

# Hendrix College Quality Initiative Proposal

## Statement of Purpose: Feeding the Core

### Overview

Hendrix College is a residential liberal arts college located in Conway, Arkansas, thirty miles from Little Rock at the foothills of the Ozarks. Related to The United Methodist Church, Hendrix is nonsectarian in its admission and educational program and provides a vision that is national and international in scope. With an enrollment of approximately 1300 students, the College provides educational opportunities consistent both with its traditions and with the demands of cultural relevance in a time of rapid change.

Hendrix is committed to the idea that the educational program of each student should combine areas of common learning with individual design. The curriculum is arranged to assure students the opportunities to gain acquaintance with cultural traditions of the world; to develop undergraduate expertise in a field of concentration; to cultivate skills of communication, deliberation, and analysis; and to study broadly in a variety of areas of knowledge. Additionally, traditional coursework is deepened and enriched through a broad array of engaged learning opportunities organized under a program called *Your Hendrix Odyssey: Engaging in Active Learning*. [See Note 7.]

Our previous Statement of Purpose [5], adopted by the Faculty and Board of Trustees in the late 1990s, was a comprehensive document that served multiple functions: A statement of mission for the College; a brief overview of the College's programs; and broad goals for student learning. This document served its purpose well; however, after two decades the College's curriculum had shifted significantly with the development of the Odyssey Program and with the restructuring of the first-year experience seminar course into *The Engaged Citizen*. [8]

When President William Tsutsui arrived at Hendrix in 2014, one of his goals was to lead the campus in a re-visioning of the Statement of Purpose as the cornerstone for a new campus strategic plan. His plan fit well with the need to update the Statement of Purpose due to the curricular changes mentioned above. The President's approach was to replace the existing comprehensive document with four separate documents: (1) A concise statement of purpose, (2) a newly constructed diversity statement, (3) a set of formal student learning goals, and (4) a statement on the historical relationship of the College with The United Methodist Church.

A new Statement of Purpose [1] was developed, discussed and approved by the Faculty and the Board of Trustees during the 2014-2015 academic year. The process began with the President's appointment of a Strategic Planning Committee that studied other mission statements from other colleges and conducted focus groups with faculty, staff, students, alumni and local United Methodists before drafting a proposed new statement. After discussions with the Faculty and a series of edits and rewriting, the Faculty voted to approve the Statement of Purpose and to forward it to the Board of Trustees. The Board enthusiastically adopted the new statement.

The Strategic Planning Committee then used this statement as the foundation for a new strategic plan for the College that would set the priorities for the next five years. This plan is organized around three principles: Enhancing the Student Life Cycle, Feeding the Core, and Opening the Gates Wider. This committee also began work on the document explaining the relationship with

The United Methodist Church. This document is now under discussion by a committee appointed by the President and a progress report is scheduled for presentation in the fall to both the Faculty and the Board.

While the administration was crafting the strategic planning document, the Faculty continued the process by discussing a new diversity statement and revised student learning goals for the College. With leadership from the Faculty's Committee on Diversity Concerns, a Diversity Statement [3] was developed, discussed, and approved by the Faculty at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year. As the first step in revising student learning goals, the Faculty also approved a Vision for Student Learning [2] at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year. The Board of Trustees will consider this document during the October 2016 meeting of the Board.

Unlike the earlier two documents, the Vision for Student Learning was directed by an *ad hoc* faculty committee co-chaired by faculty members who had recently served as the chairs of the Academic Assessment Committee and the Curriculum Committee. The process began with an information-gathering workshop at the annual Fall Faculty Conference in August 2015. Faculty comments from that workshop led to several word cloud frequency images that showed the Faculty which thematic strands and concepts were mentioned most often and most strongly. Throughout the fall semester, the committee met with faculty groups and drafted early versions of a document. The committee decided that the document should be written in paragraph form in the style of a letter to students about student learning at Hendrix. After discussion and edits during the spring semester, the Faculty approved the document and sent it to the Board of Trustees for consideration during the October 2016 meeting.

Anticipating Board approval of the Vision for Student Learning, the next step is the development of precise, measurable learning goals from the vision statement, and then, secondly, to recommend measurement tools and an assessment plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum of the College in meeting the goals of the Statement of Purpose. These tasks form the basis of the proposed Quality Initiative with the following goals:

- Develop specific, measurable learning goals based on the new Statement of Purpose and the Vision for Student Learning;
- Develop an assessment plan, benchmarks, and measurement tools for evaluating the success of our general education curriculum in producing the student outcomes stated in the new Statement of Purpose;
- Begin the collection of data and start using the results to move our general education curriculum toward a more integrated approach rather than continuing to evaluate each curricular unit on its own.

## **Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance**

The President's Strategic Plan includes a call to better examine and strengthen how Hendrix delivers a liberal arts education. The strategic planning process began with a focused examination and restatement of the College's Statement of Purpose. This reaffirms to the Faculty the centrality of the role curriculum plays in the success of the College and assures that the work of the Faculty in developing the College's curriculum is an integral part of the College's strategic planning.

As noted earlier, one of the three divisions of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is “feeding the core.” That division is described in the strategic planning documents as follows:

The teaching and learning that define Hendrix must never be taken for granted. Programs that have enriched the student and faculty experience for decades should not only be celebrated, but must also be strengthened. Above all, our commitment to a demanding liberal arts education must never waiver. And to be the best that we can be, Hendrix must ensure that those who dedicate their careers to the College and our students are adequately rewarded and that our facilities fully support our core mission of preparing young people for lives of meaning, distinction, and service.

Since our last HLC review in 2008-2009, the Faculty has greatly increased assessment activities. Recent efforts in assessment speak to the readiness of the Faculty to take advantage of the opportunities posed by the proposed initiative. In particular, the Faculty is poised to successfully complete a process to examine student learning in a more holistic way and to better understand how the parts of the general education curriculum fit into an integrated whole. This readiness is indicated by the following factors:

- *Faculty Generational Change.* More than forty percent of the Hendrix faculty has been hired in the past five years. As new faculty members arrive on campus, we have found that they are more focused on assessment activities and supportive of—and involved with—practices that increase the robustness of academic assessment.
- *Faculty Leadership in Assessment.* Recently, two newly tenured faculty members chaired the curriculum and academic assessment committees. They functioned as a team concerning the role of the curriculum committee in general education assessment and began the project for the assessment of the Learning Domains portion of the general education program [6]. Last year they chaired the ad hoc faculty committee for the new Vision for Student Learning and one of them will return to the assessment committee to work with this initiative. In the past few years, these two faculty members have gained the trust of the Faculty on student learning issues.
- *Department/Program Annual Assessment.* In the last decade, the College has moved from a handful of departments and programs developing assessment activities on their own to an annual assessment planning process that includes every academic department and program on campus. The Academic Assessment Committee has played a strong role by evaluating all department assessment plans and making suggestions for improvement.
- *General Education Assessment.* Although the Faculty has a tradition of strong qualitative assessment of the required first-year seminar course through summer workshops for participating faculty, a more focused assessment for other parts of the general education curriculum has shown continual improvement.
  - The Odyssey Program began in 2001, but the program was adopted without formal assessment plans. Five years later, we began developing learning goals for the program and now the program has learning goals and a robust assessment plan that has been a model for other departments and programs.
  - The lessons learned during the Odyssey Program assessment development set the stage for a very different approach when the required first-year seminar course was restructured as *The Engaged Citizen* in 2014. This new course, the third version of the first-year seminar course since it began in the early 1990s, was the first general education program adopted by the Faculty with learning goals and an assessment

plan as part of the original proposal. Additionally, six faculty members who were involved in general education assessment participated in a weeklong AAC&U summer assessment program during the development of the assessment plan for *The Engaged Citizen*. This group included the Associate Provost and the current chair of the Assessment Committee.

- As mentioned earlier, the assessment and curriculum committees also began an assessment project for the Learning Domains part of the general education program.

The result of the above general education projects is that the individual components of the general education curriculum now have learning goals and assessment plans. However this assessment lacks an integrated, cohesive approach for the general education curriculum as a whole. The proposed quality initiative provides an opportunity to bring integration and cohesion to the curriculum through mission-driven assessment. The task is how to use what we have learned in the recent past to begin to think more holistically about evaluating the curriculum.

In combination with the development of a new Statement of Purpose, the factors listed above create a powerful opportunity to focus on this issue as a part of the President's Strategic Plan. The proposed initiative provides a framework for the faculty to take this next step in understanding student learning at Hendrix. And, although an integrated approach is a much more complex task than assessing individual programs or requirements, this approach will lead to a better understanding of how well Hendrix succeeds in its goal to develop "whole persons." This ideal of wholeness is woven deeply into our past and continues into our future as part of the newly adopted Statement of Purpose as well as our long-standing motto [4].

The initiative's progress will be tracked in the ways we developed over the last two years to successfully adopt the Statement of Purpose and the Vision for Student Learning. Our processes for moving discussion and action items through the meetings of the Faculty are well formed and directed by the Academic Policy Council [9]. These processes include a healthy dose of discussion, debate and revision. The Associate Provost and the Chair of the Academic Assessment Committee will provide leadership for this initiative and work closely with the Academic Policy Council and the Director of Institutional Research. Minutes of the Faculty meetings and of the Academic Policy Council will capture adjustments and decisions made during the process. The Provost, working with the Vice-President for Strategic Initiatives, will report monthly to the President's Senior Leadership Team.

## Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

Again, the goals of this initiative are threefold:

- Develop specific learning goals based on the new Statement of Purpose and the Vision for Student Learning;
- Develop an assessment plan, benchmarks, and measurement tools for evaluating the success of our general education curriculum in producing the student outcomes stated in the new Statement of Purpose;

- Begin the collection of data and start using the results to move our general education curriculum toward a more integrated approach rather than continuing to evaluate each curricular unit on its own.

Before describing the milestones for and processes of these goals, it is helpful to review the tasks leading up to the initiative. These tasks were described in the introductory section above and are summarized in *Table 1: Pre-Initiative Actions*. These tasks set the stage for understanding milestones for the goals of the initiative that are described below and summarized in *Table 2: Initiative Actions*.

- **Goal 1:** *Develop specific learning goals based on the new Statement of Purpose and the Vision for Student Learning.*
  - During the Fall 2016 semester, the Committee on Academic Assessment will work with the Vision for Student Learning adopted by faculty last spring to distill a set of concise learning goals. The chair of this committee was involved in the general education assessment projects described in an earlier section. The goal is for the committee to have a proposal ready for the Faculty by the end of January. Monthly reports will be given to the Academic Policy Council and the Senior Leadership Team.
  - During the Spring 2017 semester, the newly developed learning goals proposal will go through our faculty governance system. This includes discussion by the Academic Policy Council and then by the Faculty in two separate meetings. It is common for these discussions to lead to changes and refinements to any proposal. The President, Provost and all other members of the Senior Leadership Team are part of the discussions in the faculty meetings. However, monthly reports will continue for the Senior Leadership Team. Also, the Associate Provost and a member of the Assessment Committee will attend the HLC annual meeting and give a progress report to our HLC representative.
- **Goal 2:** *Develop an assessment plan, benchmarks, and measurement tools for evaluating the success of our general education curriculum in producing the student outcomes stated in the new Statement of Purpose.*
  - During the summer of 2017, the Provost will sponsor a workshop for the Committee on Academic Assessment to prepare for evaluating and developing assessment tools. The group will focus on three issues: (1) Reviewing different standard measures of critical thinking and other higher order learning areas such as Bloom's taxonomy and the Perry Scale. (2) Examining data already available to the College through other collection methods. This includes the National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE] that Hendrix has given for several years and existing rubrics and surveys for the separate parts of the Collegiate Center. (3) Reviewing external rubrics such as the LEAP program of the AAC&U and rubrics produced by various Teagle funded projects.
  - During the Fall 2017 semester, the Committee on Academic Assessment will develop an assessment plan and select rubrics. The committee will also develop benchmarks for the faculty to consider after the rubrics have been selected. Reports to Academic Policy and Senior Leadership will continue on a monthly basis.
  - During the Spring 2018 semester, the assessment plan and rubrics will go through our faculty governance system just as the learning goals did the previous spring. The same reporting patterns will be continued.

- **Goal 3:** *Begin the collection of data and start using the results to move our general education curriculum toward a more integrated approach rather than continuing to evaluate each curricular unit on its own.*
  - During the Fall 2018 semester and the first half of the following spring semester, the Assessment Committee will collect data and evaluate the data using the adopted rubrics. The committee will prepare a report to be given to the faculty in the second half of spring semester. Based on initial results, that report will include suggested benchmarks and goals for the next few years. The results of this initiative will then fold into ongoing assessment activities.

## Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

Each phase of the initiative includes monthly reporting to the President's Senior Leadership Team. Because of this initiative's ties to the President's new Strategic Plan, the President is committed to providing the leadership and resources needed to support a successful outcome to the initiative. [See attached letter of support.]

One of President's Tsutsui's first actions to support the strategic plan was to add two new administrative positions. One was a position for a Vice President for Strategic Initiatives who manages presidential initiatives including strategic planning. This position assures that academic assessment will become a stronger part of the College's strategic planning. The Vice President, working with the Provost, creates a stronger connection between academic assessment and strategic planning. The second new position was a Director of Institutional Research who reports to the Provost. This position provides greater support for the data needs created by the addition of new assessment methods being used for this initiative.

The Provost is committed to data-driven planning at the academic level and as a member of the Psychology Department has roots in an academic discipline with a strong focus on evaluation and assessment. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, who had a lead role in the last NCA-HLC evaluation and who has responsibility for academic assessment, is in a position to provide leadership for this initiative. The Associate Provost is also experienced in moving campus planning through the faculty governance processes and is a member of the major committees involved in faculty governance—including the Academic Policy Council and the Academic Assessment Committee. He also has participated in an AAC&U summer assessment workshop and regularly attends The Assessment Institute. The experiences of these two individuals help minimize the chance of obstacles arising that would derail or significantly delay the progress of the initiative.

The earlier descriptions involving faculty generational change, faculty leadership in assessment, department and program assessment, and general education assessment show that the faculty is prepared to move forward on the initiative. The chair of the Academic Assessment Committee is particularly prepared for this assignment given her involvement in past assessment projects. The involvement of the Senior Leadership Team—particularly the Provost and the Vice President for Strategic Initiatives—with the Senior Leadership Team's focus on the Strategic Plan, assures that the faculty work on the initiative will be supported and evaluated. The new Director of Institutional Research brings knowledge of assessment methods and practices to the work of the faculty and the Assessment Committee.

Initiative costs will be covered by the accreditation budget in the Provost's office. These funds will support travel to the HLC annual meeting and all costs for the summer workshop for the Assessment Committee. The President has been supportive of making certain this budget can meet the needs of the initiative.

## Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

The timeline for the initiative is embedded in *Table 2: Initiative Actions* and as described in the previous section. This embedding shows that the goals are consistency aligned with the timing of the actions. Much of the timing is based on experiences gained with the pre-initiatives described in *Table 1: Pre-Initiative Actions* and based on the knowledge that the key persons have with steering projects through the faculty governance system.

Previous sections also describe how the initiative aligns with other campus priorities including the following issues:

- The alignment with the President's Strategic Plan assures that the Senior Leadership Team and the Faculty remain focused together on the same goals. This initiative's title *Feeding the Core* is an explicit manifestation of that alignment with the Strategic Plan.
- The alignment with the faculty's recent work on the Statement of Purpose and recent successes in other assessment projects assures that the work of the initiative remains tightly focused on mission-driven assessment and student learning.
- The alignment with the approaching ten-year HLC evaluation assures that our work on this initiative is the springboard for the HLC evaluation. The initiative's third goal provides the linkage with future assessment activities.

## Institutional Contact for Quality Initiative Proposal

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## Notes

*Notes appear in an order that moves from governing statements to curriculum descriptions.*

### 1. The Statement of Purpose

*Approved by the Hendrix College faculty and Board of Trustees in spring 2015*

Hendrix College cultivates empathy, creativity, self-understanding, rigorous inquiry, informed deliberation, and active learning across the liberal arts, toward the development of the whole person. Through engagement that links the classroom with the world, and a commitment to diversity, inclusion, justice, and sustainable living, the Hendrix community inspires students to lead lives of accomplishment, integrity, service, and joy.

## **2. Vision for Student Learning**

*Approved by the Hendrix Faculty in May 2016 and pending consideration by the Hendrix Board of Trustees in October 2016.*

Hendrix College students develop a breadth of knowledge across the liberal arts and sciences that gives them the potential to explore the present and flexibly meet the demands of their futures. Through this breadth of study, we, the college community, encourage students to enhance their understanding by making connections among different bodies of knowledge. Our students also engage more deeply in at least one area of study, establishing facility in their chosen discipline.

Students' diverse course of study at Hendrix guides them in discerning and understanding core principles about complex issues. Our students rigorously investigate and research these underlying causes and connections, learn to synthesize evidence from multiple sources, and design ways to answer their questions. They acquire the skills to evaluate arguments and evidence critically and develop independent, nuanced, and thoughtful analyses. Using written, oral, experiential, visual, or other appropriate methods, students communicate their findings effectively and persuasively. Our students reflect on their studies and are prepared to engage with the world based on their inquiry and deliberation.

To facilitate this link between the classroom and the world, we introduce our students to active engagement with multiple communities. They gain an understanding of the past, present, and future needs of the earth and of humanity, and of the challenges of our interdependence. From this foundation, our students consider ethical conundrums from conflicting perspectives. Through a commitment to diversity and inclusion, we work to foster an awareness of different cultures and empathy for the people who confront the diverse challenges and needs of our shared communities in order to inspire our students to lead lives of service. Our students bring their experiences in the wider community back to the classroom to enhance their course of study, building on what they have learned.

In order to meaningfully participate in multiple communities, our students must understand themselves and their relation to the world around them. To that end, the Hendrix community guides them in examining their abilities and strengths. We help them recognize how their skills can work for them and for the good of others, both now and in the future. We provide tools and opportunities to prepare our students for their prospective professional lives, and we strive to inspire them to lead lives of accomplishment as both leaders and team members. We share in the joy of their development as whole persons: independent, responsible, and attentive to their own mental and physical well being. We nurture our students' life-long love of learning, both about themselves and about the world, as curious, creative, and active participants in life and in their communities.

## **3. Diversity Statement**

*Approved by the Hendrix Faculty in April 2016 and pending consideration by the Hendrix Board of Trustees in October 2016.*

Hendrix College values a diverse learning environment enriched by the race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, ability, culture, political philosophies, geographical backgrounds, and intellectual perspectives of its students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We believe diversity makes the whole richer, and that participating in a dynamically inclusive community provides a framework for successful leadership and engaged citizenship in the 21st century. Inclusion is our name for an active and constructive engagement with diversity. Inclusion consists of developing and implementing programs and policies that 1) respect the dignity and civil rights of all persons, 2) help prevent prejudice and discrimination, 3) recruit and retain diverse students, faculty, and staff, 4) promote capacities for understanding diverse cultures, 5) cultivate capacities for generous listening, especially to those who might otherwise not be heard, 6) introduce the arts of dialogue across differences, and 7) afford opportunities for mutual transformation through multicultural cooperation, all with the aim of creating an atmosphere that is welcoming, hospitable, and true to the best of liberal arts education.

## **4. The Hendrix College Motto**

The Hendrix College seal appeared for the first time on the cover of the 1898 catalog. The seal included the College's motto, selected by a committee headed by the Rev. George W. Hill and taken from a passage in Ephesians: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ..." (Ephesians 4:13, King James Version). Currently translated as "unto the whole person," the motto, in Ancient Greek, reflects Hendrix's dedication to both Christian principles and the traditional liberal arts ideal.



## 5. Previous Statement of Purpose

Hendrix College, a private, undergraduate institution of the liberal arts related to The United Methodist Church, offers distinguished academic programs in a residential, coeducational setting. As a collegiate community, Hendrix is dedicated to the cultivation of whole persons through the transmission of knowledge, the refinement of intellect, the development of character, and the encouragement of a concern for worthy values. In these ways Hendrix prepares its graduates for lives of service and fulfillment in their communities and the world.

Toward the accomplishment of this purpose, the College offers curricular and co-curricular programs affording students the opportunity

- to investigate and appreciate the richly diverse cultural, intellectual, and linguistic traditions shaping the contemporary world;
- to examine critically and understand the intellectual traditions woven into the history of Western thought;
- to develop skill and effectiveness in the use of language, the analysis of information, and the communication of knowledge;
- to explore and connect the content and methods of the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences;
- to participate in depth in a specific field of study, acquiring a body of knowledge appropriate to that discipline, putting to use its methods for the discovery of new knowledge, appreciating its historical development, and grasping its implications for the broader culture.

Hendrix thereby intends to cultivate among students

- enduring intellectual curiosity and love of knowledge; aesthetic sensibilities and delight in beauty;
- powers of ethical deliberation and empathy for others; discernment of the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time;
- a sense of responsibility for leadership and service in response to those needs; and
- recreational dispositions complementing a full flourishing of the human potential.

## 6. The Collegiate Center

The academic program of Hendrix College comprises diverse elements in a coherent whole, combining design with flexibility. The general education requirements at the College, referred to as the **Collegiate Center**, consist of four components – *The First-Year Experience*, *Capacities*, *Learning Domains*, and *the Odyssey Program*. The four major components of the **Collegiate Center** provide opportunities for students to experience a liberal arts education in a way that nurtures engagement and breadth.

- *The First-Year Experience* consists of a one-credit first-year course, *The Engaged Citizen*, and a one-quarter credit first-year weekly seminar, *Explorations*.
- The *Capacities* requirement recognizes that all students must exhibit basic proficiency in fundamental skills used across multiple disciplines.
- The *Learning Domains* afford multiple options for acquiring a basic understanding of the content, disciplinary styles, and modes of inquiries of the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences in ways that may cross traditional disciplinary boundaries.
- *Your Hendrix Odyssey: Engaging in Active Learning* expands and formalizes currently available options for undergraduate research, study abroad, artistic development, internships, service experiences, and other hands-on activities.

## 7. The Odyssey Program

Hendrix College has long recognized the educational value of engaged learning, that is, of the enhanced learning that results when theory meets practice, and when experience itself, as reflected upon, becomes a source of inspiration and learning. This recognition of the value of learning through doing is manifested in numerous ways, both within the campus community and beyond its borders. The academic program entitled “Your Hendrix Odyssey: Engaging in Active Learning” is designed to encourage all Hendrix students to embark on educational adventures in engaged learning.

All students are required to complete an approved activity in at least three of the following categories:

- **Artistic Creativity [AC]** - Experiences in which students explore their creative potential in art, music, dance, drama, film, or creative writing.
- **Global Awareness [GA]** - Experiences in which students immerse themselves in cultures or environments

other than their own in ways that enhance their appreciation of those cultures and environments, deepen their understanding of the major issues affecting the world today, and lend them new perspectives on the places in which they live.

- **Professional and Leadership Development [PL]** - Experiences in which students apply their intellectual interests through internships, other opportunities for working alongside professionals on site, or leadership in community life or professional settings.
- **Service to the World [SW]** - Experiences within and beyond the Hendrix community in which students are engaged in helping meet the social, ecological and spiritual needs of our time.
- **Undergraduate Research [UR]** - Experiences in which students undertake significant research projects using the methods of their chosen disciplines.
- **Special Projects [SP]** - Experiences in which students extend, apply, connect or share different ways of knowing (e.g., oral, verbal, tactile, imaginative, intuitive), often in interdisciplinary settings.

Approved Odyssey activities may be in the form of pre-approved activities as identified in the *Odyssey Program Guide*, specially coded courses, or independent projects. Both students and faculty members may design Odyssey projects completely independent of courses. Depending on the category, a final project, public presentation, or significant reflection component may be required. Students' transcripts include a record of their completed Odyssey experiences. As part of the process for completing their projects and activities, students write 150-word descriptions of what they did and what they learned through each experience, and these appear on the transcript to give future graduate schools or employers an enhanced understanding of an individual student's application of theory to practice and engagement in learning through doing.

## 8. *The Engaged Citizen Course*

*The Engaged Citizen* is a one-semester course required of all first-year students entering Hendrix College. The theme of the "engaged citizen" combines the spirit of Hendrix's *Odyssey Program* with the College's stated purpose of "inspiring students to live lives of accomplishment, integrity, service, and joy." From philosophers and physicists to artists and anthropologists, we all approach questions about what it means to be involved in our communities, whether locally or globally, in different ways.

This course seeks to illuminate the multiplicity of possible interpretations of engaging as a citizen through interdisciplinary team teaching, in which pairs of faculty from across the institution come together to form dyads and explore a sub-topic from different methodological "ways of knowing." The varying disciplinary and individual approaches to this theme are intended to provoke discussion and reflection on this topic both within the dyads and throughout the Hendrix community.

The students divide their time equally between the two dyad professors over the course of the semester. The dyads can also meet periodically as a combined group if the professors deem it appropriate. The course includes an engaged learning component, involving an introductory, hands-on activity that engages academic material in or outside the classroom and is tied to the content of the course.

## 9. Academic Policy Council

The Academic Policy Council is the faculty committee that meets regularly with the President and reports regularly to the faculty. Academic Policy plans programs, reviews recommendations, and coordinates activities involving academic matters. Academic Policy sets the agenda for faculty meetings and makes recommendations to the faculty on any other issues not under the jurisdiction of other faculty committees. The Provost chairs the Academic Policy Council.

This committee is a blended governance group whose membership includes: The President, the Provost, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, the elected faculty representative to the Board of Trustees, the three Area Chairs (faculty appointed to positions of leadership over the Natural Sciences, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities Areas), six faculty members elected by the Faculty, and two student members elected by the student body. The previous chair of the *ad hoc* committee for the Vision for Student Learning is now an elected member of this committee.

**Table 1 - Pre-Initiative Actions**

	Semester	Project Milestones	Governance	Assess Progress	Action
	Fall 2014	Development of new Statement of Purpose	Presidential <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee	President	Proposal sent to Faculty
		Development of new Strategic Plan	Presidential <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee	President	Proposal sent to Trustees
	Spring 2015	Discussion/modification of proposed Statement of Purpose	Academic Policy Council/Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Adopted by Faculty
		Discussion of proposed Strategic Plan & Statement of Purpose	Board of Trustees	Provost/President	Adopted by Trustees
	Fall 2015	Development of Diversity Statement	Faculty Diversity Concerns Committee	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Proposal sent to Faculty
		Development of the Vision for Student Learning	Faculty <i>Ad Hoc</i> Faculty Committee	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Proposal sent to Faculty
	Spring 2016	Discussion/modification of Diversity Statement	Academic Policy Council/Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Adopted by Faculty
		Discussion/modification of the Vision for Student Learning	Academic Policy Council/Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Adopted by Faculty
	Summer 2016	Development of Quality Initiative Proposal	Provost/Associate Provost/Provost/Academic Policy Council	Provost/President	QI sent to HLC
	Fall 2016	Discussion/modification of Quality Initiative Proposal	Provost/Associate Provost	Provost/President	Expected Action by HLC
		Board Discussion of Diversity Statement & the Vision for Student Learning	Board of Trustees	Provost/President	Expected Adoption by Trustees

**Table 2 - Initiative Actions**

Goal	Semester	Project Milestones	Governance	Assess Progress	Action
<b>1</b>	Develop specific learning goals based on the new Statement of Purpose and the Vision for Student Learning				
	Fall 2016	Development of Vision for Student Learning Learning Goals	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Complete project
	Spring 2017	Discussion/modification of Vision Learning Goals	Faculty Academic Policy/Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Expected Adoption by Faculty
<b>2</b>	Develop an assessment plan, benchmarks, and measurement tools for evaluating the success of our general education				
	Summer 2017	Workshop for Assessment Committee	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Complete project
		Review/study of Critical Thinking Measures and Rubrics	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Complete project
	Fall 2017	Development of Assessment Plan for new Learning Goals	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Complete project
		Select Rubrics	Academic Assessment Committee	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Complete project
		Select Benchmarks	Academic Assessment Committee	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Complete project
	Spring 2018	Discussion/modification of Assessment Plan	Provost/Associate Provost	Associate Provost	Expected Adoption by Faculty
		Discussion/modification of Rubrics	Provost/Associate Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Expected Adoption by Faculty
		Discussion/modification of Benchmarks	Provost/Associate Provost	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Expected Adoption by Faculty
<b>3</b>	Begin the collection of data and start using the results to move our general education curriculum toward a more integrated approach rather than continuing to evaluate each curricular unit on its own				
	Fall 2018	Collect Data and Evaluate Data with Rubrics	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Complete project
	Spring 2019	Prepare Report with Recommendations	Academic Assessment Committee	Associate Provost	Report sent to Faculty
		Presentation to Faculty	Academic Assessment Committee	Provost/Academic Policy Council	Expected Approval by Faculty



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September 8, 2016

Barbara J. Johnson, Ph.D.  
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Higher Learning Commission  
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Dear Dr. Johnson,

I am delighted to be able to support the Quality Initiative Proposal developed by Provost Bonebright and her team in Academic Affairs. This initiative continues the projects the college has been doing on strategic planning activities, including the very important work developing our Statement of Purpose, a statement about diversity and inclusion, and a set of formal learning goals. All of these will assist us in guiding our efforts to provide our students with a quality liberal arts education.

The college has also made arrangements to provide the necessary budget to accomplish this initiative.

Sincerely,

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President and Professor of History

President's Office

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