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# CREATIVES' CURRICULUM

Columbia College commits to providing our students with the core competencies associated with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century liberal arts education, so that our students graduate confident in their ability to navigate whatever path they travel in pursuit of their creative interests. In recent years the College has undertaken to reimagine its Core Curriculum, and degree programs have sought to infuse aspects of professional practice experience into the artistic curricula. There is more to be done. Both in the Core and beyond, we recommit to delivering a curriculum that is nimble, responsive to current creative trends and infused with DEI values.

## ACTION STEPS: UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULAR INNOVATION

Signature elements of Columbia College Chicago's undergraduate creatives' curricula will be sound theoretical bases fostering critical thinking, strong connections to emerging practice methodologies and new technologies, and strong and sustained bridges to creative fields and industries. We also will ground our curriculum in inclusive principles, informed by pedagogical practices that advance student wellbeing. We encourage the sharing of pedagogical experiences and perspectives across departments, roles, and disciplines to empower the further development of curricula representing these distinctive elements of our vision.

- The Office of the Provost will fund **Curriculum Innovation Planning Grants** supporting departmental proposals to incorporate or strengthen the use of these signature elements in new or existing curriculum. Curriculum Innovation Planning Grants can fund short-term planning initiatives, including faculty and staff development, curricular revision activities, facilitated consultation with leading practitioners in the field, and technology acquisition, and will be awarded on a competitive basis through an annual process to be announced by the Office of the Provost.
- The College will create a **Strategic Curriculum Innovation Investment Fund** to launch proposals to innovate our curriculum in ways that advance our strategic vision for our curriculum, through an annual competitive process that prioritizes innovation and transdisciplinary approaches to teaching managed by the Provost. This long-term funding pool will support faculty and staff hiring, and technology and capital investments.
- The Office of the Provost will also fund **Student Retention and Success Grants** to support initiatives that further our efforts to infuse DEI principles into our curriculum or meaningfully advance our strategic goals for student enrollment, retention and graduation. Student Retention and Success Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis through an annual process to be announced by the Office of the Provost.

## ACTION STEPS: CORE CURRICULUM

We remain committed to a core curriculum that supports student success. The Columbia Core has been revised to add to the Essential Liberal Arts and Science (ELAS) the CCCX series of courses, fulfilling our prior strategic goal to create curriculum that connects to the physical and cultural reality of Chicago. Overall, the college has achieved many of the previous strategic goals for the Columbia Core. Our next strategic goal for the Columbia Core is to open avenues for creative exploration and expand opportunities to learn foundational business skills, while at the same time ensuring that required Core Curriculum elements are deliverable and consistently of high quality.

- We will streamline the Columbia Core requirements to support retention and completion, in keeping with best practices of higher education, and paying special attention to the needs of transfer students and students entering with advanced credits.

- We will modify the breakdown of requirements in the Columbia Core, allowing for more exploration in other areas of the undergraduate curriculum. This modification will reduce the number of credits required in current specified LAS disciplines, to allow for “**Core Elective**” credits. Core Elective credits will expand the courses currently specified as meeting Core learning outcomes, to include select foundational and experiential opportunities from the across the college.
- We will recognize and support in the Core self-directed exploration across disciplines, taking advantage of badging and other credentialing options to acknowledge sustained student interest.
- We will continue to develop ELAS Core courses that are keyed to the interests of our students and integrated into our creatives’ curriculum.
- We will invest in faculty and staff development to support innovation in teaching essential Core requirements and initiatives that advance our DEI, recruitment, retention and graduation goals.
- We will infuse throughout the curriculum opportunities for faculty to teach, and for students to learn, basic business skills, such as reading a balance sheet, business communication skills, developing a basic business plan, contract review skills, negotiation skills (contract and salary), and workplace environment navigation skills.
  - Foundational business skills courses meeting these objectives, such as BUSE 120: Personal Finance, ENGL 241: Writing for the Creative Workplace, BUSE 275: Self-Management and Freelancing, and COLL 230: Internship: Professionalism and Creativity, will be designated as Columbia **Core Elective** courses.
  - We will leverage the power of our learning management system and the business expertise of our faculty to create a bank of discipline-specific business skills modules for faculty to use in their classes, empowering departments to build connections between existing content and basic business skills.
  - We will create an online Business Skills Academy, leveraging the business expertise of our faculty to create opportunities for students to learn business skills on a self-paced, non-credit basis, taking advantage of badging and other credentialing options to recognize student achievement.

## ACTION STEPS: LIVED CURRICULUM

Academic departments and programs will partner with Residence Life to develop creatives’ living-learning communities that integrate curricular, co-curricular, engagement and professional development activities into the lived experience of residential students.

## ACTION STEPS: GRADUATE EDUCATION

Signature elements of Columbia College Chicago graduate creatives’ curricula will be hands-on learning that advances critical skills in disciplines in which we have expertise. Our graduate programs will train the next set of creative leaders by focusing on disciplines that are responsive to what the world needs.

- We will support graduate programming by expanding the pool of graduate faculty. The ability to teach in a department’s existing or planned graduate programs should be a consideration in departmental full-time faculty hiring.
- We will continue to grow our graduate student enrollment by developing new programs that deliver the signature elements Columbia College Chicago graduate programs.
- We will further increase enrollment and expand the accessibility of our programs by leveraging online and hybrid formats to meet students where they are in their professional path.

- We will promote curricular and non-curricular opportunities for graduate students to gain practical experience working with professionals in their fields and otherwise support professional development for graduate students and their transition to practice.
- We will invest in formal and informal opportunities for graduate student collaboration across programs and disciplines and create physical spaces for professional interaction and community building.
- We will support our graduate students by creating graduate student success and wellness benchmarks and goals.
- We will invest in graduate advising and student wellbeing by creating a dedicated staff line for a graduate education persistence and success advisor embedded in Graduate Education but maintaining close relationships with student services, the career center and the academic departments.

## ACTION STEPS: SUMMER ACTIVATION

- We will activate our summers by creating a rotating roster of “Summer Institutes.” The hallmarks of summer institutes will be that they provide innovative, cross-disciplinary summer coursework that infuse DEI and social justice perspectives. Summer institutes will also allow Columbia College to collaborate strategically with the many creative fairs, festivals and showcases that are held in Chicago each summer.
- Examples of possible Summer Institutes topics are Social Justice, Arts Education and Storytelling. A proposal process for Summer Institutes will be announced in August 2022.

## ACTION STEPS: CONTINUING EDUCATION & ADULT EDUCATION

- Columbia College Chicago is hub for faculty, staff, alumni and creative professionals who are leaders in their fields and have much to share. We will activate opportunities for mature learners to expand their skills and opportunities, with an emphasis on teaching artists. We will create opportunities for creative masterclass experiences of different formats to engage curious and enthusiastic adult learners in disciplines where we have expertise.