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TITLE: Changes to the Core Curriculum

RESOLVED: The following compose the core curriculum for all undergraduate school students phased in beginning with the class of 2016, as well as the administrative structure to support it.

1. Development of Western Civilization (16 credits, 20 credits for Liberal Arts Honors)
2. Required Course Component (24 credits)
 - a. The Theology Requirement (6 credits)
 - b. The Philosophy Requirement (6 credits)
 - c. The Natural Science Requirement (3 credits)
 - d. The Social Science Requirement (3 credits)
 - e. The Quantitative Reasoning Requirement (3 credits)
 - f. The Fine Arts Requirement (3 credits)
3. Core focus Component (6 credits)
4. Learning Proficiencies Component - Students are required to enhance their proficiency in the following areas:
 - a. Intensive Writing Proficiency
 - b. Oral Communication Proficiency
 - c. Diversity Proficiency
 - d. Civic Engagement Proficiency
5. Core Curriculum Support and Renewal
 - a. Core Curriculum Committee (CCC)
 - b. Development of Western Civilization Program Committee (DWPC)

To graduate, students must complete at least 120 credit hours.

General rationale: Providence College's adopted Strategic Plan, "Pursuing Truth. Achieving Excellence. Transforming Lives." places priority on fashioning a distinctive liberal arts Core Curriculum that emphasizes characteristic features of a Dominican education, including the compatibility of faith and reason, the importance of virtue, and the pedagogy of disputed questions [Objective 2.1]. Providence College remains committed to the importance of a liberal education as preparation for life. The subjects that students study as undergraduates and, as importantly, the skills and habits of mind they acquire in the process, shape the lives they will lead after they leave college. Their course of study in the Core Curriculum, and in their disciplinary studies, should require them to question assumptions, engage in self-reflection, think critically and analytically, and communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. These long-standing objectives of a liberal education, however, must be refashioned in light of a changing world and new methods of teaching and learning. The Core Curriculum, as well as study in majors and concentrations, must prepare students to connect, in an explicit way, what they

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learn at Providence College to life beyond the College, and help them to understand and appreciate the complexities of the world and their role in it. Hence, the College must provide opportunities for students to be engaged in their learning and to engage what they learn in what matters to them.

It is the goal of this new program to offer our students a core curriculum that combines the breadth appropriate to a Liberal Arts education in the Catholic and Dominican tradition with the flexibility needed for each student to focus on exploring in depth one aspect of the core. Significant breadth is accomplished through the Development of Western Civilization Program, the Required Course Component, and the attainment of Learning Proficiencies. In addition, this curriculum includes an innovative Concentration Component outside of the major in which the student will have a choice of a concentration within a discipline, a language, or a thematic concentration of linked courses.

This proposal not only creates a smaller core, but also requires most students to complete more courses over their four-year sequence. An important aspect of inviting more student investment in their core experience is the development of a culture in which they are challenged to take seriously the process of discerning an area of focus most appropriate to their academic goals; faculty are also challenged to design attractive courses that engage students in meaningful learning experiences. With new core objectives, the addition of proficiencies and concentrations, and expansive opportunities for interdisciplinary connections, this curriculum provides a template for innovation that will enable Providence College to continue its tradition of offering a first-class liberal arts education responsive to a complex and rapidly changing global environment.

Mission-related Goals for the Core Curriculum

Providence College is a Catholic and Dominican institution of higher education. This identity and the intellectual tradition that derives from it shape and inform the Core Curriculum and suggest the following goals:

1. In the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas, our students should understand the essential compatibility of faith and reason, and the integrated and cohesive nature of reality and truth. Our students should pursue the highest ideals of Dominican education: the contemplation of truth, and the sharing of the fruits of contemplation with others.
2. In the Dominican tradition, study is undertaken not only for itself but for the benefit of others, and thus students should demonstrate a commitment to civic engagement and service to others informed by Catholic Social Teaching.

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3. Our students should demonstrate an understanding of how philosophical and theological questions inform and guide the pursuit of the truth, therefore philosophy and theology should have an essential place in the Core.
4. Students should demonstrate a capacity for moral and ethical reasoning, including an understanding of the virtue-based ethics tradition, and how these ethical traditions can be applied to specific disciplines or fields of endeavor.
5. In the Dominican pedagogical tradition of the disputed question, students and faculty should be trained in the art of anticipating difficult questions from alternative perspectives and the use of reasoned argumentation in search of a broader understanding of important truths.
6. Since the pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom does not take place in isolation but in the context of community and the larger world, our students should:
 - a. demonstrate an integrated understanding of the important events, ideas, and cultural traditions that have shaped the world;
 - b. demonstrate awareness and understanding of other cultures, societies, and creeds;
 - c. demonstrate an understanding of the natural world and the importance of the intersections of scientific and humanistic modes of reasoning for understanding our place within it.
7. In the spirit of the Dominicans as the Order of Preachers, students should develop fundamental skills in critical, logical, and quantitative reasoning and should demonstrate the ability to speak and write in a clear, coherent, and well-informed manner.
8. Since the Judeo-Christian tradition finds in creation an image of its Creator, and recognizing the importance of creativity and artistic expression in the Dominican tradition, students should develop the aesthetic dimensions of their minds and spirits.
9. Finally, students should demonstrate an understanding of the Core Curriculum as the heart and soul of a Providence College education. The Core should help illuminate the key questions of human existence relating to life's purpose and meaning.

Development of Western Civilization (16 Credits)

The Development of Western Civilization Program (DWC) is a four-semester, 16-credit requirement taken in the freshman and sophomore years. Students in the Liberal Arts Honors Program will continue to satisfy the DWC Component with a 20-credit hour program.

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The First Three Semesters

The first three semesters of the Development of Western Civilization Program will consist of a seminar-style encounter with significant texts from western and other world civilizations. These three semesters will be four credits each and arranged chronologically, with the first semester dedicated to works from Antiquity, the second semester dedicated to works from the Medieval and Early Modern period, and the third semester dedicated to works from the Modern period. These classes, which will be team taught, will engage students in contemplation of significant works in their historical and cultural contexts, with special attention, when appropriate, to philosophical and theological concerns. These courses will provide a common foundational experience for all students.

The DWC Colloquium

The fourth semester of the Development of Western Civilization Program will consist of a team-taught, four-credit colloquium. Students will choose from a variety of colloquia according to their interests. Building upon the first three semesters, the advanced colloquium will focus on a specific, contemporary issue in the context of the western tradition. Topics that extend the interdisciplinary approach beyond the humanities, e.g., natural science, social science, education, and business, and those which relate western history and culture to the histories and cultures beyond the West, are welcomed. In this way the colloquia will complete the Development of Western Civilization program by enabling students to sharpen and utilize the knowledge and habits of learning gained in the first three semesters. Although the topics of colloquia will vary greatly in light of the interests and expertise of the participating faculty, each must be approved by the relevant committees as satisfying the learning objectives of the DWC program.

Rationale for the Development of Western Civilization

The DWC Program will serve as the gateway to the new Core Curriculum for Providence College. Through it students will encounter significant works of the Western tradition within their historical and cultural contexts and then have the opportunity to choose among upper-level colloquia which will be dedicated to advanced study of a Western topic, to the intersection of the Humanities with other academic disciplines, or to topics relating the Western tradition to other traditions and cultures. This program balances the need for incoming college students to develop important skills in reading, writing, and critical reflection with a conviction that these skills are best gained through directly encountering great writers, philosophers, theologians, artists, and significant historical events. The enhancement of these skills will be in service of leading students into deeper reflection on their place in the world considered in all its dimensions: historical, philosophical, religious, aesthetic, natural, and political.

This program seeks to build upon the strengths of Providence College's long-established Development of Western Civilization Program by extending in two further

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dimensions: (a) a more global outlook, and (b) an opportunity to study the intersections between the great questions of existence raised by humanistic endeavors and other areas of human knowledge. In accordance with the Catholic and Dominican tradition from which Providence College arose and by which it continues to be sustained, the DWC Program will introduce our students to a contemplation of the deep harmony between the truths of faith and the lasting achievements of human reason.

The Development of Western Civilization Program will fulfill the following objectives:

- a. Require students to demonstrate an integrated understanding of the major streams of development in western civilization with a focus on prevailing values and disputed questions as they evolve from epoch to epoch.
- b. Require students to read deeply and critically using primary works from western and world civilization. With respect to the first three semesters, professors are expected to select books that together constitute significant breadth to do justice to the assigned historical period. The selection should reflect the expertise and interests of the professors and to the extent possible embrace works of history, literature, philosophy, and theology.
- c. Pay special attention to thinkers and works grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, while analyzing religion's role in the development of western and world civilization. This involves considering religious questions with a serious regard that acknowledges not only the Catholic and Dominican character of Providence College, but also the importance of other religious traditions when appropriate.
- d. Develop effective communication skills as students participate actively in seminar discussions and write frequently in response to course readings. Multiple out-of-class writing assignments totaling at least 4000 words will be required each semester.
- e. Promote analytical and synthetic reasoning as students practice making arguments in written assignments and in seminar discussions: they will learn to select and defend a position on a debatable issue, support their position with appropriate evidence, and address counterarguments.
- f. Approach issues from an interdisciplinary perspective through studying, discussing, and writing about the core texts in the context of relevant historical, philosophical, theological, literary, and other issues.
- g. Nurture the ability to make and defend aesthetic judgments through discussing and writing about complex works of literature, music, and the visual arts.
- h. Introduce the use the library and other research resources fundamental to the practice of scholarship through completion of at least one research-oriented writing or presentation project in the second year of the program.

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Required Course Component (24 credits)

The Theology Requirement (6 credits)

Two 3-credit courses: one from core-designated 200-level courses and one from core-designated 300-level courses.

Rationale

Providence College's Mission is to educate the whole student and to pursue Truth in a way that underscores the unity of Truth and the compatibility of faith and reason. Hence, the study of theology is at the heart of the curriculum and is an integral portion of the core curriculum. Students will engage in a practice of reasoned inquiry about God and faith and the great questions of human life (e.g., What is the origin of my existence? Why is there something rather than nothing? What might one hope for, either for oneself or for humanity?) in a manner comparable with the reasoned inquiry with which they investigate other areas of the liberal arts.

The development of theological thinking is a component of the Development of Western Civilization Program. The required courses in theology increase and deepen the exposure of students to the fruit of centuries of Christian thinking about God, their understanding of the relationship between God and humankind in such a worldview, and an appreciation of the Catholic and Dominican views of the religious and spiritual dimension of human life. In theology courses, students develop a critical understanding of the dialogic relationship between theological study and the other areas of intellectual endeavor in the liberal arts. The theology component of the core curriculum is indispensable in the College's mission to prepare students to continue to reflect on their place in the world and to continue to grow spiritually in whatever path God's providence takes them after graduation.

Theology Requirement Objectives

200-level core courses will:

- a. Include the study of relevant Biblical texts.
- b. Provide students with the opportunity to read deeply and critically key Biblical texts of the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- c. Lead students to make correlations between the Biblical tradition and theological discourse.
- d. The identification of theological categories of thought (e.g., covenant, revelation, grace).
- e. The application of theological themes to issues and questions that arise in daily life.

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- f. The composition of a six to eight page essay or a comparable program of written assignments that articulates a theological question or theme and critically responds to the material under discussion.

300-level core courses will include:

- a. The analysis of primary theological sources (ancient or modern).
- b. The interpretation of relevant contemporary questions as seen from a theological perspective.
- c. The critical appraisal of a theological discussion or presentation.
- d. The comparison of a theological issue or theme between a Roman Catholic perspective, on the one hand, and a perspective belonging to another tradition, on the other.
- e. The composition of a research paper of eight to ten pages that provides an in-depth and reasoned analysis of primary textual material or of a question pertaining to a central issue of the course.

The Philosophy Requirement (6 credits)

Two 3-credit courses in core-designated philosophy courses. One must be an ethics course; the other must be a course in a field of philosophy other than ethics.

Rationale

The tradition of the Dominican Order is one of teaching and scholarship, of seeking answers to the great questions of human speculation and of helping others to do the same, and it is in support of this tradition that Providence College requires of its students the study of philosophy. Philosophy is “the love of wisdom,” and as such, philosophy serves to enrich the lives of students not only by leading them onto the path to finding these answers—since by nature all desire to know them—but also by cultivating in them the habits of moral reasoning and virtuous practice, qualities indispensable for any member of society to contribute to the common good. Beyond this, the study of philosophy uniquely fosters students’ faculties of reasoning, making them better able to think critically, to understand themselves in light of the Judeo-Christian heritage, to discern virtue, and, ultimately, to pursue the goal of all education: Truth.

Philosophy Requirement Objectives

Philosophy courses will:

- a. Focus primarily on the analysis of philosophical questions, arguments, and/or perspectives.

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- b. Provide students with the opportunity to explain, analyze, and evaluate philosophical questions, arguments, and/or perspectives.
- c. Demonstrate how understanding philosophical concepts helps to illuminate contemporary issues.

Ethics courses will:

- a. Explore the meaning and purpose of the ethical life.
- b. Examine the complexity of the decision-making process and provide guidance for making good moral decisions.
- c. Provide opportunities for students to nurture a habit of reflective moral judgments through the study of moral problems.
- d. Include a consideration of the philosophical traditions of Aristotle and/or St. Thomas Aquinas.

The Natural Science Requirement (3 credits)

One 3-credit course, core-designated as inclusive of a “hands-on” component. Students who have not taken a high-school physics course will be required to take a physics-based natural science core course.

Rationale

Science provides an empirical analysis of truth in the natural order and approaches the natural world from the unique perspective of the scientific method. Students should be able to dissect an argument and determine if it truly meets the criteria of science, or if it simply uses scientific-sounding words and phrases to hide a flawed analysis. They should be able to appreciate the compatibility of reason and faith in the pursuit of truth.

In the Dominican tradition, study is undertaken not only for itself but also for the benefit of others. In engaging with the pressing issues of the day (such as embryonic stem cells, global warming, and the wise use of energy resources), and committed to service and the common good, graduates must be prepared to look beyond labels and catch phrases to the basic scientific facts and data which will provide a foundation for realistic solutions. Students need to be able to integrate religious, philosophical, political, and scientific viewpoints into a coherent whole in order to make effective decisions for the betterment of society. This background will enable Providence College students and graduates to make informed decisions about important scientific issues that affect society.

Natural Science Requirement Objectives

Natural Science Requirement courses will:

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- a. Characterize the scientific method by demonstrating the dependence of science on quantitative and testable empiricism, the way scientific theories and models are developed, and the dynamic nature of scientific theories.
- b. Present a body of contemporary scientific information drawn from the natural sciences and, where appropriate, address issues that have a significant impact on the world to give students a foundation from which to understand better the interrelatedness of the sciences and society.
- c. Illustrate a scientific perspective, describing how scientists study the natural world, and how this differs from other forms of study.
- d. Give students significant opportunities to illustrate the role of testable empiricism in the development of scientific theories via classroom, laboratory, or project activities.

The Social Science Requirement (3 credits)

One 3-credit course chosen from core-designated courses, ordinarily in a social science discipline.

Rationale

The Providence College Mission Statement reminds the community of the “unity of the human family that proceeds from its one Creator” and “encourages the deepest respect for the essential dignity, freedom, and equality of every person.” The mission also requires that the College help students to develop a more reasoned and thorough understanding of their own society and culture as well as those of others. To honor these imperatives and accomplish these goals, the curriculum must promote critical understanding of individual and collective human behavior and institutions, precisely the subject matter of the social sciences. Social science entails the application of quantitative and qualitative methods to the study of human social institutions and behavior. Through the application and study of such methods, and through analytic reflection on the concepts and theories employed by the social science disciplines, students should deepen their commitment to the Truth and develop the knowledge and the critical abilities needed to become informed, engaged citizens of American society and the world. It is for these reasons that the core curriculum includes a social science requirement.

Social Science Requirement Objectives

Social Science Requirement courses will:

- a. Demonstrate the value of systematic, rigorous qualitative and/or quantitative methods for understanding individual and collective human behavior and institutions.

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- b. Analyze key concepts and theories concerning individual human behavior and/or collective action and organization.
- c. Examine how empirical evidence is used to construct arguments about human behavior and/or social, political, and economic phenomena.
- d. Explore the role of norms and values in shaping human behavior and socio-political phenomena.
- e. Analyze social science issues within larger historical and global contexts and encourage students to reflect on the human and social impact of developments in other areas of inquiry, such as the arts, science, religion, etc.

Quantitative Reasoning Requirement (3 credits)

One 3 or 4-credit course chosen from core-designated courses that meet one of the course options listed below.

Rationale

Quantitative reasoning (QR) skills are essential in the modern world. Every professional career demands some ability to understand presentations of quantitative data, analyze them and draw reasonable conclusions, and utilize such data in making arguments. A comprehensive liberal arts education must improve students' appreciation of the value of quantitative approaches to understanding and modes of thought. This requirement offers students the flexibility of acquiring QR in a variety of ways most suitable to their academic objectives.

Quantitative Reasoning Requirement Objectives

Course option #1 will:

- a. Teach students the basic elements of statistics including frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, the normal distribution, confidence intervals, hypothesis testing and significance.
- b. Examine how quantitative reasoning and evidence are used in constructing substantive arguments.
- c. Evaluate quantitative claims according to conceptual, statistical, and mathematical criteria.
- d. Demonstrate ways of responsibly communicating quantitative information in graphics and in writing.

Course option #2 will:

- a. Provide an introduction to the basic theory of differential or integral calculus.
- b. Demonstrate how calculus can be used to formulate and solve problems in the natural and social sciences.

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- c. Evaluate quantitative claims using calculus.
- d. Demonstrate ways of responsibly communicating quantitative information graphically and in writing.

Course Option #3 will:

- a. Provide an introduction to the language and notations of set theory, propositional logic, and methods of proof.
- b. Apply these methods of proof in areas such as number theory and algebra.
- c. Provide an introduction to combinatorics and probability.
- d. Demonstrate ways of correctly constructing a mathematical argument.

Course Option #4 will:

- a. Provide an introduction to the mathematics underlying some commonly encountered objects including, for example: debt amortization, the future value of an investment, the present value of an annuity, problems involving elementary probability, the expected value of a random variable, the optimization problems, the utility of matrix operations in solving systems of linear equations, the use of Markov chains in analyzing discrete random processes, elementary graph theory, the symmetry of natural world and symmetry in art.
- b. Provide students with examples of practical problems which can be modeled, analyzed and solved using one or more of the mathematical techniques developed within the course.
- c. Require students to become adept at both modeling and solving practical problems using the mathematical ideas developed within the course.
- d. Concentrate on developing students' abilities to communicate mathematical ideas effectively in both written and presentation format.

The Fine Arts Requirement (3 credits)

One 3-credit course chosen from core-designated courses, ordinarily in the fine arts.

Rationale

The fine arts requirement reflects the importance of creative and artistic expression within the Dominican tradition and the Catholic faith. The Mission of Providence College requires that students are educated as moral, spiritual, and intellectual beings. To accomplish this goal, students must be provided with opportunities to engage directly with artistic activities as well as develop the aesthetic dimension of their minds and spirits. The fine arts core seeks to foster students' understanding and appreciation of the arts and of the aesthetic in the human and natural world. It encourages students to reflect on aesthetics as a way of integrating the multifaceted dimensions of human experience. Through such reflection, students can develop a richer understanding of the meaning of life and of the moral and spiritual values that sustain it. It is also hoped that

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students are encouraged to develop life-long practices of arts appreciation and of considering the role of the aesthetic in broader human and social questions.

The fine arts requirement can be fulfilled through courses that emphasize the historical development of different forms of art, as well as those that emphasize hands-on student involvement in the creation of works of art, music, theatre, dance, or film. Regardless of emphasis, fine arts core courses should encourage the development of students' critical appreciation of the arts, including an understanding of how historical changes have shaped the creative process and notions of the aesthetic. Where possible and relevant, core courses in the fine arts should seek to enrich students' aesthetic experience by exposing them to the resources of the Rhode Island cultural community.

Fine Arts Requirement Objectives:

Each Fine Arts Course must satisfy at least two out of the following required objectives:

- a. Teach students specific skills necessary to engage in an art form, encouraging development through practical application.
- b. Teach students ways of analyzing and interpreting works of art.
- c. Examine historical developments in aesthetics and artistic creation, including how the arts and notions of the aesthetic are shaped by social, political, cultural, and technological change.
- d. Analyze the creative processes through which works of art are produced.
- e. Encourage students to examine the place of the arts and aesthetics in their own lives and communities, for instance, through reflection on their own cultural environment.

Core Focus Component (6 credits)

Rationale

To encourage depth of knowledge as well as an interdisciplinary perspective, students must take two courses as part of a concentration. The choice of a core focus deepens a student's engagement in disciplines not necessarily included in the Development of Western Civilization program. Additionally, by completing a core focus in a discipline or theme in which they are not majoring, students experience the methodology and central questions of other disciplines, enabling them to think more critically and with an interdisciplinary perspective. A particular value of this aspect of the core is the long-desired ability of students to choose to fulfill the core by taking a modern or classical language. The Core Focus Component can be fulfilled in two different ways: concentration in a particular discipline or a thematic concentration of two linked courses.

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Courses satisfying the Core Focus Component will not count towards credit for one's major nor will they be used to fulfill the Required Course Component.

Option 1: Core Focus in a discipline. A focus in a discipline consists of two courses in language (modern or classical), science (physical or biological), social science (psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, history), fine arts (art and art history, music, theatre, creative writing), or quantitative reasoning (math, statistics). To encourage depth in the concentration, both courses must be from the same department.

Option 2: Core Focus in a theme. A focus in a theme consists of two linked courses that come from two different departments or programs, but address a similar topic. Choosing such a core focus provides students an opportunity to develop interdisciplinary knowledge about a particular theme. Students will choose these thematically linked courses from an approved list and normally complete them in a single year.

Students in Liberal Arts Honors are considered thereby to satisfy this requirement.

Learning Proficiencies Component

These requirements require that students enhance their proficiency in the following areas of knowledge while at Providence College:

- a. Intensive writing
- b. Oral communication
- c. Diversity
- d. Civic understanding

It is expected that students will complete these proficiencies as part of their disciplinary studies or with carefully chosen free electives. Approved courses may fulfill one or more proficiency requirements.

General Rationale

Achievement of a liberal arts education involves acquisition of capabilities that are not directly mandated by Core Course Requirements. Such competencies include writing, speaking, understanding diversity, and developing civic skills. The intention in instituting Proficiencies is (a) to incorporate such capacities in the Core as educational objectives to be addressed across the Core curriculum and (b) to invite the college community to continue to explore how we can ensure that graduates of Providence College are prepared to be responsible and productive citizens to serve their own society and the greater world community.

Any course, whether within the core, part of a major, or a free elective, can satisfy a proficiency requirement if so designated. It is expected that students commonly will

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satisfy these proficiencies while simultaneously fulfilling other academic requirements. By establishing these proficiencies, Providence College will both enhance and diversify its course offerings and will allow our students not only to hone the skills needed for their chosen professions, but also to confront in an academic manner the complexities of the increasingly global world in which they will live.

Intensive Writing Proficiency

Two core-designated intensive writing courses with at least one at Level II, as approved by the Core Curriculum Committee. Approved intensive writing courses will normally be capped at 18 students. Students must first meet a minimum writing proficiency requirement.

If incoming students earned a 2.5 high school point average, as calculated by Providence College, they are required to take WRT 100 Writing for College Success (offered through the School of Continuing Education) prior to completing the intensive writing proficiency as described below.

Rationale

The cultivation of the skills and habits of good writing is inseparable from an authentic Liberal Arts education. Accordingly, all students will be required to develop their ability to write by taking two writing intensive course, one focused on the basic techniques of good writing and a second in which students apply those skills to a particular academic discipline.

Requirements for Intensive Writing I:

Level One courses will:

- a. Require a variety of writing assignments throughout the semester, totaling at least 5000 words of out-of-class formal writing. At least one writing assignment should require research and proper documentation.
- b. As needed, review basic grammar, syntax, and formatting of texts.
- c. Provide students with ample practice in writing outlines, revising drafts, and editing.
- d. Develop the ability of students to write organized essays, with a unifying thesis, supporting evidence, and language that unambiguously convey the author's meaning.

Requirement for Intensive Writing II:

Level Two courses will:

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- a. Require a variety of writing assignments throughout the semester, totaling at least 5000 words of out-of-class formal writing. At least one writing assignment should require research and proper documentation.
- b. Provide students with ample practice in writing outlines, revising drafts, and editing.
- c. Develop the ability of students to write insightful and well-organized essays, with a unifying thesis, supporting evidence, and language that is precise, concise, and appropriate for the intended audience and rhetorical situation.
- d. Enhance the ability of students to use stylistic techniques, such as control of tone, variety of sentence structure, and effective use of transition.
- e. Teach students the proper use and correct citation of sources, appropriate for the academic discipline.

Oral Communication Proficiency

One core-designated oral communication course, as approved by the Core Curriculum Committee. Approved oral communication courses will normally be capped at 20 students.

Rationale

The cultivation of the skills and habits of good oral communication is necessary for an authentic Liberal Arts education. Accordingly, all students will be required to develop their ability to speak in a clear and coherent manner by taking one course designated as fulfilling the oral communication proficiency.

Requirement Objectives

Oral Communication Proficiency courses will:

- a. Require students to present at least one formal oral presentation, along with a variety of other oral presentations, such as student-led class discussions.
- b. Instruct students in delivering oral presentations that are designed to be lively and interesting, and in the virtues of effective communication, including a clearly focused topic, a unified thesis, supporting evidence, and language that is precise, concise, and appropriate for the rhetorical situation.

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Diversity Proficiency

Students will demonstrate proficiency in diversity, understood as either cross-cultural or involving diversity within the American context through a designated course as approved by the Core Curriculum Committee.

Rationale

The pursuit of truth that animates the academic mission of Providence College cannot be rightly undertaken by individuals isolated from community. Education is not merely an acquisitive process, but a formation of mind and heart directed toward the sharing the fruits of one's contemplations with others. In today's world, we are more and more aware that these others reflect a wide diversity of traditions, cultures, religious convictions, abilities, and experiences. For this reason, an education for truth must involve serious consideration of the differences within the human community. Accordingly, each student will be required to take a course devoted either to the exploration of a culture outside of the American and Western European ambit or to the study of differences within the American context. Both options reflect the Catholic commitment to the unity of the human family above and beyond all distinctions.

Requirement Objectives

Option #1: Cross-cultural Understanding courses will:

- a. Introduce students to a different culture and help students think about what constitutes a cultural identity and the fundamental assumptions which underlie cultural differences.
- b. Provide students with the opportunity to understand and appreciate the perspectives of others who encounter and interpret the world in significantly different ways, while simultaneously providing students with new perspectives on their own culture.
- c. Explore the theoretical, methodological, and/or ethical issues involved in encountering cultural differences.
- d. Provide students with significant opportunity to use their understanding of cultural differences to reflect on their own behavior and decisions.

Option #2: Diversity courses will:

- a. Introduce students to the meaning of social identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and disability and their intersections.
- b. Offer students the opportunity to discuss and understand multiple forms of oppression including, but not limited to racial and ethnic intolerance and resulting inequality as it occurs in the United States or elsewhere.

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- c. Explore comparisons of discrimination such as those based on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, social class, age, or gender.
- d. Stimulate critical reflection on theoretical, methodological, and ethical issues involved in encountering differences stemming from race, gender, class, religion, and disabilities, and help students to think systematically about the fundamental assumptions underlying such differences.

Civic Engagement Proficiency

Students will demonstrate proficiency in civic engagement, through a designated course as approved by the Core Curriculum Committee.

Rationale

Providence College students will be called to be impassioned and informed participants in an increasingly complex society and world. In that world, every citizen must be educated about public issues, trained to think critically through public problems, and able to devise solutions mindful of the common good. The Dominican tradition emphasizes education as a primary means to instill such values in students. Accordingly, our students must understand and engage with the civic world in order to grow into responsible citizens of a twenty-first century global community.

Requirement Objectives

Civic Engagement Proficiency courses will:

- a. Offer students the opportunity to examine, in depth, a public problem or civic issue that concerns them.
- b. Explore the nature of social, cultural, political, and/or environmental forces, institutions, and ideas that influence public problems and their resolution in public life.
- c. Encourage students to consider their own role in the larger community and their responsibilities within that community. This consideration would include an analysis of citizen obligations to promote key elements of the common good, such as social justice, solidarity, human rights and dignity, participation, peace, subsidiarity, cultural and economic justice, and environmental sustainability.
- d. Analyze the challenges associated with seeking the common good, (e.g., collective decision making, public program implementation, community service provision).

Core Curriculum Support and Renewal

A **Core Curriculum Committee (CCC)** is responsible for administering the core curriculum and maintaining its integrity. This committee will be made up of eight voting

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members. Four members will be appointed by the Faculty Senate (at least one member from each school of college) and two students will be appointed by Student Congress. All terms will be two years, staggered in order to provide continuity. In addition, the Director of the Development of Western Civilization Program, the Dean of Arts & Sciences will serve *ex officio*. The chair will be appointed by the Provost following an election by the members for a renewable, two-year term and will be responsible for calling meetings, setting the agenda, and reporting to the President of the Faculty Senate and the administration of the College.

The responsibilities of the CCC will include:

- To work with departments, programs, and individual faculty to develop course proposals appropriate to the objectives of the core.
- To review and approve all courses satisfying a core requirement, whether distributive requirement or designated learning proficiency. A separate committee will approve courses belonging to the Development of Western Civilization Program.
- To carry out ongoing assessment of the core and every two years to present a report on the status of the core to the faculty senate and the provost.
- To submit proposals to the Faculty Senate for changes to the core curriculum.
- To carry out and oversee the election of the Director and at-large members of the Development of Western Civilization Program Committee every three years.

A **Development of Western Civilization Program Committee (DWPC)** is a separate governance structure for the Development of Western Civilization Program. This consists of a Director and a faculty/student committee. The Director will be a tenured member of the faculty appointed by the Provost following an election by those who have taught in the program for at least one semester in the previous four years. The Director's term will be three years and is renewable. The Director will be assisted by a committee of ten members: four representatives (one each) elected by the departments of English, History, Philosophy, and Theology, two members of the Ordinary Faculty appointed by the Provost following an election by the Development of Western Civilization Faculty, two students appointed by Student Congress, and two members of the Ordinary Faculty elected by the Faculty Senate.

The responsibilities of Development of Western Civilization Program Committee will include:

- Working with departments, programs, and individual faculty to develop course proposals appropriate to the objectives of the DWC program.
- Review and approval of all courses for the DWC program.
- Ongoing assessment of the DWC program in conjunction with the CCC.

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- Work with the director to explore ways to ensure a sensible degree of commonality between the Development of Western Civilization Program sections with respect to student expectations, grade distribution, and, when appropriate, common readings.