Creating Curricular Coherence: Three Examples of Institutional Change

Periclean Colleges and Universities
Allegheny College • Bates College • Berea College • Bethune-Cookman University
Carleton College • Chatham University • Dillard University • Drew University
Elon University • The Evergreen State College • Goucher College • Hampshire College
Hendrix College • Macalester College • Morehouse College • New England College
The New School • Occidental College • Pace University • Pitzer College • Reed College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute • Rhodes College • St. Mary’s College of Maryland
Skidmore College • Swarthmore College • Ursinus College • Wagner College
Whitman College • Widener University • The College of Wooster

Project Pericles appreciates the generous support of
The Teagle Foundation and the Eugene M. Lang Foundation
Laying a Foundation

- Researching
- Curricular Mapping
- Communicating Pathways
What & Why of Project
Research

Geography

Macleaster's Department of Geography is nationally recognized for its faculty and research in geology. Students have opportunities to work with esteemed faculty members, as well as with specialized programs and courses designed to prepare them for careers in geography. The department offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs, including a major in geography, a minor in geography, and a geographic information system (GIS) program.

Faculty and Staff

The geography department is composed of highly qualified and experienced faculty members committed to providing students with a comprehensive understanding of geographic concepts. The faculty includes experts in physical geography, economic geography, and human geography.

Recent Faculty

J. Brian Wood, professor of geography, specializes in economic geography and urban planning. His research focuses on the economic development of urban areas and the impact of globalization on local economies.

K. Lee, professor of geography, focuses on environmental geography and conservation. His research examine the impact of human activities on the environment and the development of sustainable practices.

K. Jones, professor of geography, specializes in political geography and international relations. His research focuses on the political dynamics of international relations and the role of geography in shaping political outcomes.

K. Taylor, professor of geography, is an expert in human geography and urban studies. His research examines the impact of urbanization on social and economic development.

Recent Projects

The geography department is involved in several research projects, including:

- An analysis of the impact of climate change on coastal communities
- A study of the effects of urbanization on biodiversity
- A project examining the role of geography in economic development
- A research on the impact of globalization on regional economies

These projects provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, preparing them for careers in a variety of fields.
Curricular Mapping
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<td>LO3: Analyze, process, and present information</td>
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<td>LG2: Learn about existing scholarship on a topic and engage with that scholarship in preparing an argument</td>
<td>LO1: Identify, summarize, appraise, and synthesize other scholars’ historical arguments</td>
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<td>LO2: Sift, organize, question, synthesize, and interpret complex material</td>
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<td>LO3: Insert own analysis within an existing debate</td>
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<td>LG3: Consider the ways that contingency and context shaped the way people acted and thought in the past, and appraise the past on its own terms</td>
<td>LO1: Students understand and can explain History as a process (“doing History”)</td>
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<td>LO2: Students understand and can explain History as a content area (“learning History”)</td>
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<td>LO3: Explain multiple causes of complex events and understand contingency</td>
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<td>LG4: Recognize the nature of historical evidence</td>
<td>LO1: Recognize the nature of historical evidence</td>
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<td>LG5: Critically appraise perspectives and ethical implications</td>
<td>LO1: Critically appraise perspectives of historical actors</td>
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<td>LO3: Students learn about the responsibilities and ethical implications</td>
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<td>LG6: Communication &amp; Writing</td>
<td>LO1: Students can effectively orally communicate their ideas</td>
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<td>LG7: Write for multiple audiences</td>
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<td>LG8: Students understand and can describe the disciplinary writing mechanics and formatting of History</td>
<td>LO5: Students understand and can describe the disciplinary writing mechanics and formatting of History</td>
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### Curricular Map: Civic Engagement in the Geography Department

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**Class = Classroom only**  
**Field = Observations/interactions in the field**  
**Opt. = Optional individual engagement**  
**Direct = Direct relationship w/ community partner**

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**Learning Objective #1**: Student can effectively communicate in a civic context, showing ability to do all of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives

**Learning Objective #2**: Student connects and extends knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from geography to civic engagement

**Learning Objective #3**: Student reflects upon their roles, motivations, and actions with regard to their involvement within and across community to achieve a civic aim

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**Introduced**:  
Students are introduced to this learning objective by the final day of class.

**Reinforced**:  
Students are sufficiently familiar with the learning objective that instructors can immediately move past an introductory lesson in future courses.

**Mastered**:  
Students have achieved the level of skill in this learning objective that would be expected of a graduating Geography major.

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“What does it mean to be a geographer?”  
“...A community-engaged geographer?”

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* In this case, GEOG 294 refers to “Geography of Asia”, most recently taught by I-Chun Catherine Chang in the fall of 2016  
† For the final in GEOG 341 (City Life), students choose between producing an individual project or working with a local organization for several hours per week during the semester. Learning Objective #1 is introduced for students producing individual projects, while it is reinforced for students working with local organizations.
Historic Rondo Neighborhood

Since the 1990s, Macalester College has maintained a relationship with the Historic Rondo Neighborhood of Saint Paul through various projects initiated by students and faculty.

ABOUT RONDO

From Rondo Avenue Inc.:

"In the 1930s, Rondo Avenue was at the heart of Saint Paul, MN’s largest Black neighborhood. African-Americans whose families had lived in Minnesota for decades and others who were just arriving from the South made up a vibrant, vital community that was in many ways independent of the white society around it.

The construction of I-94 in the 1960s shattered this tight-knit community, displaced thousands of African-Americans into a racially segregated city and a discriminatory housing market, and erased a now-legendary neighborhood.

While the construction of I-94 radically changed the landscape of the neighborhood, the community of Rondo still exists and its persistence and growth are celebrated through events like Rondo Days and the Jazz Festival."

In July 2018, the Rondo community celebrated the opening of the Rondo Commemorative Plaza, a learning and reflective space for community members to learn about the Rondo community in the past and read about the houses demolished to make way for the construction of I-94.
Academic Projects

Numerous Macalester courses have completed projects with different Historic Rondo Neighborhood community partners. The following projects are listed by academic discipline then by course title.

American Studies

Engaging the 21st Century City: Innovation, Inequality, and Urban Development in the Twin Cities and Seattle (Professor Paul Schadewald and Professor Rebecca Wingo)

This class explores urban issues in the Twin Cities and Seattle. Students who enrolled in a four-credit experience completed independent, digital projects, including a project on the theme of gentrification in the neighborhoods near the Historic Rondo community.


Environmental Studies

Senior Seminar in Environmental Studies (Professor Chris Wells)

Students studied the impact of I-94’s construction and aftermath on the Rondo community. Each student embarked on an individual research project and looked at the environmental connection between Rondo and I-94 through various perspectives, such as the Environmental Assessment (EAs), noise pollution, and other health risks. At the end of the course, students present their research findings through a poster presentation.
Common Harvest Farm

Due to the emphasis on sustainability throughout multiple academic disciplines, a number of courses at Macalester partner with Common Harvest Farm in Osceola, Wisconsin to understand the complexities of sustainable farming and associated challenges in policy. Students take field trips to the farm to witness community sustainable agriculture (CSA) and the logistics of running a farm. Macalester students also have the opportunity to declare a Food, Agriculture, and Society concentration and intern with Common Harvest Farm.

The 40-acre farm was founded in 1989 as an outreach of an urban peace and justice community seeking a greater connection to the land and their food. It produces 40 different vegetables and herbs with a focus on the traditional carrots, tomatoes, green beans and potatoes. In addition to a regular season share, they offer a fruit and extended season share. Common Harvest Farm is owned and operated by Dan Guenthner, Margaret Pennings, and their three children Annie, Grace and William.
Piloting a Sustainability & Civic Engagement General Education Pathway @ Widener University

- Goals
- Methods / Progress
- Challenges
- Lessons
Welcome to the Sustainability & Civic Engagement Pathway Garden

This paver garden commemorates the Sustainability & Civic Engagement general education pathway in the Widener College of Arts & Sciences. The general education pathway is supported by a Curricular Coherence Grant from the Teagle Foundation, made possible through Widener’s affiliation with Project Pericles and the Eugene M. Lang Foundation (2017-2020).

The pathway was conceived for a two-fold purpose: 1) to enhance the curricular coherence across existing general education courses touching on the sustainability theme; and 2) highlight and market this coherent set of courses more effectively to interested students.

Informed by an understanding of sustainability as represented by the Oxfam doughnut conceptualization, pathway courses must contain content spanning across at least two of the economic, environmental and social spheres of sustainability.

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<tr>
<th>Spring 2019 Pathway Courses</th>
<th>Additional Pathway Courses</th>
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<td>ANTH 105 Introduction to Anthropology</td>
<td>ANTH 241 Rom, Raca &amp; Revolution Field Study</td>
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<td>ANTH 231 Progress &amp; Poverty</td>
<td>ANTH 261 Urban Anthropology</td>
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<td>CHEM 120 Sustainable Chemistry</td>
<td>ANTH 263 No Place Like Home: Mass Migrations in Perspective</td>
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<td>CJ/SW 208 Serving the Underserved: A Global Perspective</td>
<td>ENOL 205 Community Literacy</td>
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<td>ENVR/HUM 183 Coffee Culture &amp; the Environment</td>
<td>ENVR 171 Principles of Environmental Science</td>
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<td>SOC 315 Poverty &amp; Society</td>
<td>POLS 215 Environmental Politics &amp; Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC 316 Social Movements &amp; Social Change</td>
<td>PSY 216 Community Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSCI 202 Contemporary Issues in Political Engagement</td>
<td>SOC 202 Civic Engagement &amp; Social Activism</td>
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<td>SPAN 301 Spanish Conversation &amp; Composition I</td>
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<td>SSCI 120 Engaged Citizenship</td>
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GENERAL EDUCATION

STEPS TO REFORMING GENERAL EDUCATION AT MOREHOUSE COLLEGE
REFORM AS PROCESS

- CLARIFYING THE PROBLEM
- CREATING A TEAM
- INCLUDING STAKEHOLDERS ACROSS CAMPUS
- TAKING INCREMENTAL STEPS