

Response to Faculty Senate		
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Issue in Senate report 16 April 2010	Response	Co-curricular Issue?
1. The intent is to cover the skills provided by the eliminated courses through a combination of curricular and co-curricular activities.	The fundamental change is a the development of a voluntary (or at least non-credit) system, providing skills when needed and in a useful format. There are models, for example KSOM's own Passport Program.	Yes
1.1. Undeclared majors:	The choice of a major is a foundational question for all students, not simply undecided majors. Since sizeable portion of our students change majors, and since students arrive with a limited perspective on what is possible and indeed what is useful, the need for a broad introduction to possible majors and the consequences of a choice of majors should be available for all students. This is a critical co-curricular program.	Yes
1.1.1. Limits on major seminars	For reasons cited in 1.1 above, I am not enthusiastic about major seminars. But there are very positive accomplishments attributable to major freshmen seminars, and until a largely satisfactory co-curricular program is in place and can provide a useful comparison, major seminars should remain an option. There are very few situations where a student would be required to take two freshmen seminars (SJLA, for example, is not one of them), so either these few students could count the extra seminar as an free elective or adjudication could be handled by a dean.	
1.1.2. Uncertain majors	same as above.	
1.2. Physical fitness and wellness.	The Exercise Science and Sport Department and the Existing Wellness Program are working together to develop a campus wide wellness program.	Yes

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1.3. Computer skills.	On conjunction with CTLE, and if willing the Computer Science Department, the goal is to develop a series of open tutorials that will provide skills to students as they are needed.	Yes
1.4. Oral communication (Eloquentia Perfecta designation)	This issue provides the faculty with an opportunity to review the question of <i>eloquentia perfecta</i> as a curriculum wide issue. Note that this issue includes oral communication, media presentations and writing. All classes have a role and a responsibility to hone the writing and speaking skills of students. This is not simply a once and done task that can be attributed to one department, much less one course. Of course, the real problem is how to do it.	
2. Freshman Seminar		
2.1. How to handle Ignatian tradition	Much of the answer to this question should be evident in the Student Outcomes attached to this document.	
2.2. Mission v. retention	I do not think there is a disparity between mission and retention in the goals of academic programs. If we believe in the value of a Jesuit education, and this proposal gets the purpose of a Freshmen Seminar approximately right, then we accomplish the mission while we prepare and engage the student in the life of the mind that is the core of a Jesuit and liberal arts education. But note, study after study and comment after comment links the full capabilities of a Jesuit education to the future life and career needs of our students. The whole package	

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2.3. Best practices	A review of best practices (as in part those presented by the Faculty Senate Report of April 17, 2010) indicate that this proposal is within both the conceptual and credit boundaries that comprise the mainstream discussions of Freshmen Seminars. Pursued vigorously, the co-curricular opportunities based on needs identified by the Senate report are actually capable to pushing our program into the forefront of these discussions.	
2.4. Expand oral component (parallel written component)	This is an excellent proposal the accomplishment of which depends upon a faculty led and faculty endorsed program. A curriculum wide <i>Eloquentia Perfecta</i> program will not be easy to articulate or to enforce, but it is the right thing to do. The provost's Office stands ready to work with the Senate and the faculty in general to describe and implement such a program.	
2.5. Expectations	For learning outcomes, cf. Appendix Two to this document.	
2.6. Balance of types of seminars/should there be a variety?	I have proposed three different types of Freshmen Seminars because of the present practice of allowing freshmen seminars in majors and the apparent desire of some majors to retain the practice. I also felt there were advantages to allowing seminars in GE core areas. As is clear from my comments on major seminars, I think that type is the least desirable. This certainly is an area that experience with the seminars might have great deal to teach us.	

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2.7. What to do with practical skills of intd 100	For Learning outcomes, cf. Appendix Two to this document. For my sense of what to do with the remainder of the current objects, see Appendix three.	Yes
2.8. Gradual Implementation	First, we are piloting these seminars this fall. A variety of interesting things have already been learned and problems surfaced by this effort. Second, at some point implementing the seminars must simply be done or a thorough mess is made with regard to most of the questions raised by this report.	
2.9. 4 hours?	I think creating a four credit freshmen seminar would be a mistake. First, it avoids the integration of content into a discussion of what a freshmen should be looking to as an academic career. Second, much of what is covered in the current freshmen seminar is not academic and can be handled in other ways (as described in this document and as needs further development in future discussions). Third, it would create a scheduling morass for both faculty and students.	

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2.10. Full time faculty	I strongly endorse the idea that full-time faculty (including faculty specialists) teach this seminar. Lectures and adjuncts should not teach it. Students benefit from quickly establishing a relationship with a full-time faculty member and it is desirable that this relationship be available to the student for his or her four years here. Further, the task of introducing the student to a life of the mind requires a mature and developed sense of what that involves. The expectation is that full time faculty have these characteristics and can model them for students.	
2.11. Prep for teaching the seminar	The seminar is being piloted now. I expect we will learn important elements of the task of teaching this course from these pilots. Further, later in this semester, we will provide information discussion sessions to assist faculty members in developing seminars.	
2.12. Resources for undeclared majors?	As stated above, we will provide a variety of resources for undeclared majors, as well as for all students many of whom will be changing majors anyway. Plans are underway for the deans, advising centers, and career services to provide developmentally appropriate resources that will aid in the selection of majors, the development of an individual curriculum, the identification of internships and post-graduate possibilities, as well as usual career guidance. Importantly, the expectation of a student-faculty relationship developed in the seminar is crucial to the mentorship of the student until such time as he or she develops a mentor within the chosen major.	Yes

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2.13. How to count the seminar in majors?	That will be up to the major. If the faculty of the major wishes to have a major freshmen seminar, that will count to the major. If they do not, the seminar can count toward core general education requirements (e.g. a philosophy or theology intro course) or it may count simply as a general education elective.	
2.14. Catholic Studies??	I do not think Catholic Studies (a concentration) is conceptually broad enough or staffed adequately to carry this Seminar.	
2.15. Skills again	This is a concern with the General Education change not specifically with the Freshmen Seminar. In contrast to the current Freshmen Seminar, the proposed seminar would by its nature address writing and speaking. At least with regard to the seminar, that is a substantial improvement. The larger questions created by proposed changes in General Education are addressed elsewhere in this document through mechanisms that include CTLE, and the development of an Eloquentia Perfecta program.	Yes
2.16. Changes in majors?	As stated above, I think the freshmen seminar as proposed creates a very strong foundation for a student's experience of a Scranton education in its breadth and depth. Changing majors should actually be easier and more congenial to the student than the current more modest system.	
3. Misc.		

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3.1. Sufficiently radical?	I am not sure what this section or the following one calls for. Generally speaking, if a curriculum is to have general education requirements there are two models: Subject area requirements organized around differing methodologies (what we currently have, on which the current proposal is based), and required content based courses, such as a Great Books program or a Western Civilization program. Over the years, I have heard folks talk of the latter. I have never sensed that it had significant traction here; indeed, the discussions of that possibility during the last curriculum revision were very negative when that possibility came up (under the guise of interdisciplinarity). Thus, the most reasonable approach seemed to be to improve what we already do. How radical the improvement is, I will leave to others to judge, but this proposal does have the advantage of reasonably quickly accomplishing what I consider a significant improvement in our general education curriculum without precluding discussions of either further improvements or a shift to another model.	
3.1.1. From scratch?	cf. 3.1	
3.1.2. Cap on hours permitted for all majors?	There is no proposed cap on hours permitted for majors (or required for majors). Majors remain in full control of their courses and their curriculum. The only possible limit on majors comes with regard to the fifteen free credits that are part of the General Education requirements (cf. section 3.2).	

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3.1.3. Necessity of drop to 120 hours?	The number of credits we require for graduation has been a faculty and administration concern for some time. This is particularly true for credit heavy majors, which are helped by eliminating ten credits of GE requirements. As illustrated by Appendix Two, our requirements are significantly higher than our colleagues in the AJCU, which in and of itself is not a compelling argument. But when you look at the collection of positive accomplishments in the proposal, there is little reason to be so out of step with competitors.	Yes
3.1.4. Mandate all majors at 120?	There are no mandates for majors involved in this proposal. Majors are left free to decide what courses are required for their students within the major. Indeed, credit heavy majors are assisted by the reduction in GE requirements of ten credits.	
3.2. Free 15 credits?	Part of the mission and tradition of the University is to provide a liberal arts component to our student's education. The point of the free electives is to provide students with the opportunity to explore a range of subjects in order to be liberally educated and to encourage their curiosity. The current practice of allowing majors to require their majors to take specific courses subverts the purpose of free electives, not to mention creating the contradiction of a required free elective.	

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3.3. 15 free credits bars foreign language	This was not addressed in the original proposal. It makes sense to propose the following addition: "The exclusion of the free credits from any required use by the student's first major does not apply to any second major. That is, a student may use those fifteen free credits to construct a second major, including a major in a world language or an individualized major.	
3.4. Behind the curve?	Yes, we are behind the curve. I have attached as Appendix Two a chart from the Jesuit magazine <i>Conversations</i> what should there are several anachronistic elements to our curriculum, particularly our expectation of 130 credits for graduation. The point of this proposal, in part, is to bring the university in line with our fellow Jesuit colleges and universities.	
3.5. ADP?	The ADP core includes a Freshmen Seminar that they take as a part of their program. That practice could continue. They also now take Comm 100. One simple solution to that proposed gap in the ADP curriculum would be to fill it with an ADP course on public speaking that could be counted against their free elective.	
4. Administration.		

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4.1. Usurpation	I would like to think we are colleagues in this effort. The Faculty Senate is a full partner in this discussion and this is appropriate as the curriculum and courses are subject to the full review of the FSCC and the faculty Senate. This document is an effort to respond completely and thoroughly to questions raised by the Senate's subcommittee, and the proposal does reaffirm the FSCC's responsibility for the proposed Freshmen Seminars as they are developed. As issues arise, they will be addressed collaboratively.	
4.2. Resources and support	Some faculty resources have already been developed and put into place (notably positions in philosophy and theology). Other faculty lines will be identified as faculty members and departments choose to offer seminars. Approximately fifty seminars will need to be offered; scheduling will be a bit rough until we have a pattern in place but we are close to having the resources already in place. For a few years there will be sophomores and above who will still need freshmen core courses, and there will always be a need for basic core courses for those students who take a freshmen seminar in their major or as a free elective. These are scheduling issues which will be handled by deans and chairs. The physical infrastructure will also take a little while to get firmly in place; with the new science building we will have some new dedicated seminar rooms, and we are planning the development of additional ones elsewhere on campus.	

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4.2.1. Expansion of CTLE	I have engaged Andre Oberle and Dean Kratz in a discussion of the opportunities and resultant needs this proposal contains for CTLE. The identification of the needs for CTLE will accompany the identification of how it will support the general task of these changes. These discussions must include the Faculty Senate and identification of how to proceed with computer literacy and public speaking..	
4.2.2. Integration of physical fitness and wellness	Exercise Science and Sport are already in discussions with the existing Wellness Program to establish and support a creative and challenging wellness program for the entire University community, including students, staff and faculty.	
4.2.3. Faculty Training	The first step in faculty training will be to discuss the results of the pilot seminars now underway. As those results become clear, a series of seminars or some form of gathering will be established to aid faculty. The topics that are likely needed would include tips on course description and syllabus development, pedagogy of seminars, and support for subject concerns, such as how to approach the Ignatian mission of the University,	
4.2.4. Standards for Content and Pedagogy	I have attached a proposal for learning outcomes for the Freshmen Seminar. These establish standards for the pedagogy of the seminar. I also propose that the faculty Senate establish a committee to oversee the development and implementation of the seminar.	

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4.2.5. Review Mechanisms for Approval	The faculty Senate Curriculum Committee would be the normal avenue for approval of any new courses or curriculum changes. For this year, in anticipation of a large number of proposals for freshmen seminars, Ben Burnham has agreed to chair a subcommittee of the FSCC to review only freshmen seminars. He would work closely with Terry Sweeny , the current chair of the FSCC.	
4.2.6. Review Mechanisms for Oversight	Oversight of the GE curriculum is ordinarily handled by the CCC. I think that practice should continue.	
4.2.7. Review Mechanisms for Assessment	Again, the CCC is responsible for our GE evaluation. That body should continue to have that responsibility. If it needs assistance in this task, the nature of the assistance need should be identified and resources will be provided.	
4.2.8. Co-curricular activity transcript	This is a good idea. One of the more significant issues with dropping certain GE expectations in the light of a sense that students can be and should be responsible for their education is a (paradoxical) concern with ensuring that certain vital skills are learned. A co-curricular transcript (such as the KSOM Passport system) is an attractive way to accomplish this. Even there enforcement remains an issue. I would welcome a committee from the Faculty Senate work with Student Affairs to identify the full range of issues that need to be addressed and create a mechanism for doing so. Much of the existing orientation, skills and planning goals of the existing Freshmen Seminar could be considered in this discussion, but I do not see how these goals warrent academic credit.	Yes

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4.2.9. Revision of catalog	Catalog revisions are a separate issue. The move to an on-line catalog has already been accomplished and we are continually improving the on-line edition in response to suggestions from faculty, advisors, and students. NOTE: In order to allow sufficient time and energy to the development of freshmen seminars and their review by the FSCC, I am asking the Senate for expediting at least a provisional approval of the freshmen seminar in October.	
4.2.10. Assessment of Eloquentia Perfecta system	Assessment of any system of accomplishing Eloquentia Perfecta must be built into the program that accomplishes it. As mentioned above, I ask the faculty Senate to consider the question of what such a system should be, and in that context how it should be assessed.	
4.3. Suspensions regarding curricular development	As is appropriate and the current practice, the faculty have primary responsibility for the curriculum. Faculty review it through the FSCC and majors issues are brought before the full senate. That remains the case regardless of who initiates the proposal.	

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4.4. Size of faculty and student tuition.	Since we are close to handling this proposed change with the resources we have already, there should be little impact on the size of the faculty. Indeed, it has already grown a little in anticipation of the seminars. Because of the current staffing patterns of the courses, the elimination of the ten credits from the graduation requirements affects adjunct faculty primarily. This will affect individual dean's budgets, but the impact is so slight in the context of the total University budget that there should be no impact on tuition.	
4.5 Implementation Time Line	The concern is appropriate. The number of Freshmen seminars that could be offered on the fall of 2011 will depend upon the interest of the faculty in offering the seminars. Also, some sophomores, juniors or seniors will still need the current required courses and scheduling will have to accommodate them. The first couple of years of implementation will likely require some scheduling flexibility, which should decrease as we get more adjusted to the changes. The timeline mentioned in the Faculty Senate report is certainly workable.	