

Announcing a new offering for 2018-2019!

GE 398-399 A two-semester linked course: *The New St. Olaf Requirements*

Course rationale: St. Olaf has had the same general education requirements for approximately 25 years. While they have served us well, they are overdue for revision. In 2015-16, the Curriculum Committee created an ad hoc committee to study trends in general education at peer institutions. They produced a report asking for a full review of St. Olaf's requirements. In 2016 the St. Olaf faculty approved the formation of a general education task force to formally evaluate the College's program and suggest alternatives. This task force worked through 2017-18, developing three structural models for general education and hosting multiple forums on different kinds of requirements. In May of this year, the faculty approved a resolution to create a new 2018-19 task force with the charge to:

1. Develop a guiding document relating to the overall goals of GE.
2. Propose a GE curriculum consistent with these goals by the spring of 2019.
3. Suggest how the full faculty deliberate and move to implement it.

This syllabus is the response to that charge.

Suggested course readings: Report of the 2017-18 Task Force. Other readings to be announced.

Course participants: St. Olaf faculty.

Students, staff, administrative leadership, and Board of Regents may audit the course and share ideas through conversation, focus groups, and surveys. The task force charged with shaping the implementation process will meet on Wednesdays at 3:30-5:00 in BC 143.

Course etiquette:

- Bring your best self to class!
- Our learning will be guided by [St. Olaf's core values](#): Intellectual and personal honesty, mutual trust, fairness, and respect for a wide range of opinions, ideas, and persons.¹
- Attendance and participation are required.
- Kindly avoid reference to current general education requirements (remember SANTA: say no to acronyms).
- Please do think in terms of best serving our students.
- Try to remain focused on the interests of St. Olaf College as a whole.

Course structure: The agenda for each class will be distributed in advance by the Curriculum Committee, in consultation with the GE Task Force. Each class meeting will have a specific agenda and focused discussion, with the Provost serving as chair. Minutes will be taken by a designee but endorsed and submitted by the Faculty Secretary. Lunch will not be provided; stay tuned for more information.

¹ Adapted from <https://wp.stolaf.edu/thebook/academic/integrity/>

Class meetings:

August 30: Regular Faculty Meeting. A discussion of possibilities and new initiatives connected to the To Include is to Excel program. Syllabus distributed.

September 20: Special Faculty Meeting devoted to St. Olaf requirements. Discussion on principles for the new requirements (previously distributed).

October 4: Regular Faculty Meeting. Vote on principles for new St. Olaf requirements.

October 11: Special Faculty Meeting. Discussion on mission statement for new St. Olaf requirements.

November 1: Regular Faculty Meeting. Vote on mission statement for new St. Olaf requirements.

November 8: Special Faculty Meeting on St. Olaf requirements. Discussion of desired learning outcomes for new requirements. Begin forming ad hoc groups.

December 6: Regular Faculty Meeting. Vote on learning outcomes for new requirements.

January term: Conduct focus groups and a survey of students to gauge responses to new principles and learning outcomes. Share progress with Board of Regents.

February 14: Regular Faculty Meeting. Presentation of student responses.

February 28: Special Faculty Meeting on St. Olaf requirements. Discussion on ideas from ad hoc groups.

March 14: Regular Faculty Meeting. Update on draft of new requirements.

March 21: Special Faculty Meeting on St. Olaf requirements. Discussion on draft of new requirements.

April 11: Regular Faculty Meeting. Continued discussion on finalized new requirements.

April 25: Special Faculty Meeting on St. Olaf requirements. Activities to explore possibilities for teaching and learning with the new requirements.

May 2: Share new requirements with Board of Regents at their spring meeting.

May 9: Regular Faculty Meeting. Final discussion of new St. Olaf requirements. Vote on the requirements and the next steps toward implementation.

Course evaluation:

90-100% approval: outstanding!

80-89%: great!

70-79%: not bad!

60-69%: ok!

50-59%: hmmm

49% and below: get ready to serve on the next GE task force...