# A Practical Guide for Faculty to Building Out the BU Hub Curriculum

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(March 2017)

Here you will find an overview of the BU Hub’s distinctive vision and conceptual framework for university-wide general education, together with program requirements, student learning outcomes, and other information to help guide your participation in readying and revising current courses and developing new courses for inclusion in the Hub.

The Provost has made significant funding available to encourage and reward faculty who take up the challenge and opportunity of revising and creating new courses for the Hub over the next six months.

Beginning the week after Spring Break, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will host information sessions for faculty and staff to discuss the BU Hub learning outcomes and requirements, to ask questions, and to begin planning next steps for revised and new courses. Deans may also have plans to host discussions within the Schools and Colleges.

- The Hub’s Six Capacities, Constitutive Areas, and the Signature Cross-College Challenge
- BU Hub Requirements for Students
- Learning Outcomes for Each BU Hub Area
- Financial Incentives & Academic Resources for Faculty
  - Hub Course Development Stipends
  - CTL (Center for Teaching & Learning): Information Sessions, Workshops, New Course Development Institutes, and Customized Consultations
- Recommendations and Priority Areas for New Course Development
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- BU Hub Implementation Timeline Spring 2017 – Summer 2018
The Hub’s Six Capacities, Constitutive Areas, and the Signature Cross-College Challenge

Note: Beginning the week after Spring Break, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will host information sessions for faculty and staff to discuss the BU Hub learning outcomes and requirements, to ask questions, and to begin planning next steps for revised and new courses. Deans may also have plans to host discussions within the Schools and Colleges.

The founding president of Boston University, William Fairfield Warren, arrived in Boston from his post as a Methodist missionary in Germany. Warren carried with him German ideas about the modern university as a synthesis of liberal arts and professional training, and a belief in higher education as a way to promote understanding among diverse peoples of the globe.

More than a century later, Warren’s commitments to global engagement, to the lifetime love of learning and the pursuit of truth, and to combining the liberal arts and sciences with professional training still define undergraduate education at BU. Updating those traditions to meet the needs of the 21st-century, the six BU Hub capacities identify the core knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that BU undergraduates need to thrive in their professional, personal and civic lives.

1. **Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Historical Interpretation**
2. **Scientific and Social Inquiry**
3. **Quantitative Reasoning**
4. **Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship**
5. **Communication**
6. **Intellectual Toolkit**

The BU Hub is designed to equip students to engage with complexity, diversity, and change, and with enduring features of human cultures. Its six capacities and their constitutive areas expose students to a broad range of knowledge and disciplines, encourages a sense of social responsibility and a commitment to social justice, cultivates a set of widely applicable habits of mind, such as analytical, interpretative, quantitative and communication skills, and develops the ability to apply knowledge in diverse settings.

While the BU Hub does not identify a definitive corpus of knowledge that every student is expected to know, it maps out the core areas of knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that all undergraduates will develop. The BU Hub is flexible, integrated into students’ courses of study, and can be pursued along pathways of the students’ choosing. In this respect it differs from many standard general education programs: students develop the core knowledge, skills and habits of mind across all four years, in the major and outside the major, in co-curricular activities as well as courses. By featuring courses and co-curricular experiences that help students develop more than one area, the BU Hub encourages students to draw connections among fields of study and ways of thinking.
As the BU Hub’s signature learning experience, the Cross-College Challenge is being developed to epitomize BU’s integrative approach to university-wide general education. In this junior-senior course, teams of 6-8 students from multiple liberal arts and sciences and professional majors will work together to conceive and carry out a significant faculty-mentored project, delving collaboratively into a contemporary issue or enduring question that transcends disciplinary boundaries, and applying their acquired and developing abilities to the creation and presentation of a tangible product. Decisions about whether the Cross-College Challenge will be optional or required will be made after the pilots run in Spring, Summer, and Fall 2018.

Finally, as Boston University seeks to educate students who are, in the words of its mission statement, “reflective, resourceful individuals ready to live, adapt, and lead in an interconnected world,” the BU Hub calls on students to begin the lifelong pursuit of personal qualities that embody BU’s values and aspirations for its graduates. We hope BU students will learn

- intrepidity in thought and action
- empathy from walking imaginatively in others’ shoes
- resilience in recovering and learning from disappointments and setbacks
- nimbleness needed to recognize opportunity and respond creatively to changing circumstances
- humility in the face of all they do not yet know and understand
- self-discipline needed to achieve their goals
- self-sufficiency required to take responsibility for themselves and their actions
- responsibility to others as ethical members of communities
- self-awareness necessary for a thoughtful, well-examined wisdom and curiosity about themselves, others, and the world.
BU Hub Requirements for Students

Pathways for developing the six capacities of the BU Hub are flexible, encompassing various kinds of courses and co-curricular activities and ensuring that all students have multiple opportunities to develop the capacities inside and outside the classroom across their undergraduate careers at BU.

As a condition of Boston University’s accreditation, all undergraduate degree programs must require a minimum of 40 academic credits that can be identified as “general education.” Requirements for completion of the BU Hub take account of that 40-credit threshold, ensuring that all students’ chosen pathways to graduation will meet or exceed it.

**BU Hub Units and the 2+1 Rule.** Requirements of the BU Hub are nonetheless expressed in terms not of courses or credits, but of BU Hub Units. This alternative “currency” is needed to accommodate both the variability from course to course in BU credits assigned and the fact that students will have the option of fulfilling some BU Hub requirements through equivalent non-credit bearing co-curricular learning experiences. A **BU Hub Unit is a learning experience that achieves the student learning outcomes for a given area of one of the Hub’s six capacities** (e.g., for Aesthetic Exploration, a constitutive area of Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Historical Interpretation).

Students must complete at least one BU Hub unit in each BU Hub area. They will accomplish that typically in 10-12 four-credit courses or equivalent by virtue of the following key provision for implementing the Hub’s commitment to integrative learning:

A single 4-credit BU Hub course or equivalent that connects and meets learning outcomes for two Hub areas, or for three if one of those is in the Intellectual Toolkit, will count as fulfilling a BU Hub Unit in all of those areas.

Similarly, a 4-credit course designated as “Writing-Intensive” can be approved to confer BU Hub units in two areas plus Writing.

Thus, for example, a hypothetical 4-credit course in the history of art and architecture, depending on its central emphases, might count for combinations such as the following:

1. Aesthetic Exploration (one unit), Historical Consciousness (one unit), Critical Thinking (one unit)

2. Aesthetic Exploration (one unit), Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy (one unit), Writing-Intensive (one unit)
The assumption is that “two areas plus a tool” and “two areas plus writing-intensive” (the “2+1 rule”) offer realistic, intellectually promising, and assessable blueprints for putting different ways of knowing in dialogue within a 4-credit course while fostering significant essential learning in each contributing area.

The 2+1 rule describes a maximum for a 4-credit course. There will and should be 4-credit courses that address one or two areas of the BU Hub.

The 2+1 rule pertains to all 4-credit courses, except the following:

1. The first foundational course in Writing (WR 100 or equivalent) counts only for Writing. *(Note: pending discussions with the Writing Program, it is possible that WR 100 might also count for an additional communication unit in either Digital/Multimedia Expression or Oral and/or Signed Communication.)*

2. The second foundational course in Writing (WR 150 or equivalent) counts only for Writing plus toolkit area Research and Information Literacy.

3. The Cross-College Challenge is expected to count as students’ second unit in four toolkit areas: Critical Thinking, Research and Information Literacy, Teamwork/ Collaboration, and Creativity/Innovation.

As an alternative to single 4-credit courses, the BU Hub allows for the possibility of fulfilling learning outcomes for a Hub area through a sequence of two or more courses totaling at least four credits. In that case, students earn a BU Hub unit upon completing the entire sequence. Partial Hub units will not, however, be awarded for incomplete sequences (or for any other reason). Concern for students’ progress to degree thus dictates sparing, well-considered use of this option to distribute a unit over more than one course. A well-designed 2-credit course could fulfill the learning outcomes of a single BU Hub area.

Students complete, at a minimum, the following BU Hub Units.

1. **Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Historical Interpretation**

   Three units:

   o Philosophical Interpretation and Life’s Meanings—one unit
   o Aesthetic Exploration—one unit
   o Historical Consciousness—one unit
2. **Scientific and Social Inquiry**

   Three units:
   - Scientific Inquiry I—one unit
   - Social Inquiry I—one unit
   - Social Inquiry II or Scientific Inquiry II—one unit

3. **Quantitative Reasoning**

   Two units:
   - Quantitative Reasoning I—one unit
   - Quantitative Reasoning II—one unit

4. **Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship**

   Four units:
   - The Individual in Community—one unit
   - Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy—two units
   - Ethical Reasoning—one unit

5. **Communication**

   Six units:
   - Writing
     - Freshman writing (e.g., WR 100)—one unit
     - Research writing course (e.g., WR 150)—one unit
     - Two writing-intensive courses—one unit each
   - Oral and/or Signed Communication—one unit
   - Digital/Multimedia Expression—one unit
6. **Intellectual Toolkit**

Seven units:

- Critical Thinking—two units
- Research and Information Literacy—one unit beyond introductory research writing
- Teamwork/Collaboration—two units
- Creativity/Innovation—two units
- Life Skills—Students decide with their advisors on additional courses and/or co-curricular experiences to develop this area (e.g., FY 101).

Expectations for the junior-senior Cross-College Challenge, to be pilot-tested beginning in Spring 2018, are that it will count as students’ second unit in the four Intellectual Toolkit areas of Critical Thinking, Research and Information Literacy, Teamwork/Collaboration, and Creativity/Innovation.

**Co-Curricular Experiences in the BU Hub**

Students may elect to fulfill up to two BU Hub Units in approved co-curricular experiences, rather than coursework. Grounded in the extensive educational research demonstrating the power of co-curricular learning, the integration of approved co-curricular activities is a distinctive feature of the BU Hub among our peers.

It is anticipated that the BU Hub will be especially rich in co-curricular offerings in the Diversity, Civic Engagement and Global Citizenship capacity and in the Life Skills area, though exciting possibilities are also emerging in other capacities as well.

Guidelines for co-curricular activities for the BU Hub are being developed and will be ready for distribution late Spring 2017.

**The BU Hub and Majors/Minors**

In keeping with BU Hub principle of curricular integration, there is no limit on the overlap between BU Hub courses and courses taken for major and minor requirements. If a student majored and minored or double-majored in different areas of study, it is conceivable that, except for the two foundational writing courses, all BU Hub units could be achieved in coursework for the major(s) and minor(s).
BU Hub Learning Outcomes

In specifying what students will learn, the learning outcomes for the six capacities provide the criteria by which courses and co-curricular activities are approved for inclusion in the BU Hub by the University Council General Education Committee. The capacities are interconnected and overlap. Some learning outcomes—engagement with diverse cultures, knowledge of the scientific and social aspects of climate change, for example—are involved with numerous capacities and, hence, by design, occur repeatedly.

Click below to see the descriptions and rationales for each capacity and area, and the learning outcomes that derive from them.

1. Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Historical Interpretation
2. Scientific and Social Inquiry
3. Quantitative Reasoning
4. Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship
5. Communication
6. Intellectual Toolkit
Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Historical Interpretation

Three units:

- Philosophical Interpretation and Life’s Meanings—one unit
- Aesthetic Exploration—one unit
- Historical Consciousness—one unit

A sophisticated capacity for interpretation is a necessary condition for understanding the world and one’s being in the world. Interpretation is a primary way of finding and creating meaning in our lives, and of apprehending the complexities and wonder of being human. Exploring the knowledge and ways of thinking associated with philosophical, aesthetic and historical interpretation develops critical consciousness, and builds essential foundations for ethical and responsible action. These outcomes foster familiarity with notable texts, creative works, methods of interpretation, and an awareness of diverse ways of knowing and living in the world. They promote critical inquiry, imaginative thinking, and historical consciousness as lifelong paths to understanding and taking account of views, cultures, and personal experiences different from one’s own.

Philosophical Inquiry and Life’s Meanings

Philosophical inquiry asks such questions as: What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope for? By learning how to pose such questions critically, all BU students will learn how to investigate and think for themselves about their place in nature and history, as well as their responsibilities to one another, to themselves, and to the Earth. Philosophical inquiry complements other interpretations of life’s meanings, including those provided in diverse religious, historical, cultural, and scientific contexts.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of notable works in philosophical thought, make meaningful connections among them, and be able to relate those works to their own lives and those of others.
2. Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and possess the vocabulary to reflect upon significant philosophical questions and topics such as what constitutes a good life, right action, meaningful activity, knowledge, truth, or a just society.

Aesthetic Exploration

Through words, images, sounds, and built environments, literature and the arts explore complex human feeling and thought in a search to discover, create and express meaning. Experience of the arts offers deep communion with other minds and hearts across time and across cultures, brings beauty into our lives and enlivens us to its varieties in and around the world, and opens
the senses to the perceptual world. Aesthetic interpretation is the ability when confronted by a painting (or a poem, a song, a film, a play, a building, a web game, for example) to analyze how it works and to reflect upon its meanings. As such, interpretation deepens experiences of the arts and the ability to learn from their wisdom. Exploration of literature and the arts through the BU Hub should foster involvement in Boston’s vibrant arts communities, a distinct advantage of a BU education.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of notable works in literature and/or the arts, including the cultural contexts in which those works were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.
2. Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art (literature, music, visual arts, etc.).
3. Students will produce evaluative, analytical, or creative works that demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics—such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history—of at least one literary or artistic medium.

Historical Consciousness

Whether deciding which business strategy to adopt for the next quarter, which candidate to favor in the next election, or how to lead our personal lives, we all interpret the evidence of the past and craft historical narratives: we select significant events from a broad universe of evidence, make arguments about cause and effect, and recognize how previous decisions and their consequences shape the options before us. History asks us to think not just across time, but also across disciplines and across geographic spaces. History creates a sense of connection, rootedness—participation in an ongoing conversation among and between generations. Above all else, historical consciousness gives us the power to imagine worlds different from our own, to evaluate them, and thus to imagine how to live differently and better.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

1. Students will create historical narratives, evaluate interpretations based on historical evidence, and construct historical arguments.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material (textual, visual, or aural) using a range of interpretive skills and situating the material in its historical and cultural context.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of religious traditions, intellectual paradigms, forms of political organization, or socio-economic forces, and how these have changed over time.
Scientific and Social Inquiry

Three units:

- Scientific Inquiry I—one unit
- Social Inquiry I—one unit
- Social Inquiry II or Scientific Inquiry II—one unit

A capacity to frame and pursue questions concerning how the world works is essential to becoming responsible, engaged citizens who understand how science, society, and individual lives intersect, and who can navigate contemporary and emerging public debates over social and scientific issues. While inquiry in the natural sciences explores the forces governing the physical universe, and inquiry in the social sciences examines the interplay of factors driving outcomes in the social world, both pursue answers by collecting and analyzing or interpreting evidence to evaluate competing claims. Through understanding and practicing the methods of scientific and social inquiry, all BU students will develop a broadly informed curiosity about the workings of the physical and social worlds, as well as the knowledge, skills and habits of mind needed to engage with key challenges facing our species and planet today, such as sustainability, immigration, and globalization. These learning outcomes involve an introduction to major concepts in both scientific and social inquiry, and the opportunity to pursue more advanced evidence-based inquiry in the social or natural sciences or at the intersection of science and society.

Scientific Inquiry

Many of the most vexing problems facing the contemporary world, from the global challenge of climate change to intimate decisions about our own health, demand the capacity to evaluate scientific claims, assess the strengths and weaknesses of prevailing theories, and discriminate between conflicting data and conclusions. Scientific literacy – both a basic understanding of major concepts in the natural sciences and a grasp of how scientific knowledge is produced and validated – is essential to responsible citizenship and personal autonomy. These outcomes foster the ability to understand scientific ideas, as well as the skills necessary to formulate working hypotheses, design experimental tests of these hypotheses, and evaluate experimental data.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will identify and apply major concepts used in the natural sciences to explain and quantify the workings of the physical world. This will include an introduction to the way that scientists explain complex systems such as living organisms, the Earth, or the Universe.
II.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this group must have at least one of the following outcomes.

While all courses in scientific inquiry involve the application of major concepts, courses here require more advanced application of concepts and methods, including the analysis of data, to answer questions or solve problems.

1. Students will apply principles and methods from the natural sciences based on collecting new or analyzing existing data in order to answer questions and/or solve problems. They will understand the nature of evidence employed in the natural sciences and will demonstrate a capacity to differentiate competing claims in such fields. This includes reflecting on and critically evaluating how natural scientists formulate hypotheses, gather empirical evidence of multiple sorts, and analyze and interpret this evidence.

2. Using their knowledge of the natural and social sciences, students will engage with issues of public policy, such as climate change, inequality, and health, that involve the intersection of perspectives from different disciplines. This would entail an ability to identify the evidentiary basis for scientific claims, the challenges to it, and the connections among the economic, social, and scientific factors that shape the creation and adoption of effective public policy.

Social Inquiry

People do not live and work in isolation. Rather, we are embedded in, and move between, multiple complex communities: families, neighborhoods, universities, cities, states, and transnational groups, for example. As a result, our individual choices are significantly shaped by social forces and the social structures in which we act. Understanding how social phenomena affect our lives informs our personal and ethical growth by illuminating the societal implications of our individual actions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

I.

1. Students will identify and apply major concepts used in the social sciences to explain individual and collective human behavior including, for example, the workings of social groups, institutions, networks, and the role of the individual in them.
II.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this group must have at least one of the following outcomes.

*While all courses in social inquiry involve the application of major concepts, courses here require more advanced application of concepts and methods, such as the analysis of data, to answer questions or solve problems.*

1. Students will apply principles and methods from the social sciences based on collecting new or analyzing existing data in order to address questions, solve problems, or deepen understanding. They will understand the nature of evidence employed in the social sciences and will demonstrate a capacity to differentiate competing claims in such fields. This includes reflecting on and critically evaluating how social scientists formulate hypotheses, gather empirical evidence of multiple sorts, and analyze and interpret this evidence.

2. Using their knowledge of the natural and social sciences, students will engage with issues of public policy, such as climate change, inequality, and health that involve the intersection of perspectives from different disciplines. This would entail an ability to identify the evidentiary basis for scientific claims, the challenges to it, and the connections among the economic, social, and scientific factors that shape the creation and adoption of effective public policy.
Quantitative Reasoning

Two units:

- Quantitative Reasoning I—one unit
- Quantitative Reasoning II—one unit

The contemporary world demands competence in a broad array of quantitative skills, including the ability to interpret evidence, model complex systems, and draw valid inferences from data. On a daily basis, people evaluate quantitative evidence and arguments, for example, to assess risks, maximize returns, evaluate change, and interpret statistical models. While these quantitative skills are acquired primarily through the study of mathematical, statistical, and computational methods, quantitative reasoning is ubiquitous in all fields of study and all aspects of life. Beyond skills and methods for problem solving, computational thinking has deep implications for understanding how the digital world works. Despite an ever-increasing potential for new insights and efficiency gains, algorithms—processes or sets of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer—can also amplify structural discrimination, produce errors that deny services to individuals, or mislead electorates.

BU students should understand, use, and interpret the role that quantitative reasoning plays in shaping their personal, professional, and civic lives. They must possess a fundamental understanding of the tools of quantitative reasoning and the ability to apply them to marshal, interpret, and analyze data to answer complex questions across a variety of settings. Developing a capacity for quantitative reasoning is crucial for personal self-sufficiency, professional advancement, and responsible citizenship.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

I.

*Learning experiences in this group enable students to acquire core concepts and tools for quantitative reasoning.*

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

1. Students will demonstrate their understanding of core conceptual and theoretical tools used in quantitative reasoning, such as statistics, computing, and mathematics.
2. Students will interpret quantitative models and understand a variety of methods of communicating them, such as graphs, tables, formulae, and schematics.
3. Students will communicate quantitative information symbolically, visually, numerically, or verbally.
4. Students will recognize and articulate the capacity and limitations of quantitative methods and the risks of using them improperly.

II.
Learning experiences in this group enable students to frame and address complex problems using quantitative reasoning.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

1. Students will frame and solve complex problems using quantitative tools, such as analytical, statistical, or computational methods.
2. Students will apply quantitative tools in diverse settings to answer discipline-specific questions or to engage societal questions and debates.
3. Students will formulate, and test an argument by marshaling and analyzing quantitative evidence.
4. Students will communicate quantitative information symbolically, visually, numerically, or verbally.
5. Students will recognize and articulate the capacity and limitations of quantitative methods and the risks of using them improperly.
Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship

Four units:

- Individual in Community—one unit
- Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy—two units
- Ethical Reasoning—one unit

In our globally connected world made up of complex, diverse communities, BU graduates will need to find their places in a community, to work and live with people whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own, and to think through the ethical challenges they will face over a lifetime. BU’s founders envisioned an institution that fostered opportunity for people of every race, class, religion and gender. From early on, BU has recruited students from around the globe and sent its alumni to every corner of the earth. Building on these commitments to inclusion, the BU Hub prepares students to engage with peoples and cultures abroad and within one’s local community, and with struggles for social justice. These learning outcomes take advantage of BU’s broad range of language programs and study abroad options, and abundant coursework in literature and the arts, cultures, societies, public issues, and development challenges of societies worldwide. They foster engagement with the city of Boston as well as our own diverse campus, which offer many opportunities to learn from our neighbors and to appreciate and value complex social environments.

The Individual in Community

*Over a lifetime, people move in and out of multiple communities that range from the family, to neighborhoods and cities, to professional and other organizations (which might be international), to larger units such as the nation. These communities may be defined by, among other things, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, gender, personal relationships, time, location, interests, and beliefs. The ability to accept individual responsibility toward multiple communities, and to work as engaged members of diverse communities is essential to all aspects of life in the 21st century.*

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will analyze at least one of the dimensions of experience—historical, racial, socio-economic, political, gender, linguistic, religious, or cultural—that inform their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies.

2. Students will participate respectfully in different communities such as campus, citywide, national and international groups, and recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those communities.
Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy

In a world interlinked socially, economically, and politically, an ability to orient ourselves when outside our cultural comfort zones (abroad, in a foreign-language context, in an unfamiliar neighborhood of Boston, for example) and to work with sensitivity with people from different backgrounds is necessary to success in the workplace and to living a productive, meaningful life.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have at least one of the following outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will demonstrate, through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in at least two different languages, cultures, religions, political systems, or societies. Note: A course in this area might, for example, explore the political systems of two countries, while another might explore multiple religious traditions within a single country, and another might explore the literature of a single country and, in assignments, invite comparative analysis of works of other national literary traditions, including those of students’ countries of origin.

2. Students will demonstrate detailed understanding of at least two cultural contexts through foreign language or culture study at BU, participation in a language or culture living-learning community at BU, or study abroad. This will involve reflection on the challenges and pleasures students discover in orienting themselves in new and unfamiliar cultures.

Ethical Reasoning

What should we care about? How should we behave in our personal, civic, and professional lives? Do laws have a moral basis? Learning to grapple competently with such fundamental ethical questions is a central component of citizenship and is critical to helping us understand ourselves not just as individuals, but also as parts of communities and custodians of the Earth. Ethical reasoning is part of Boston University’s distinguishing tradition of social justice.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will be able to identify, grapple with, and make a judgment about the ethical questions at stake in at least one major contemporary public debate, and engage in a civil discussion about it with those who hold views different from their own.

2. Students will demonstrate the skills and vocabulary needed to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that face individuals (or organizations, or societies or governments) as they grapple with issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as “other.” They should consider their responsibilities to future generations of humankind, and to stewardship of the Earth.
Communication

Six units:

- Writing
  - One freshman writing course (e.g., WR 100)—one unit
  - One introductory research writing course (e.g., WR 150)—one unit
  - Two writing-intensive courses—one unit each
- Oral and/or Signed Communication—one unit
- Digital/Multimedia Expression—one unit

To thrive as citizens of the contemporary world, we all need the capacity to communicate effectively and responsibly in written, oral, and digital/multimedia modes. While these forms of expression are distinct, they are also complementary, with each supporting and even including the others. Among them, writing remains the foundation. But oral communication and digital/multimedia communication are also important, not only in their traditional forms but also in new forms engendered by the technologically driven expansion of communicative capacities. By graduation, all students will be able to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and in a variety of situations, using appropriate media and modes of expression, in addition to demonstrating special proficiency in those forms of communication most relevant to their particular majors or prospective professions.

Writing

Writing is fundamental, the most important form of expression that BU undergraduates must develop. In the academy and in almost every professional setting, BU graduates must be able to express their ideas in clear, coherent prose. Effective writing demands the honing of skills, but it also cultivates ways of thinking, evaluating evidence, constructing responsible and convincing arguments, and generating creative ideas. As effective writers, BU graduates will pay close attention to the potential readers of their writings; as responsible writers, they will take ownership of their message and the means of communicating it, and hold their writing to high standards of truth, accuracy, validity, and humaneness.

Writing courses must have all three outcomes. Writing-intensive courses must have at least outcomes 1 and 2.

Note: While learning to craft written arguments is essential in the two foundational writing courses and most courses designated as “writing-intensive,” the latter also accommodate students’ learning to write to the standards of majors and professions such as journalism that place a premium on the difference between “arguments” and expository accounts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to craft responsible, considered, and well-structured written arguments, using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.
2. Students will be able to read with understanding, engagement, appreciation, and critical judgment.

3. Students will be able to write clearly and coherently in a range of genres and styles, integrating graphic and multimedia elements as appropriate.

**Oral and/or Signed Communication**

*BU students should be able to communicate information in a clear and coherent formal oral and/or signed presentation, to engage responsibly with others, and to make use of a range of disciplinary-appropriate informal oratory. As with writing, effective oral/signing communicators should prepare remarks with an awareness of their purpose and their audience. Because oral and/or signed communication is generally interactive, students should be able to attend and respond thoughtfully to others. They should also understand that public presentation serves an essentially civic function as a means of participating in collective debate and decision-making.*

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

1. Students will be able to craft and deliver responsible, considered and well-structured oral and/or signed arguments using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.

2. Students will demonstrate an understanding that oral/signed communication is generally interactive, and they should be able to attend and respond thoughtfully to others.

3. Students will be able to speak/sign effectively in situations ranging from the formal to the extemporaneous and interact comfortably with diverse audiences.

**Digital/Multimedia Expression**

*Communication through means other than words—whether spoken or written—requires a distinct set of skills. In a world where messages are routinely conveyed through audiovisual media, BU students need to develop an understanding of the role and impact of color, composition, rhythm, and acoustics that matches their mastery of verbal syntax and rhetoric. Today, in addition to live performances and installations, BU graduates receive information and experience the world through websites, videos, and podcasts. They must be able not only to consume and appreciate these and other forms of digital expression, but to evaluate and produce them.*

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

1. Students will be able to craft and deliver responsible, considered, and well-structured arguments using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the capabilities of various communication technologies and be able to use these technologies ethically and effectively.

3. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of visual communication, such as principles governing design, time-based and interactive media, and the audio-visual representation of qualitative and quantitative data.
Intellectual Toolkit

Seven units:

- Critical Thinking—two units (one satisfied by the Cross-College Challenge or other means)
- Research and Information Literacy—one unit (satisfied by the Cross-College Challenge or other means) beyond the unit of introductory research writing
- Teamwork/Collaboration—two units (one satisfied by the Cross-College Challenge or other means)
- Creativity/Innovation—two units (one satisfied by the Cross-College Challenge or other means)
- Life Skills—Students decide with their advisors on additional courses and/or co-curricular experiences to develop this area (e.g., FY 101).

Some skills and habits of mind are so fundamental to the full development of all of one’s intellectual capacities and to lifelong well-being that they constitute a toolkit for life and work throughout college and beyond. Today’s rapidly changing, interconnected world demands graduates with the ability to think critically, to conduct research amidst an overabundance of information sources, and to explore profound questions and approach problem-solving with imagination and creativity, both individually and as members of a team. Students must also learn to make a range of informed life decisions that will sustain them and enable them to put their education to good use in the world. Cultivating these multi-purpose toolkit skills explicitly and intentionally is a crucial dimension of BU students’ preparation for a broad and ever-evolving spectrum of personal, educational, professional, and civic opportunities.

The required formal introduction to understanding and practicing the essential skills of critical thinking, teamwork/collaboration, and creativity/innovation will be reinforced and extended in almost every course students take at Boston University. Students’ participation as juniors and seniors in The Hub’s signature Cross-College Challenge or its equivalent (depending on decisions made about requiring the Cross-College Challenge) will further develop and refine their critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and information literacy.

Critical Thinking
The ability to think critically is the fundamental characteristic of an educated person. It is required for just, civil society and governance, prized by employers, and essential for the growth of wisdom. Critical thinking is what most people name first when asked about the essential components of a college education. From identifying and questioning assumptions, to weighing evidence before accepting an opinion or drawing a conclusion—all BU students will actively learn the habits of mind that characterize critical thinking, develop the self-discipline it requires, and practice it often, in varied contexts, across their education.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to identify key elements of critical thinking, such as habits of distinguishing deductive from inductive modes of inference, recognizing common logical
fallacies and cognitive biases, translating ordinary language into formal argument, distinguishing empirical claims about matters of fact from normative or evaluative judgments, and recognizing the ways in which emotional responses can affect reasoning processes.

2. Drawing on skills developed in class, students will be able to evaluate the validity of arguments, including their own.

Research and Information Literacy

Scholarly research—the process of posing problems, designing effective investigative strategies, collecting and evaluating information, drawing conclusions, and presenting findings—drives the creation and dissemination of new knowledge in and across all academic disciplines, professions, and walks of life. Today’s information explosion places a particular requirement on anyone doing research to develop the abilities associated with information literacy—knowing how to locate needed information, assess the accuracy of sources, and use them to good effect. Boston University’s mission as a research university embraces the conviction that research and information literacy should be central to an undergraduate university education. By learning from scholars on the BU faculty how new knowledge is created and disseminated, and by conducting or participating in research, BU students join a community of inquiry with a commitment to the pursuit of knowledge that crosses borders and connects generations.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to search for, select, and use a range of publicly available and discipline-specific information sources ethically and strategically to address research questions.

2. Students will demonstrate understanding of the overall research process and its component parts, and be able to formulate good research questions or hypotheses, gather and analyze information, and critique, interpret, and communicate findings.

Teamwork and Collaboration

Collaboration defines the 21st-century workplace. Employers rely increasingly on teams—groups of people with different backgrounds and training who tackle projects jointly—and they identify the ability to collaborate with these diverse groups as an essential skill for almost every position. Civic life in an increasingly interdependent world also calls more and more for the ability to collaborate with people from different backgrounds and with different perspectives, build consensus, and compromise for the good of a broader purpose. Training in and the practical experience of teamwork teaches the process of innovation, develops leadership, and fosters knowledge of one’s own strengths and appreciation for those of others.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. As a result of explicit training in teamwork and sustained experiences of collaborating with others, students will be able to identify the characteristics of a well-functioning team.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to use the tools and strategies of working successfully with a diverse group, such as assigning roles and responsibilities, giving and receiving feedback, and engaging in meaningful group reflection that inspires collective ownership of results.

Creativity and Innovation

BU students across all fields of study will benefit from learning how to think in new ways, imagine new possibilities, take new approaches, and/or make new things. Creative activity is a source of deep human satisfaction and common good. In addition, the ability to generate and pursue new ideas is quickly becoming a pre-requisite for entry into the skilled workforce, which places a premium on applicants’ creative skills and potential for contributing to creativity’s more applied offspring, innovation. BU graduates should understand how the creative process moves from need or desire to design to draft to redesign to execution; they will have personal experience of taking risks, failing and trying again; and, in this way, they will have developed the patience and persistence that enables creativity to come ultimately to fruition.

Courses and co-curricular activities in this area must have all outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of creativity as a learnable, iterative process of imagining new possibilities that involves risk-taking, use of multiple strategies, and reconceiving in response to feedback, and will be able to identify individual and institutional factors that promote and inhibit creativity.
2. Students will be able to exercise their own potential for engaging in creative activity by conceiving and executing original work either alone or as part of a team.

Life Skills

Thriving in college and beyond depends largely on an ability to make considered decisions in one’s daily life and to engage effectively in establishing one’s priorities and planning for the future. BU students should possess the life skills needed to take responsibility for their physical and mental wellbeing, manage their personal finances, and reflect on what they want out of their education.

Note: Credit-bearing coursework in Life Skills is not required. The BU Hub makes available a full roster of courses, workshops, and co-curricular experiences as a way for individual students to acquire the skills in this part of the toolkit. Students will select their work in this area in
consultation with their advisors.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to make informed decisions that contribute to their physical, mental, emotional, professional, and financial wellbeing.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the abilities they need to engage in meaningful reflection on their goals and values, articulate their strengths and transferable skills, and understand the career development process and how it fits within their life plans.
Financial Incentives and Academic Resources for Faculty

Hub Course Development Stipends

For the BU Hub to fulfill the promise of the faculty’s outstanding work to create a framework and set of student learning outcomes, nothing will be more important than the creation of distinctive Hub courses that faculty are excited to teach and students find engaging and valuable. Recognizing the time and effort that high-quality curricular innovation will require between now and launch of the Hub for freshmen entering in Fall 2018, the Provost has committed substantial funding for stipends for new course development over the coming six months. Stipends will be awarded, on the basis of a simple application, to individual faculty members, pairs of faculty, and faculty teams who commit to developing and teaching substantially revised and new courses that address learning outcomes for one or more Hub areas. Special consideration will be given to interdisciplinary courses, both team-taught and solo, that develop more than one BU Hub area.

Stipends are available through participation in the CTL-sponsored one-day workshops ($1000) and week-long course development institutes ($3000) which will bring together faculty from around the university in productive conversation with each other. See below. In addition, stipends are available for other means of course development proposed by individual faculty, groups or pairs of faculty, departments, and schools/colleges. CTL is available to help plan and, if desired, run such course development activities. While consultation with the CTL is recommended, it is not, however, required to request funding for Hub Course Development Stipends.

Detailed information on Hub Course Development Stipends, including application form, will be available in the week of March 13.

CTL Hub Support: Information Sessions, Workshops, and Course Development Institutes

The Center for Teaching & Learning will provide extensive support of various kinds for faculty initiatives in new course development and revision of current courses for inclusion in the BU Hub program of general education.

Online Guides to principles of course design, as well as a broad range of other Educational Strategies that faculty colleagues have found effective.

A Syllabus Template, developed in consultation with the Undergraduate Council, for faculty’s use when proposing courses to the General Education Committee for inclusion in the Hub. (Proposals will be submitted using a new online form, now in final development and testing, with availability anticipated by mid-March 2017.)
Events and Programs hosted by CTL, in collaboration with BU Hub leadership and Digital Learning & Innovation:

(beginning in early March and continuing throughout the Spring 2017 semester) Hour-long Information Sessions combining a general overview of Hub course development with specific information and guidance tailored to the needs and questions of session participants

(Spring 2017) 90-minute Workshops devoted to special topics thus far identified as faculty priorities: Blended Learning, Using Boston as Your Classroom, and Large Lecture Courses

(May and June 2017) One-day Workshops for substantial course revision for the BU Hub. ($1,000 stipend; brief application required)

(May and June 2017) Week-long New Course Development Institutes ($3,000 stipend; brief application required)

(beginning in early March and ongoing) Individual and small group Consultations

Online resources and programming will continue to evolve in response to demand. For a preview of what will be available from March 2017 forward, visit the dedicated CTL BU Hub page.
Recommendations and Priority Areas for New Course Development

The Hub is BU’s first “all-university” academic program in the sense not only that it will be required of all undergraduate students, but also that its successful enactment is predicated on enlisting the full range of BU’s scholarly expertise, curricular creativity, and contextual advantages (e.g., Boston) in the education of individual undergraduates. The Hub’s integrated vision of general education—as translated into concrete learning outcomes through the collaborative efforts of multidisciplinary faculty committees with a combined membership of more than 100—offers opportunities for faculty to develop new courses and co-curricular learning experiences across disciplines, across schools/colleges, between the liberal arts and the professions, between the Charles River and Medical campuses, between academic affairs and student affairs, between BU and Boston communities, and between sites abroad and at home.

The following recommendations and examples of courses and course types that will be key to realizing the Hub’s vision and potential have emerged from formal and impromptu discussions among the deans, faculty members, and other academic leaders from all over the university. Some of these recommendations are implicit in the vision Task Force report and reaffirmed in the work of the outcomes committees. By no means exhaustive or specifically prescriptive, this list is intended both to set some initial priorities for new course development and revision of current courses and to inspire faculty’s continuing to think together about other possibilities. The Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) can assist with all dimensions of effective, efficient course and syllabus design, and will host a series of BU Hub information sessions, workshops, and course development institutes beginning in early March 2017 (schools and colleges will be notified when the schedule of CTL events is posted).

Courses that Bridge Areas Within and Across BU Hub Capacities

Both realizing the intellectual vision of the BU Hub and ensuring students’ timely completion of its ambitious requirements will depend on there being a substantial and varied roster of courses that bridge areas and count as two or three BU Hub units. While some combinations (e.g., of areas within Interpretation) will be quite well represented by revised versions of current courses, many other combinations are possible. The contemporary ubiquity of quantitative reasoning, for example, makes it a good candidate for pairing with other areas. Another priority is to increase the number and range of courses that bridge to an area within Diversity, Civic Engagement, and Global Citizenship.

“Freshman” Foundational Courses in “Critical Thinking” and “The Individual in Community”

Although the BU Hub does not prescribe when in their undergraduate years students will fulfill any of its requirements except freshman writing, a broad consensus has emerged around the advantages for students of their beginning to engage as early as possible with the areas of “Critical Thinking” and “The Individual in Community”—perhaps, but not necessarily, in a course that addresses both areas in tandem.
The whole of students’ intellectual transition to college will benefit from the groundwork laid by explicit, systematic attention to understanding and practicing all the elements of critical thinking enumerated in the learning outcomes for that area. Similarly, the sooner students begin to develop relevant habits of sophisticated analysis and empathy, the better equipped they will be to grapple with issues of diversity and take their place in BU and other diverse communities.

**Introduction to Other Toolkit Skills: Creativity/Innovation and Teamwork/Collaboration**

New courses are also needed that combine focus on one or two substantive areas of the Hub with a thorough conceptual and practical introduction to the processes of creativity/innovation and teamwork. As in the case of critical thinking, these foundational courses will serve as touchstones for reinforcement and increasing mastery throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

**Oral and/or Signed Communication and Digital/Multimedia Expression**

Expertise in the areas of Oral and/or Signed Communication and Digital/Multimedia Expression, while considerable, is scattered throughout the University. It will be important to identify faculty members across the schools and colleges who can collaborate in the design of courses that develop these modes of Communication in tandem with a range of other Hub capacities. Either or both areas might be the focus of a CTL-sponsored summer one-day workshop or course development institute.

**Boston-based Courses and Co-curricular Experiences**

Faculty developing new courses in any Hub area are encouraged to consider how student engagement and learning are enhanced when coursework incorporates use of the city as an extended classroom and/or capitalizes on partnerships with local institutions or community groups.
Writing-Intensive Courses

Courses designated as “writing-intensive” do not simply require a considerable amount of writing; they provide students with explicit opportunities to improve their writing through targeted assignments and regular feedback. Writing-intensive courses have the following attributes:

- Multiple reading and writing assignments distributed throughout the semester (i.e., a long term paper at the end doesn’t make a course “writing-intensive,” but a term paper with opportunities for feedback on steps along the way--e.g., a proposal, an outline, an annotated bibliography, a draft introduction--would ).
- Explicit instruction in how to read texts in the course’s field or discipline (for example, a writing-intensive science course could teach students how to navigate scientific reports and how to interpret charts and graphs)
- Writing as a means to engage with course materials (so that students are not just learning to write but are using writing to learn)
- The writing in a writing-intensive class must be an integral and visible part of the class: it cannot be “closeted.” Integration and visibility can be achieved by such means as class discussion of exemplary written works (including students’), sharing of writing among students in the class, or collaboration among students in the class.
BU Hub Implementation Timeline Spring 2017 – Summer 2018

Spring 2017

January 17: Implementation Task Force consultation with UG Council on requirements and outcomes
January 18: Implementation Task Force consultation with Council of Deans on requirements and outcomes

Late January—Early February:

Individual meeting with each undergraduate dean (and faculty leadership, if desired) to continue discussions of requirements and outcomes, and consult on school/college strategy for implementation, and CTL and DLI support for school/college efforts

Continued work with UGC on requirements and outcomes

February: Update and consultation with Faculty Council

February-March: Enrollment Planning subcommittee of the Operations Satellite defines targets for 2018-19 BU Hub courses in each area

January-February: University Council General Education Committee (GEC) course approval form drafted and discussed

January-February: Online tool for BU Hub course submission built and tested

Early March: Begin ongoing CTL-sponsored BU Hub information sessions for faculty and staff, and individual and small group consultations

Late Spring: GEC constituted and open for business

Mid Spring: Begin ongoing 90-minute CTL-sponsored Workshops on Blended Learning, Using Boston as Your Classroom, and Large Lecture Courses. Other topics as requested.
**Summer 2017**

May and June: One-day CTL-sponsored Workshops for substantial course revision for the BU Hub.

May and June: Week-long CTL-sponsored New Course Development Institutes

**Fall 2017**

September 1: Draft of Fall 2018 schedule due

December: Initial courses for Fall 2018 incoming Freshmen approved.

**Spring 2018**

February: Course Schedule for Fall 2018 Deadline

June 1: Bulletin with Requirements for incoming Fall 2018 students goes live

Includes courses, tagged to requirements

June-August 2018: Incoming Freshmen Orientation and Registration for Fall 2018 courses.

**Fall 2018: Launch**

All Freshmen entering in Fall 2018 follow the BU Hub requirements.