I. OVERVIEW

This document outlines the Foundations program proposed by the Core Reform Task Force to replace Boise State’s current Core curriculum. The program incorporates input from campus-wide constituencies. The task force has attempted to provide sufficient details to describe the structure, learning outcomes, assessment, staffing, funding, and implementation for consideration of approval. Specific details in several areas of the proposal are not fully developed. It is the opinion of the task force that these details are best finalized in the final development of the program and in the continuous improvement of the program. 1

The Foundations program emerges from a multi-year process orchestrated by the Core Reform Task Force, which included monthly Task Force meetings, open to faculty, staff, and students, targeted meetings with faculty and administrators, examination of various programs around the country, and consultations with experts in general education requirements in higher education.1

The Task Force’s goal has been to develop a highly effective general education program that supports the desired learning outcomes of academic majors, and one that addresses the shortcomings of the current Core curriculum that are identified in the Task Force’s 2009 Progress Report: lack of vision, inadequate coherence and oversight at the curricular level, and insufficient attention to outcomes and assessment at the course level. (See Section II of the Progress Report.)2

The balance of this document describes the details of the Foundations program, but its distinguishing features and benefits are summarized in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses structured around a small number of specific, clearly-articulated learning outcomes</td>
<td>Inspires confidence that the goals of general education are being met; simpler and more clear for instructors and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More inclusive and relevant learning outcomes: ethics, diversity and internationalization, teamwork and innovation</td>
<td>Fully integrates highly valuable and sought-after traits into the program; not tacked on as afterthoughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built-in assessment process for key learning outcomes</td>
<td>Fosters efficient program review for improvement and accreditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-year seminar, learning communities, service learning, communication in the</td>
<td>Increases student success and retention, places value on the education of students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 http://academics.boisestate.edu/provost/core-reform-task-force/  
II. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Foundations program is organized around eleven University Learning Outcomes (ULO’s), which every Boise State graduate is expected to have met, regardless of major or baccalaureate degree. These outcomes provide a framework for departments and degree programs seeking uniform assessment categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundations Program University Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Cluster Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write effectively in multiple contexts, for a variety of audiences.</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Communicate effectively in speech, both as speaker and listener.</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Engage in effective critical inquiry by defining problems, gathering and evaluating evidence, and determining the adequacy of argumentative discourse.</td>
<td>Critical Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Think creatively about complex problems in order to produce, evaluate, and implement innovative possible solutions, often as one member of a team.</td>
<td>Innovation &amp; Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analyze ethical issues in personal, professional, and civic life and produce reasoned evaluations of competing value systems and ethical claims.</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Apply knowledge of cultural differences to matters of local, regional, national, and international importance, including political, economic, and environmental issues.</td>
<td>Diversity &amp; Internationalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Apply knowledge and the methods of reasoning characteristic of mathematics, statistics, and other formal systems to solve complex problems.</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Apply knowledge and the methods characteristic of scientific inquiry to think critically about and solve theoretical and practical problems about physical structures and processes.</td>
<td>Natural, Physical, and Applied Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Apply knowledge and methods characteristic of the visual and performing arts to explain and appreciate the significance of aesthetic products and creative activities.</td>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Apply knowledge and the methods of inquiry characteristic of literature and other humanities disciplines to interpret and produce texts expressive of the human condition.</td>
<td>Literature and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Apply knowledge and the methods of inquiry characteristic of the social sciences to explain and evaluate human behavior and institutions.</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3 These were inspired by the AAC&U’s ‘LEAP’ framework: http://www.aacu.org/leap/index.cfm
ULO’s 1-6 are competency-based outcomes that are developed throughout the academic career and in multiple courses and contexts. After exposure to these ULO’s in early courses, students revisit these ULO’s in greater depth throughout their college experiences and academic programs.

ULO’s 7-11 are associated with disciplinary course clusters that represent multiple perspectives to be encountered during a student’s academic career. The disciplinary clusters are clearly not mutually-exclusive: a particular course might be such that reasons could be given for including it in several different clusters. However, it is assumed that for each course there will be a cluster whose learning outcomes fit the course most naturally, and all sections of the course in question will belong to that particular cluster.

III. SUPPORT STRUCTURES FOR THE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The eleven learning outcomes are supported primarily by traditional coursework, but also by co-curricular activities. We discuss each of these in turn.

There are four types of courses that support the ULO’s: ENGL courses, Foundations courses, Communication in the Discipline (CID) courses, and Disciplinary Lenses courses (DL). All but ENGL are new course designations.

All course types are organized around carefully-articulated, course-level learning outcomes with associated assessment rubrics designed to determine a student’s level of success in achieving the target outcome(s).

A. Communication Courses

These courses provide direct support for ULO’s 1 and 2.

1. First Year Writing Courses: ENGL101 / ENGL102

An introduction to the writing and research expectations of the University and to the study of writing contexts.

- A two-course sequence (six credits total).4
- Coordinated, staffed, and assessed by the First Year Writing Program (housed within the Department of English).
- English 101: “Introduction to College Writing” builds the reflective awareness needed for success in a wide range of writing experiences within the University. Students write, receive feedback on their writing, and give feedback to others. Students also engage with challenging readings and begin putting others’ ideas in conversation with their own. Introduces academic writing conventions (e.g., use of library, sources, and a citation system).
- English 102: “Introduction to College Writing and Research” explores how writers form their own research questions and how academic writers generate new ideas by engaging in an ongoing conversation through sustained research. Writers consider many perspectives on their subjects and speak to and sometimes against those ideas as they explore what they think. This kind of writing occurs through close interactions with a wide range of sources. While the course emphasizes academic research, it also considers how inquiry informs all kinds of writing within the academy and beyond.
- Selected first-year writing courses are taught with library-based co-requisites, in learning communities (e.g., linked to IF100), or with integrated service-learning projects.

2. Communication in the Discipline (CID)

- At least one course within the major department at the 200-level or above (not necessarily conducted in English), designed to extend students’ experience with ULO’s 1 and 2. For students who have successfully completed ENGL 101/102.5

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4 Current policies for placement into First-Year Writing courses will remain in place.
- Focused on written and oral communication as they are practiced within the discipline.
- Foundations faculty (see Section VIII below) would develop criteria and approve courses in the major that could have the CID designation.
- Support for instruction in CID courses, including staff development for faculty teaching CID courses and direct tutorial services for students, would be coordinated by the Subcommittee on Communication and the University Writing Across the Curriculum Director (Boise State Writing Center).
- Assessment conducted within departments, reports submitted to Foundations Director each spring (see Sections VI and VII below) and incorporated into Periodic Review process.

B. Foundations Courses

This sequence of courses is designed specifically to support ULO’s 1-6. The first two courses in the sequence (IF100 and CF200) represent a significant departure from many of our current Core courses, both in pedagogy and structure.

1. Intellectual Foundations (IF100)
   - A three credit, first-year seminar required of all new students to Boise State, provides an “intellectual orientation” to university-level learning, inquiry, and innovation.
   - Provides direct support and assessment for ULO’s 2, 3, and 4: oral communication, critical inquiry, innovation & teamwork; ULO’s 1, 5, and 6 are foreshadowed but not assessed.
   - Envisioned as a themed cluster course that includes a large plenary session one time per week and small discussion sections (~25 students) meeting two times per week. Emphasis placed on small group work and active learning processes; small-group facilitators will assist Foundations Faculty in keeping student groups on task (see CF 200 course description below).
   - Discussion sections taught by instructor of record; common learning outcomes, core expectations, and assessment measures across discussion sections, but flexible with respect to particular assignments, activities, and instructional style.
   - Discussion sections converge weekly in a large plenary sections (~200 students), where different disciplinary experts will engage students to explore the methods and mindset of the particular themed inquiry, stimulating student curiosity and planting questions for exploration within the discussion sessions to follow.
   - Incorporates the Campus Read selection for the year.
   - Taught by Foundations faculty (see Section VII below).
   - Themed and organized around overarching questions: What does it mean to be engaged in inquiry? How do different disciplines investigate similar issues? Are there limits to inquiry within a particular discipline? If so, what are they, and what explains them?
   - Could be focused on variable topics of inquiry such as global sustainability, the world economy, infinity, water, etc., whether selected by Foundations faculty or drawn from the First Year Campus Read.6
   - A limited number of sections are envisioned to constitute student learning communities in which instructors of IF100 would collaborate with instructors of ENGL 101/102 sections to create rich, cross-disciplinary teaching and learning experiences within both courses.

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5 While CID courses provide a space for students to study disciplinary writing, writing and oral communication should continue to be integrated throughout all courses, as appropriate.

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2. Civic and Ethical Foundations (CF200)\(^7\)

- Three credit course for students at the sophomore level.
- Provides direct support for ULO’s 1, 5, 6: writing, ethics, diversity & internationalization; ULO’s 2, 3, and 4 are revisited but not assessed.
- Writing, ethics-related, and diversity-related assignment design and assessment to be supported by pre-semester professional development facilitated by the Center for Teaching and Learning and selected faculty experts in the area of emphasis (e.g., Writing Across the Curriculum Director).
- Medium-sized classes (~40 students) typically delivered in standard face-to-face format; hybrid option possible.
- Documentation of an experiential learning activity related to ULO’s 5 and 6 is required of every student. For example, instructors will be encouraged to utilize service-learning as a pedagogical strategy required of all students in his/her section.\(^8\) Other experiential learning activities might include community service, student leadership, and facilitation of student-group discussion in IF100 sections (see course description above).
- Taught by Foundations faculty (see Section VII below).

3. Finishing Foundations (FF400)

- 1-3 credit culminating experience offered within the major department (80% of programs currently have a capstone or culminating experience).
- Course title will bear a departmentally-determined subtitle – for example, “FF400: Senior Thesis in Psychology”.
- Supports ULO’s 3 and 4 (critical inquiry, innovation), and either 1 or 2 (writing, oral communication).
- Departments currently offering capstone courses would be encouraged to adapt them to this format; departments without any such course would either be required to create one or to find an appropriate surrogate (whether at the college-level or in another program).
- Interdisciplinary research, team teaching, and community-based projects would be highly desirable, where applicable.
- Assessment conducted within departments, reports submitted to Foundations Director each spring (see Sections VI and VIII below).

C. Disciplinary Lens (DL) Courses

The title “Disciplinary Lens” is intended to highlight the belief that different disciplines maintain distinctive methods and perspectives; a familiarity with multiple perspectives is necessary to be broadly educated and in order to approach having a complete “picture” of the human condition and the world that we inhabit.

These courses resemble the courses that populate the current Core curriculum in that their content and methodology are typically situated within the discipline of the department offering the course. For example, CHEM 101, COMM 101, FRENCH 101, HIST 101, MATH 124, PHYS 100, PHIL 101, SOC 101, THEA 101, and a host of other Core courses will very likely transition into one of the DL course clusters. New courses will also be encouraged.

Despite the fundamental similarities between the DL portion of the Foundations program and current Core courses, there also several important differences:

1. Every academic department is strongly encouraged to offer at least one DL section per semester.
2. Departments should tailor DL courses for broad appeal and academic value beyond their own majors, rather than as introductory courses for majors.

\(^7\) A Foundations course designed for certain transfer students is also planned (see Section V below).

\(^8\) The assumption is that these experiences would utilize the centralized support of the Service-Learning Program and that the SL Program will provide necessary online project registration and faculty development. It is important to note that the focus on SL in the CF200 course does not imply that SL cannot be used in other courses within the Foundations program. As is the case now, instructors may choose this pedagogical approach in any course that they teach.
3. Like their Foundations course counterparts, DL courses are designed to serve carefully-articulated disciplinary cluster rubrics (see Appendix A for a sample rubrics designed by Boise State faculty at a Summer 2010 workshop facilitated by the CTL).

4. Additionally, each DL course must support and assess one of the ULO’s 1-6 (e.g., a DLS-COMM 101 course would serve ULO 2); distinct sections of a single course must serve the same ULO.

5. Over time, pairs or trios of DL courses may be conjoined to form learning communities.

6. Course development funds will be provided to adapt and/or DL develop courses as necessary.

Difference (1) acknowledges the potential relevance of every academic discipline to undergraduate education. The disciplinary clusters are structured in such a way as to provide natural "homes" for disciplines while also providing opportunities for departments to offer courses that fall outside their traditionally-conceived disciplinary boundaries.

Difference (2) is intended to address “gateway syndrome”, a condition afflicting students taking a Core course outside of the area of their major when the course in question functions as a foundations course for its associated major, rather than as a gen-ed course. Such students rarely develop a lasting appreciation for the significance of the discipline and frequently express bewilderment in the fact that they are required to take such courses. Some instructors dilute the content to better serve non-majors, but this compromise rarely serves either majors or non-majors well. Wherever possible, DL courses should be conceived not as introductory courses, but rather as terminal courses, since it will often (though not always) be the case that each DL course is the only course in that particular discipline taken by many of the students.

Difference (3) is intended to ensure that the course in question does indeed expose the students to the concepts, bodies of knowledge, and methods that are distinctive of the disciplinary cluster. The assessment process of these courses will be guided by the Foundations program faculty, Director. Assessment reports will be submitted to Foundations Director by a committee of Foundations faculty each spring (see Sections VI and VII below) and ultimately to the Faculty Senate for review.

Difference (4) is intended to strengthen and deepen the competencies embodied in ULO’s 1-6, which are by design outcomes “to be developed over time and in multiple contexts.”

Difference (5) is intended to capitalize on a highly effective pedagogical practice.

It is worth emphasizing that courses within a particular cluster could come from any discipline, provided that the cluster’s learning outcomes are central to the course design and the associated assessment rubric is demonstrably employed in evaluating coursework. For example, the Foundations program will permit an appropriately designed course offered by Kinesiology to be a member of the DLN cluster (Natural and Physical Sciences), and a course offered by a Health Sciences department might well be a member of the DLS cluster (Social Sciences).

D. Co-Curricular Activities

In addition to traditional coursework, students will be encouraged to use co-curricular activities to support their achievement of the intended outcomes of the Foundations program. Many activities that students engage in are quite relevant to the larger goals embodied in the institution’s mission and, more specifically, to the intended outcomes of the Foundations program. In order to facilitate this, staff in Student Affairs can choose to use the ULO’s relevant to particular co-curricular activity to focus or guide the student experience. Familiar examples of such activities are internships, credit for prior learning, student government and other university activities that are not credit-bearing. The use of the Foundations framework beyond the student academic experience will serve to reinforce the importance of the goals for student learning and will help students to develop a broader picture of the purpose of the ULO’s, much in the same way that the University’s Statement of Shared Values is appealed to in various contexts.

To date, the University has had no means to assess or document such activities and (relatedly) little way of providing additional motivation for students to participate in them. The Division of Student Affairs has proposed creating co-curricular student “profiles” as a way of addressing this need. Co-curricular profiles are supplements to the official academic transcript, not a proper part of the transcript. The activities and
experiences documented in such a profile could span a broad range of possibilities: participation in student government or other campus organizations, attending lectures or taking part in other events on campus, engaging in community service, and so on. Student Affairs would coordinate with the Foundations Director (see Section VI below) to review and approve proposed elements of the co-curricular profile and to develop mechanism of assessment; Student Affairs would be charged with conducting the assessment and maintaining the profile.

IV. CORE VS. FOUNDATIONS CREDIT LOADS

The typical Core credit load compares to that of the Foundations program as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Course</th>
<th>Foundations Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 101 3 cr.</td>
<td>IF100 (Intellectual Found.) 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 102 3 cr.</td>
<td>ENGL 101 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area I 12 cr.</td>
<td>ENGL 102 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area II 12 cr.</td>
<td>CF200 (Civic &amp; Ethical Found.) 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area III (incl. Math) 11-13 cr.</td>
<td>CID (Comm. In Discipline) 3 cr. (typical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 41-43 cr.</td>
<td>DLM (Mathematics) 3-5 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DLN (Natural &amp; Physical Sciences) 7 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DLV (Visual &amp; Performing Arts) 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DLL (Literature and Humanities) 3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DLS (Social Sciences) 6 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FF400 (Finishing Found.) 1-3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 38-42 cr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As these figures show, the credit load for the Foundations program represents a slight reduction from the current Core curriculum, but it remains in compliance with the Idaho State Board of Education Governing Policies and Procedures, Section III, Subsection V (“Articulation and Associate Degree Policy”), which requires a minimum of 36 credits.

There are several noteworthy facts about the Foundations credit load: requirements:

- The proposed core meets the State Board of Education (SBOE) requirements for the core. The current Core curriculum meets the SBOE requirements for Mathematics and Natural Sciences and exceeds the requirements for Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences by 12 credits. The proposed Intellectual Foundations 100 and Civic Foundations 200 course requirements offset the reduction in the credit load for Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
- Many degree programs already include courses that would satisfy the CID requirement. For those that do not, it is likely that at least one required course within the major would be a candidate for modification to meet the requirement.
- Similarly, the FF400 requirement would probably be satisfied by existing courses in well over half of the fifty-odd baccalaureate degree programs offered (ignoring various emphases and sub-programs). Modification of course structure or requirements would undoubtedly be necessary in some cases. Those programs with no capstone experience of any form would be required to create one that is consistent with the Foundations guidelines.
- Programs would remain free both to require specific courses within disciplinary clusters (e.g., History within DLS or Literature within DLL) and to impose additional requirements over the minimum requirements specified in the Foundations program.

Although the credit load associated with the Foundations Program is not significantly smaller than that associated with the current Core, it loads those credits more efficiently by integrating gen-ed course work with major course work (4-6 credits in CID and FF400). Thus, it should result in an overall reduction in the number of gen-ed-specific sections required for a student body of fixed size and should, on average, expedite students’ time to graduation.

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9 This requirement will typically also meet a requirement within the major.
10 At least one of the two courses taken within the DLN cluster must have a laboratory component.
V. TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION

The transition from Core to Foundations will introduce questions about transfer credits and articulation agreements with other State institutions. We address some of the more prominent issues below.

A. Advanced Placement Credits

Students entering the University with AP credits may apply them toward Disciplinary Lens requirements just as they have been toward Core requirements, with the same conditions and restrictions. While AP classes are not likely to resemble some of the DL replacements for their former Core counterparts, it would be imprudent to penalize high-achieving students by refusing to accept AP credits in the established tradition. Therefore, AP credits will be articulated to specific courses as approved by the offering DL department and the Foundations Director.

B. Incoming Transfer Students with Associates Degrees

As the College of Western Idaho gains a foothold in the Treasure Valley, an increasing number of students will enter Boise State with associates degrees. All students entering Boise State “core certified” will be relieved from taking ENGL101/102, IF100, CF200, and all DL courses. In lieu of the two lower-level Foundations courses, these students will be required to take a transfer-specific Foundations course (“Transfer Foundations, TF300”), which (a) will serve the learning outcomes supported by IF100 and CF200 with higher achievement expectations, and (b) will count as 3 credits toward the upper-division credits requirement for graduation.

Associate-degree-holding transfer students will also be required to take appropriate CID and FF400 courses. The CID courses are expected to be courses that will satisfy major requirements for the degree, therefore not disproportionately burdening transfer students.

C. Incoming Transfer Students without Associates Degrees

The credit load for ENGL101/102 and DL courses is 28-30 credits. Students whose transfer credits satisfy at least 75% of this credit load (21 of the 28 minimum) will be permitted to take TF300 in lieu of IF100 and CF200. Students whose transfer credits satisfy less than 75% of this credit load (fewer than 21 credits) will be required to take IF100 and CF200.

D. Outgoing Transfer Students

Because the Foundations program is in compliance with SBOE requirements, students transferring to sister institutions within Idaho should encounter no additional difficulty than do those students who currently transfer out under the Core requirements. Articulation agreements will need to be modified to reflect the Foundations nomenclature. Foundations courses will transfer as general education electives in satisfaction of the SBOE requirements.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

The current Core curriculum at Boise State is fully distributed: Core courses are designed, delivered, and assessed (with the aid of the Core Curriculum Committee) by independent academic units with relatively little oversight. Many of the undesirable features of the current Core identified in the Task Force’s Progress Report can be traced to the distributed nature of the Core.

The Foundations program is a hybrid in terms of centralization: DL courses are developed and assessed by individual academic units within the parameters of the DL cluster and Foundation program structure. By contrast, Foundations courses are developed and taught with centralized oversight and support. The goal of
the Foundations program administrative structure is to place faculty at the center of program development, approval, assessment and instruction while providing leadership, stature, incentive, administrative support and resources for successful, coordinated implementation of the program.

In order that sustained oversight and leadership be in place, the Core Reform Task Force recommends that the position of Foundations Director be created, supported by a staff member and supplemental staff support from the office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. The Task Force does not make this recommendation lightly. Decentralized models were considered (e.g., ones in which academic departments identify a faculty member as an Assessment Coordinator), but the Task Force is of the firm opinion that the program will be far more effective – and less burdensome for departments – if course scheduling, assessment analysis, and other coordinating activities are executed centrally. The work of the current Core Curriculum Committee is vast and ongoing; this structure of faculty and infrastructure will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of designing, implementing, and assessing general education.

The duties of the Foundations Director would include:

- Working with Department Chairs to recruit Foundations faculty (see Section VII below)
- Collaborating with the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Writing Across the Curriculum Director to provide appropriate professional development for Foundations Program faculty
- Tracking and distributing funds to support Foundations faculty
- Communicating and collaborating with Foundations faculty on questions of course design and assessment
- Communicating and coordinating with departmental faculty and the Writing Across the Curriculum Director on questions related to CID courses
- Coordinating writing tutorial services for Foundations students with the Director of the Boise State Writing Center.
- Shepherding courses through the administrative approval process
- Overseeing the assessment process by helping to create clear standards and processes for assessment, and coordinating the committees that conduct the assessment and document the results
- Reviewing student evaluations of teaching of Foundations courses before forwarding to the appropriate Department Chair
- Making determinations with respect to continued participation of faculty within the Foundations program
- Functioning as Department Chair for routine administrative student issues (reviewing academic adjustments, addressing concerns in a Foundations course, etc.)

The office for the Foundations Director should be centrally located on campus, probably in the Administration building, since some staff support will be provided by the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. The Director will report to the Vice Provost and could meet regularly with the Deans Council to ensure support for the program.

With such oversight, some existing committee structures could be streamlined. The two committees could work together As one possibility, the committees could have joint subcommittees for various functions and foci. The subcommittees might include: (1) IF100 and CF200, inclusive of approving courses, assessing outcomes and approving "significant community experiences"; (2) DL clusters to identify outcomes, approve cluster courses and assess outcomes of courses; (3) FF400 approval of program culminating experiences; (4) ULO's assessment (with support of institutional research); (5) CID courses, inclusive of approving courses and assessing outcomes and (5) overall curriculum approval (which currently falls to the University Curriculum Committee).
VII. COURSE APPROVAL AND ASSESSMENT

Within the Foundations Program, course design, approval, and assessment are all cut from the same cloth. By organizing a course around a set of meaningful course-level outcomes that are linked to an assessment rubric, an instructor simultaneously commends the value of the course for its intended purpose and also prepares the ground for efficient and effective assessment without the need to reconstruct the connection between course activities and outcomes after the fact for external “auditors” (e.g., the Core Curriculum Committee).

A. Assessment

We propose an assessment process that incorporates regular involvement from faculty teaching Foundations program courses that is manageable and fosters a culture of assessment. Since the learning outcomes are built into the structure of courses making up the Foundations Program, assessing outcomes will be embedded in the course design and implementation and the overall structure of the program. To facilitate this process, a faculty “Curriculum Assessment” committee (a committee of the faculty senate) would be created and would work closely with the subcommittees of the Boise State Curriculum Committee responsible for approval of courses in the Foundations Program. The Curriculum Assessment committee, along with the Foundations Program Director and Writing Across the Curriculum Director would coordinate two assessment meetings per year (August and January) including select groups of faculty involved in teaching courses that support the ULOs. Rubrics for measuring student learning of the different ULOs would be examined at this time (see, for example, Appendix A). These meetings would occur in a variety of ways. For example, instructors in the first year writing program would meet together, faculty within a department involved in the disciplinary capstone might meet together, interdisciplinary groups of faculty all teaching the CID courses might meet together, faculty teaching a DL course within a college or department might meet together. These dialogues would inform future plans and instill a sense of ownership of the Foundations program (and the ULOs) as broad as possible across the university. As a result of the August and January meetings, 1-page reflections would be written by individual faculty and forwarded to the "course leader" whom would be responsible for digesting/summarizing the reports from their area and making appropriate recommendations back to the appropriate area (e.g., to the Foundations director, the WAC director, Deans and Department Chairs, etc.) including the Curriculum Assessment Committee. The 1-page reflection activity would be written into contracts as expectations for adjunct faculty across the campus and that fulfillment of these expectations be required for continued employment. In order to keep this work of the Curriculum Assessment Committee manageable, it is envisioned that they would focus particular attention around 2 ULOs each year (one of 1-6 and one of the DL ULOs 7-11). The Curriculum Assessment Committee would then create a report for submission to the Faculty Senate which would serve as that year’s “snapshot” of learning, with particular attention to two of the ULOs each year.

A summary of the stages involved in this process is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>Late January</th>
<th>Mid-February</th>
<th>March-April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>Teach Foundation</td>
<td>½ day</td>
<td>Faculty reports due</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>assessment planning</td>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>(results) discussion</td>
<td>due</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meeting; discuss</td>
<td>Assessment committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>does analysis and writes focused report; submits to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Committee</td>
<td>does focused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Senate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>report from previous year</td>
<td>assessment in 1-2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>areas</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In the future, it would be desirable for the program to include undergraduate portfolios (perhaps in electronic form) for each student that includes documents demonstrating their satisfaction of each learning outcome. From the student perspective, such portfolios could serve as valuable supplements to the traditional application materials provided to prospective employers. From the departmental perspective, they would function as a durable record of student achievement and facilitate more meaningful program assessment.

B. Course Approval

- Foundations courses are developed and proposed by faculty across departments and colleges. They are approved by a subcommittee of Foundations faculty based upon frameworks or rubrics designed to assess the relevant ULOs in the course (Foundations 100 or 200).
- Ad hoc committees of disciplinary experts will be formed and charged with designing an assessment rubric for each of the ULO’s in 7-11, which will be reviewed and approved by the relevant subcommittee of the Boise State Curriculum Committee. Draft versions of these DL rubrics (created by faculty during a summer 2010 workshop) are included as appendices.
- Courses are admitted into the DL portion of the Foundations program by applying to be included in one of the five disciplinary clusters, a process overseen by the Boise State Curriculum Committee in consultation with the Foundations Director. Each DL course will also specify one of the competency-based ULOs (1-6) as an area of focus within the course. Once approved, all sections of a given DL course will be expected to share a common set of learning outcomes.
- DL course approval should be conducted with a view to represent as many of ULO’s 1-6 as possible within each disciplinary cluster. When necessary, the committee may solicit proposals for DL courses that specifically serve an under-represented foundational or civic ULO.
- The process of approving CID courses and capstone courses for inclusion in the Foundations program will be overseen by the Foundations director and the appropriate subcommittees of the Boise State Curriculum Committee.

VIII. INSTRUCTIONAL STAFFING

The Foundations Program is a coherent program of study that every Boise State graduate is expected to have experienced in pursuit of his or her degree and in achieving University Learning Outcomes. As such, the instructors responsible for delivering the coursework must understand and commit themselves to the goals of the program. The instructional staff required to deliver the lower-level Foundations courses (IF100, CF200, and TF300) is equivalent to that of a medium-to-large academic department, since every student admitted to the University will be taking them in some combination.

Foundations courses set the cornerstones of a student’s education at Boise State. The comparatively high degree of consistency and coordination among sectional offerings requires that some courses within the program be staffed and delivered with centralized oversight. Other courses within the Foundations program are far more flexible and (by design) discipline-specific. The oversight of these courses properly belongs at the unit level.

- FF400, CID, and DL courses will be delivered at the departmental level with centralized developmental and assessment support
- IF100, CF200, and TF300 will be taught by Foundations faculty (no more than 6 workload units per year), who will be recruited from academic departments by the Foundations Director to serve three-year terms (renewable) in the program while holding joint appointments in their home department
- Memoranda of understanding will be signed by the Foundations Director, prospective Foundations faculty member, and the Chair of the faculty member’s home department, describing the terms of the Foundations appointment, particularly as it relates to assignment of workload units
- Effort associated with those workload units will be applied to high-level curricular design (e.g., developing rubrics), course design, classroom instruction, and assessment analysis
• Responsibility for annual evaluation of Foundations faculty will be retained by the Chair of the faculty member's home department. The Foundation Director will provide feedback for the Chair’s consideration.
• Copies of student evaluations for IF100, CF200, and TF300 courses will be forwarded to the Chair of the faculty member’s home department.
• Instructors without assigned workloads (primarily adjunct faculty) could also apply for Foundations faculty status and be selected on the basis of established criteria.
• Eligibility criteria will be established by Foundations faculty committees to identify faculty with the necessary experiences, skills, and motivations to teach Foundations courses.
• Professional development programming offered by the CTL would be required of all first-time Foundations faculty.
• Foundations faculty would retain their regular salary, and replacement money would be transferred to the home department to cover the expenses resulting from the faculty member’s reassignment and to compensate the department for their contribution to the program (see Section VIII below).
• It is highly desirable that Foundations faculty represent a wide variety of disciplines.

Staffing of DL courses remains entirely within departmental purview. In signing on to teach a DL course, an instructor thereby agrees to support and assess the specified ULO’s for the course in question. Noteworthy considerations:

• Regular assessment of the ULO’s supported by the course will be required of all DL courses.
• The reduction of total credits moving from Core to Foundations would very likely reduce typical student FTE loads for some academic units.
• The requirement of Foundations courses should further reduce student FTE loads for those units but will not impact faculty lines.
• Because every discipline contributes to the education of Boise State students, every academic unit on campus is encouraged to eventually offer at least one DL course. Those programs that decouple their DL courses from the major will be free to make their traditional lower-division courses (which formerly served as watered-down gateway courses) more rigorous, providing opportunities to streamline programs.

Staffing of CID courses will be within departmental purview. The Writing Across the Curriculum Director will work with departments to identify and adopt recognized best-practices for these kinds of courses.

**Intellectual Foundations 100 (IF 100)**

Capacity requirements:
• 3300 students enrolled each year, of which 2700 are full time.
• 18 sections of 200, 3-credits
  o 9 interdisciplinary themed courses with 2 sections each that include one large group session and 2 small group sessions per week.

Faculty Role and Compensation:
• Nine “lead” Foundations faculty (drawn from tenure-track University and Lecturers) shall collaborate as a team to support the Foundation Program. Each “lead” Foundations faculty member shall design the course architecture for an interdisciplinary theme of their choosing (IF 100), orchestrate the interdisciplinary teaching assignments, guide Foundation 100 faculty through a training process, and oversee assessment. Lead Foundation faculty will be responsible for one interdisciplinary theme that will be offered in two sections (2 sections IF 100 in a given theme). Each section includes one large group session (max 200 students) and 8 small group sessions (25 students each). The large sessions
could be team taught and individual faculty members would be assigned to each small session. Compensation will be 6 Workload Units (category to be negotiated between chair and faculty member) and $3,000 in supplemental pay for the 9 month contract. Departments will receive $6,000 to use as needed. This compensation reflects the lead faculty teaching 2 small group sessions and coordinating the large group session. The work load associated with each large group session is roughly equal to a 1-credit course. The work load associated with each small session is roughly equivalent to a 1-credit course, therefore, the workload units for the teaching by lead Foundations faculty is approximately 4.

- Nine co-Foundation faculty (also drawn from tenure-track University and Lecturers) will assist the lead Foundation faculty as appropriate and will teach 2 small group sessions of IF 100 (2 work load units). Compensation will be 3 Workload Units (category to be negotiated between chair and faculty member) and $2,000 in supplemental pay for the 9 month contract. Departments will receive $3,000 to use as needed.
- Faculty recruited to be Foundations instructors will facilitate 2 small sessions and receive $2000 in supplemental pay and will be one workload unit. Adjunct faculty shall receive $2000 for facilitating 2 small group sessions. Each themed IF 100 course would be implemented with a team of 8 faculty that includes a “lead” Foundations faculty, a co-Foundations faculty, and 6 Foundation instructors. Together they would implement 2 sections of IF100 for that theme.

Civic Foundations 200 CF 200 (includes Transfer Foundation 300)

Capacity Requirements:
- 2800 second year and transfer students
- 70 sections of 40 students, 3-credits

Faculty Role and Compensation
- Four “lead” Foundations faculty for CF 200/300 (drawn from tenure-track University and Lecturers) shall collaborate as a team to support the Foundation Program. The team of “lead” Foundations faculty shall design the course architecture, orchestrate the teaching assignments, guide Foundation 200 faculty through a training process, and oversee assessment. Compensation will be 6 Workload Units (category to be negotiated between chair and faculty member) and $3,000 in supplemental pay for the 9 month contract. Departments will receive $6,000 to use as needed. This compensation reflects the lead faculty teaching 2 small group sessions and coordinating the large group session
- 10 adjuncts shall teach 20 sections for adjunct pay from freed up A260 funds. Adjunct rate is $911 per credit.
- 15 of the remaining 30 sections shall be taught by 5 graduate students (10 hour assistantships) graduate instructors X ($6,000 stipend + $4000 tuition fees) = $50,000
- 15 sections taught by T/TT, lecturers and/or adjunct faculty. T/TT could be “on load” or off. Maximum cost is 15 sections x $3,000 = $45,000
- Total FF 200/300 “faculty” is 34 that includes 4 Lead FF, 10 adjunct, 5 graduate assistants, up to 15 T/TT, lecturer, adjunct faculty = max 34

VIII. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Projected resource requirements for the Foundations program are based on the current Core profile and a set of simplifying assumptions. The projections are inherently rough and more so to whatever extent the simplifying assumptions differ from the conditions that obtain when the program is realized.
Current Core semester profile (figures from FA 2009)\(^\text{11}\)

- Number of Core sections offered: 522
- Total enrollment for all Core sections: 25,836
- Mean enrollment for Core sections: 62
- Total credit hours for all Core sections: 67,904
- Degree-seeking first-time, full-time admits: 2,194
- Degree-seeking transfer students: 995

Projected Foundations Profile

Simplifying assumptions:

1. Any reduction in mean credits earned will be largely offset by increased retention
2. Current balance of Extended Studies/non-ES offerings will be preserved
3. Current balance of tenure-track / lect. / adjunct / G.A. instruction will be preserved
4. Mean enrollment for individual DL sections will approximate mean enrollment for current Core sections
5. For first several years of Foundation Program implementation, departmental DL course offerings will approximate, but will not exceed, traditional Core offerings (except for those departments with no prior record of offering Core courses that opt in)

\(^{11}\) Figure are based on all on-campus Core offerings (including labs but excluding ENGL 101/102) scheduled between 7:40 a.m. Monday and 5:00 p.m. Friday, including lab sections – that is, on all non-Extended-Studies-funded Core sections.
Instructional Costs:

**Intellectual Foundations 100:**
- Nine lead Foundation faculty
  - $6,000 to departments and $3,000 supplemental pay = $9,000 x 9 = $81,000
- Nine regular Foundation faculty
  - $3,000 to departments and $2,000 supplemental pay = $5,000 x 9 = $45,000
- Foundation instructors
  - 108 sections x $1000 = $100,000
  Total for IF 100 personnel $234,000

**Civic Foundations 200**
- Four lead Foundations faculty
  - $6,000 to departments and $3,000 supplemental funds = $9,000 x 4 = $36,000
- 10 Adjuncts at $5466 compensation = $54660
- 5 Graduate Assistantships at $10,000 (includes 1/2 time stipend, prorated tuition) = $50,000
- 15 sections at $2733 = $40995
  Total = $181,655

IF 100 + CF 200 = $234,000 + 181,655 = $415,655

**Budget**

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<td>Director</td>
<td>$45,000 + fringe</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>$180,000</td>
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* Assume January 2011 hire
Funds Available

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<tr>
<td>Existing Core Appropriated Budget</td>
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<td>Reallocated A260 funds</td>
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<td>Portion of UNIV 100 Funds</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$595,000</strong></td>
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IX. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Foundation program would begin Fall 2012. Because University policy allows students to graduate under any catalog within the last six academic years, a full transition to the Foundation program could last approximately 6 years. However, the implementation plan calls for nearly complete offering of Foundation courses within 2 years with “automatic” academic substitutions for students in prior catalog years. The table below outlines the current transition and implementation plan. We recognize that once the implementation has begun in earnest, the plan and timeline will be adapted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>New Courses offered</th>
<th>Staffing Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>Foundations 100 and 200 course design &amp; approval; Core courses converted to DL courses&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;; degree program revision</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Committee structures altered&lt;sup&gt;13&lt;/sup&gt;; Foundations Director and staff hired; begin hiring and training Foundations faculty; training for DL instructors&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>CID course design and approval&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt;; track DL course demand and adjust offerings</td>
<td>None, DL courses may be offered if approved for core and DL</td>
<td>Continued hiring of Foundations faculty, continued training for Foundation and DL instructors; training for CID instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>UNST 400 course design and approval; continued adjustment of DL offerings</td>
<td>• Foundations 100&lt;br&gt;• Few Foundations 200 courses for students choosing 2012 catalog&lt;br&gt;• Portion of DL courses</td>
<td>Hired and trained Foundations faculty for 100 and DL faculty identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations 200 DL Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>All components of Foundations program in place&lt;br&gt;Academic Adjustments for students under later</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<sup>12</sup> Departments might choose not to redesign all Core courses to meet the DL course designation; these courses would continue to meet the Core requirements for students graduating under old catalogs. Course design/conversion will be facilitated by the Foundations Director and CTL.

<sup>13</sup> Careful consideration must be give to how the committee structure will manage the transition period.

<sup>14</sup> Instructor training will be facilitated by the Foundations Director and CTL.

<sup>15</sup> Staff in the First Year Writing Program will facilitate CID course design and instructor training.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>Same as previous year; complete phase-out year for courses with the “Core” designation</td>
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