

Pathways to General Education: an outcomes-based curriculum



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Jill Sible, Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education

What is an outcomes-based curriculum?

- ❖ defines the endpoint – what should students be able to do at the end of the learning experience.....
- ❖ but not necessarily the path, allowing for varied learning experiences
- ❖ articulates measurable goals, lending the curriculum to continuous improvement through regular assessment



Why an outcomes-based curriculum?

- ❖ positions everyone (student, teacher, administrator) toward the same goal
- ❖ guards against the arbitrary (does this count?)
- ❖ sets the stage for alignment (content, pedagogy, credit hours, assessment, learning environment, resources)
- ❖ SACCS says we must



Process to date:

- ❖ Broad learning domains articulated by task forces and UCCLE
- ❖ Student focus groups providing feedback on the current CLE
- ❖ Visits to peer institutions, participation in national meetings, consultation with AAC&U
- ❖ Faculty curricular planning teams tasked with articulating outcomes and 3 – 5 indicators of learning.
- ❖ Team representatives and UCCLE met for a workshop to share and critique outcomes



Pathways to General Education

Core learning outcomes: students will...

LO1) **Discourse**: demonstrate proficiency with the English language and the ability to reason, write, and speak effectively for academic, professional, and public purposes.

LO2) **Quantitative and Computational Thinking**: creatively engage with the world by the manipulation of precisely defined symbolic representations.

LO3) **Scientific Reasoning**: improve their scientific reasoning skills through the acquisition of the detailed knowledge of one or more of the natural sciences, hands-on experience with how science is conducted, what science can and cannot tell us about the universe, and the relationship between science for society.

LO4) **Design and the Arts**: develop a richer understanding and appreciation of the fine, applied and performing arts, and the built environment through hands-on production and/or interpretation.

LO5) **Human Behavior, Social Relationships, and Traditions of Thought**: understand that they are a small part of a much larger global community and engage with diverse individuals, groups, and ideas that have changed and will be changing over time.

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Comprehensive learning outcomes: Students will...

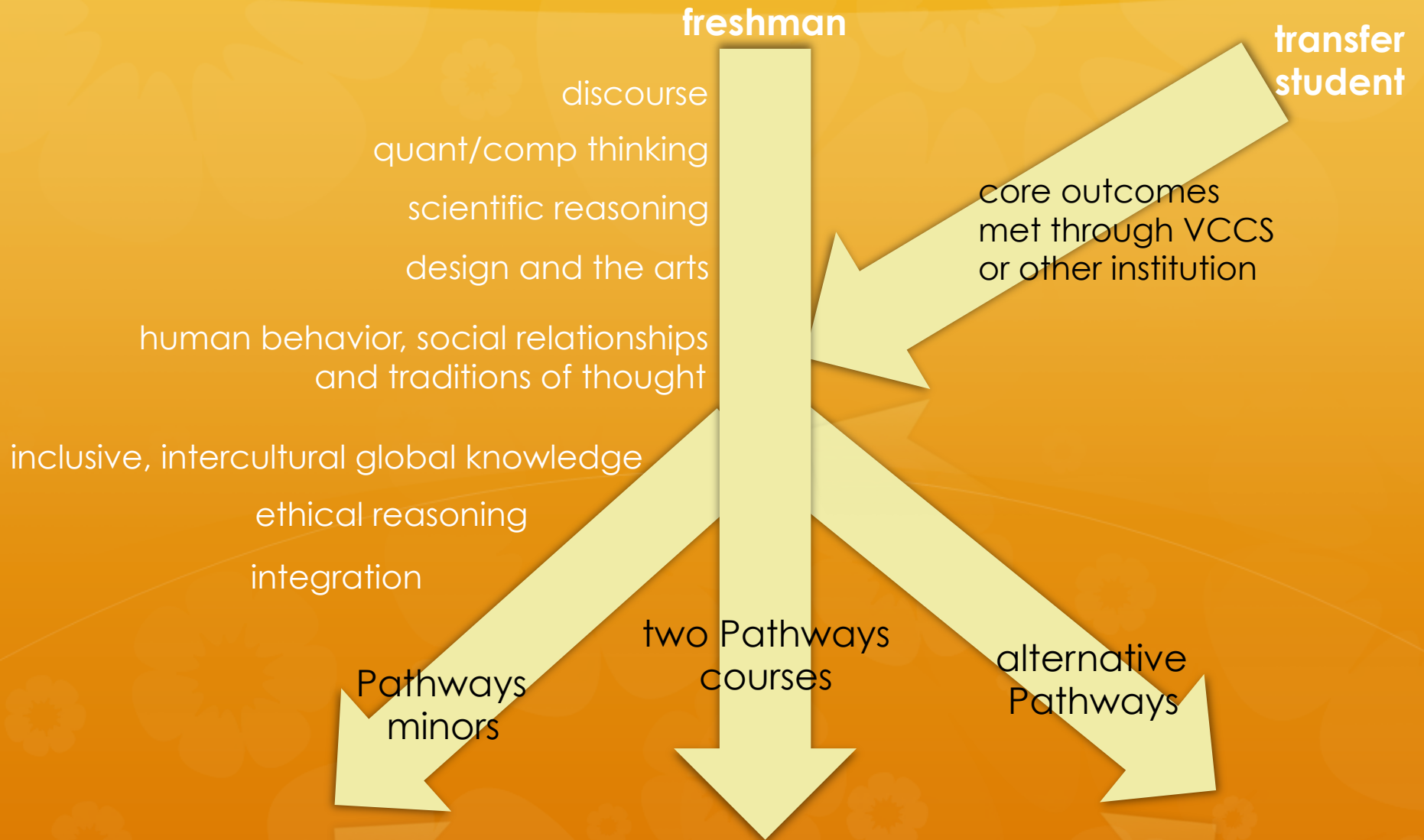
LO6) **Integrate** knowledge across the domains in which students will live and work

LO7) **Reason ethically**

LO8) Apply **inclusive, intercultural** and **global** knowledge



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Example Indicators of Learning

Scientific Reasoning:

1. Explain the foundational knowledge of a particular scientific discipline.
2. Demonstrate the iterative nature of science.
3. Evaluate the credibility and the use/misuse of scientific information.
4. Analyze the reciprocal impact of science and society.

Warm feedback

Students will be more active/involved.

Relevant, important, contemporary

Appropriate focus for general education

Cool feedback

#2 needs rewording; science not wrong or right

Depth in one area of science or breadth across many?



Trending....

- ❖ Stacking of learning outcomes toward increasing depth and participatory learning
- ❖ Opportunities for contextualized learning (within major or integrated gen ed courses) after foundational learning
- ❖ Participatory “hands-on, minds-on” activities as the culminating learning experiences
- ❖ Need for more than the SACSCOC minimum (30 cr) credit hours to meet general education outcomes

Updates and Next Steps

March Outcomes Workshop – teams reconvening to revise outcomes

April General Education Fair (April 21, all day, Newman Library)

Call for nominations – Pathways Scholars in General Education

Call for proposals – Pathways courses (new and revised),
Pathways minors

Summer

AAC&U Workshop on General Education

Workshop for Pathways grantees

General Education proposal prepared for governance

Fall Pathways proposal submitted through governance

Continued professional development for Pathways grantees

Winter – Spring –

Implementation and assessment of Pathways projects