA position has allowed me to learn more in-depth leadership strategies and skills that I can directly apply to my other leadership roles such as Residence Life.”
QUESTIONS?
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<td>a. Students primarily work on simulated projects or assignments.</td>
<td>a. Students engage with a real, non-simulated challenge.</td>
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<td>b. Resulting student projects are intended for the classroom context.</td>
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<td>c. Students engage in dialogue with persons vested in the issue or problem.</td>
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**CRITERION 3 | Construct meaningful, interdisciplinary responses to these encounters, taking seriously multiple perspectives.**

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<td>b. Students create meaningful multidisciplinary responses.</td>
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<td>a. Students connect theoretical perspectives and practical applications as they engage in scripted problems.</td>
<td>a. Students engage with complex and ambiguous problems and perspectives which require flexibility, and for which a solution may not be found.</td>
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<td>b. Students connect theoretical perspectives and practical applications.</td>
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<td>c. Students identify and explore ethical issues through multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>c. Students apply ethical and other perspectives to unscripted problems.</td>
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<td>a. Students make few, if any, connections between the liberal arts and future employment.</td>
<td>a. Students create a product that demonstrates skills and competencies of liberal learning that are relevant to future employment.</td>
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<td>b. There are limited, if any, opportunities for students to make intentional connections to personal, professional, or civic vocation.</td>
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