

Commonalities across multiple offices

- Incorporation of several high-impact practices*, possibly to include:
 - Common first year experience
 - Capstone experience
 - Experiential high-impact practices (off-campus study, internships, undergraduate research, internships)
- Necessity for integrated reflection, either through an eportfolio, reflection course/course element (such as a “Liberal Arts in Practice” course), or some other means
- Necessity for consistent, simple, and clear messaging about our GE and what a liberal arts education at St. Olaf means
- Necessity for being student-centric

*Note that all the high-impact experiences listed raise additional questions about how we would define these practices and the particular content or outcomes that would be achieved.

Main points from each office

(for more information, please see each office’s individual responses)

International and Off-Campus Studies (IOS) and Academic Civic Engagement (ACE)

- There is a strong need to maintain high-level of participation in off-campus studies through models that reduce cost for students and the college, and continue to offer programs that fulfill GE requirements.
- We need to have a consistent and clear transfer policy and procedure for students studying abroad.
- Faculty should consider an emphasis on “citizenship,” broadly speaking, in the content, structure, and experiences of the GE.
- This office is strongly advocating for an experiential high-impact practice learning requirement, to be fulfilled through off-campus study, ACE, internships, or undergraduate research.

Center for Advising and Academic Support

- Faculty should consider a model with a first year seminar course in which the faculty member is the student’s advisor and that assists students with the transition to college. Having the seminar course faculty member serve as the advisor allows for more interaction between advisee and advisor which facilitates a mentoring relationship.
- The model of General Education should be clear (easy to understand and explain), flexible, and encourage student exploration, especially in the first year.
- CAAS supports a required experiential learning experience (ACE, study off-campus, research or internship)

- CAAS supports a smaller General Education requirement as it allows students to take more electives, study off campus and focus their studies in areas of interest.

Admissions Office:

- Strong, clear messaging about St. Olaf's approach to the liberal arts that is specific and possible for prospective students' and their families to easily connect with and see how it will benefit them beyond St. Olaf.
- GE's that allow for a transfer policy that is easy for prospective transfer students to interpret and use to understand their placement at St. Olaf.
- Implement a first year seminar that discusses identity, privilege, and all types of diversity: this will be especially important to think about as the demographics of high school students continue to change, as we see that evidence of an effort to be more inclusive is something that prospective students from all backgrounds wish to see.
- Maintain and continue to emphasize the areas that excite prospective students the most: global perspective/study abroad, excellence in the sciences/fine arts, and opportunities to pursue careers in the medical field.

Student Life

- The College should strongly consider a course within the GE curriculum that help students achieve success and prepare for success in all courses at St. Olaf.
 - These seminars would aim to encourage students to think critically, reflectively and synthetically about a topic, specifically relating to a theme.
 - Thinking around this construct would require the use of multiple disciplinary perspectives.
 - Course assignments and assessments should encourage a breadth of thought that expands beyond narrow disciplinary boundaries.
 - Students would take seminars during their first or second semester.
 - Seminars would be designed to familiarize incoming students with academic expectations and encourage engagement with faculty.
 - The course would foster an understanding of rich cultural, historical, and social diversity.
 - Consideration of a 2nd or 3rd year seminar might be helpful as well.
- GE requirements could be clarified and articulated in a way that minimize confusion amongst students.
- The impact of GE course requirements on students transferring into St. Olaf should be examined.

Registrar's Office

- It is essential that we revise our transfer policies -- they must be simpler, clearer, and more concise.
- We need to simplify the GE curriculum -- there should be fewer requirements, they should be clear, and students, faculty, and staff should be able to articulate what they

are and why there are essential to a St. Olaf College education and how they connect to life after St. Olaf.

- We need one “source of truth”: we need common language so that we all understand one another. We need all faculty, staff, and students to use the same terminology when explaining and describing degree requirements.

Libraries and Information Technology (LITS)

- Digital and information literacy (DIL) is an important set of critical and creative practices necessary for informed participation in society. As such, students should learn a range of DIL skills and concepts in a variety of courses both within their fields of study and across disciplines.
- Students should have learning experiences that underscore the value of DIL for academic research, job preparation, and a life of learning and critical engagement after college. In particular, students should gain an understanding of the ways that DIL skills prepare them to ask — and answer — their own questions after college.
- Students should have the opportunity to put DIL concepts to use in the context of progressively more challenging questions and projects, culminating in a substantial multimodal project (capstone experience) that spans disciplines and research methods, requires creative and critical thinking, and bridges scholarly and civic conversations.
- Students can be more successful when engaging DIL concepts when instructed and supported through partnerships of subject matter experts, both staff and faculty. Learning opportunities should be a mix of intense focus and frequent interaction and practice.

Piper Center for Vocation and Career

- Even though the college estimates that 90-95 percent of all graduating seniors have voluntarily completed some kind of experiential learning, to the extent that the college believes that we need to require all students to engage in such learning, the Piper Center would support (a) a revision of the curriculum requiring students to fulfill a GE in experiential learning or (b) a co-curricular alternative that would deliver a similar outcome.
- We strongly encourage thoughtful consideration of definitions of experiential learning and desired outcomes, as well as the potentially significant implications of a mandatory GE on the sourcing, overseeing, and funding of internships.
- We are supportive of a first-year seminar that would provide an opportunity for students to gain a more in-depth understanding of what a liberal arts education offers, what comprises “college knowledge,” and what resources St. Olaf provides to support students’ academic success and well being.
- We encourage the development of opportunities for students to articulate the skills associated with a St. Olaf education and to understand -- and acquire -- the broad range of skills that new graduates need to succeed and flourish in today’s employment market.

