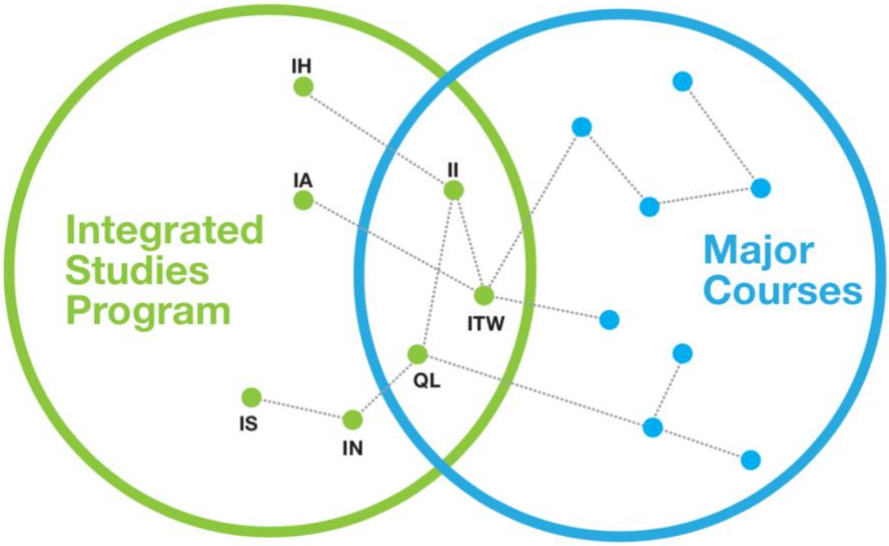
Integrative Studies Program Self-Study

Engage and Connect



The Integrative Studies Program at Keene State College

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Signature of the Director, Dr. Mark C. Long _____

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History of Program

General Education at Keene State College: 1990–2005

During the 1990s, the faculty at Keene State College (KSC) produced two proposals for a new general education program. The 1991 General Education Proposal featured a two-course, first-year experience, core courses, and a capstone. And the 1997 Proposal for General Education included area requirements, a two-semester, first-year experience, as well as a three-course developmental sequence in writing and quantitative reasoning. While these curriculum proposals were not successful (the Faculty Senate voted for the spring 1998 General Education proposal by a small margin —but it was not approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs), they include elements in our current conversations about the future of general education at the College: aligning the Program with our mission as a public liberal arts college, designing a first-year experience (FYE), implementing course sequences in writing and quantitative reasoning, and emphasizing diversity and global citizenship.

In the spring of 2003, the Provost charged the Senate Curriculum Committee (SCC) to guide the campus to agreement on general education goals. A Senate General Education Program Committee (GEPC) formulated goals and reviewed the literature on general education—including the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Greater Expectations Report (2002) and programs at comparator colleges and larger universities. The GEPC also took into consideration NEASC accreditation standards related to general education, research in learning and teaching, and trends in postsecondary education—from demographic and enrollment forecasts to employer expectations for college graduates.

In 2004 the GEPC released the Keene Academic Plan (KAP). The Plan begins with broad and inclusive objectives: intellectual and personal growth, a developmental approach to academic skills, breadth of knowledge, connections between the self and the community, as well as diversity and global awareness. The Plan defines general education as "the part of a liberal education curriculum. . . [that] "provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and forms the basis for developing important intellectual and civic capacities (Schneider, 2004a, 9)." In the Plan, no one disciplinary course is required and all academic programs are eligible to contribute to the breadth requirements. Certain General Education principles were then approved by the College Senate in May of 2005 (Inclusiveness, Coherence, and Intentionality) and an administrative committee was formed including program co-chairs, a member of the faculty and the Associate Provost, and twenty-one representatives from across the academic program.

The design of a new general education curriculum took shape during a campus-wide transition from a three-credit to a four-credit course curriculum. In 2005, following the adoption of four-credit courses in the departments of English and Management, the Senate unanimously approved a predominantly four-credit curriculum. The "4+4 curriculum" increased the contact hours in each course from three to four, the semester course load for students was reduced from five to four, and the annual course assignment for faculty was reduced from 4/4 to 3/3. The 4+4 curriculum had significant program implications as well. For the four-credit course model reduced the number of general education courses from fourteen (forty-two credits) to eleven (forty-four credits).

The Integrative Studies Program: 2006–2019

Following meetings of campus constituencies to refine the governance structure, the design principles, and the program learning outcomes, a draft proposal of the Integrative Studies Program (ISP) was approved by the College Senate in the spring of 2006. The ISP required students to complete forty-four credits—including two foundational courses, Integrative Thinking and Writing (ITW) and Integrative Quantitative Literacy (IQL)—with a minimum of two courses at the 300 or 400-level. The Program offered breadth of knowledge in discipline-based courses and an interdisciplinary course requirement. In the fall of 2006, a Thinking and Writing course, taught by faculty across the disciplines, was run as a pilot (nineteen proposals were submitted). This course replaced Essay Writing, a course that had been taught by tenure-track and adjunct faculty in the department of English. An Integrated Quantitative Literacy (IQL) course pilot was also run during the 2006–2007 academic year.

The transition from 3-credit to 4-credit courses began in 2006-2007. The implementation of the ISP began in 2007–2008; and in 2008–2009, lower-level and upper-level ISP courses were offered for the first time. The ISP implementation benefitted from Davis Foundation funding that supported Faculty Institutes for Integrative Teaching and Learning. The Institutes—and the curriculum revisions by programs moving to four-contact hour courses—offered incentives for faculty to redesign courses with skills, perspectives, and integrative outcomes. The Davis grant included a four-year development, implementation and assessment plan for faculty development in ITW 101 and IQL 101 and shorter duration workshops for the perspectives area courses. Tenure-track and adjunct faculty who participated in the institutes received stipends in faculty development workshops through the 2009–2010 academic year.

In the fall of 2009, the College approved a comprehensive strategic plan for 2009–2014. The KSC Academic Plan (KAP) called for KSC "to define and refine its identity as a public liberal arts college" and included specific goals for the ISP: 1) supporting opportunities for faculty to teach in the Program; 2) addressing faculty concerns with structure and governance, as well as some departments' limited ability to participate in the Program; 3) implementing and providing on-going refinement of the ISP and assuring a strong relationship among the schools, departments, and the ISP in developing and scheduling ISP courses; and 4) phasing out the transitional general education program (TGEP). In addition, a University System of New Hampshire (USNH) concern with time to graduation resulted in the Senate reducing the ISP requirements from forty-four credits (11 courses) to forty credits (10 courses).

Results of Last Program Review

The Provost's Office oversees and facilitates academic program review at Keene State College. In the spring of 2015, along with recommendations for changes to the ISP submitted to the Senate, the Provost delayed the ISP Self-Study until the 2019–2020 academic year.

The recommendations from the Provost incorporated a series of task force and administrative reviews between 2011 and 2015. In 2011, the Provost and the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) charged a task force to conduct a comprehensive review of the ISP. Co-chaired by Dr. Anne-Marie Mallon (English) and Dr. Tom Bassarear (Education) this review addressed

concerns among the faculty about governance as well as data that indicated full-time faculty were not participating broadly in teaching general education courses. The Integrative Studies Program Review Task Force Final Report, submitted to the SEC early in 2012, recommended simplifying the complexity of the ISP administration, governance, and outcomes.

The ISP Advisory Council responded to the Task Force Report with the recommendation that the Provost search for a full-time director who would report to the Associate Provost and be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Program. However, in the fall of 2013, responding to the Senate's annual "ISPC Membership and Charge," the Advisory Council recommended a co-director model of one tenure-track and one adjunct faculty member who would report directly to the Provost and Chair of the College Senate. The ISP Advisory Council was restructured as an Advisory Board to represent the three schools (Arts and Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences, Professional Studies) and the Mason Library. The Senate provided the Co-Directors and the Advisory Board with a prioritized list of tasks. And, in 2014, the co-chair of the ISP, Dr. Karen Jennings (Psychology) and Dr. Teresa Podlesney (Film Studies) submitted a detailed list of further recommendations to the SEC. However, the co-directors did not return for a second term; and the Interim Provost was then appointed Interim Coordinator of the ISP for 2014–2015.

Since 2015, the ISPC Membership and Charge from the College Senate had defined the committee structure: A Director, three area coordinators, and representatives from the schools and the Mason Library. The responsibilities of the Director are to provide leadership for the ISPC, convene and hold regular meetings, serve as a Senate liaison via the SEC and the point person for ISP related communications. There is a Coordinator of Interdisciplinary courses (II), a Coordinator of Quantitative Literacy (QL) courses, and a Coordinator of ITW. The ex-officio (non-voting) members are the Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and the Dean of the Mason Library. The Integrative Studies Program Committee (ISPC) facilitates and supports the day-to-day operation of the Program; reviews ISP policy changes; reports annually to the Dean of the Mason Library, Provost and SEC on committee progress; facilitates student focus groups to gather input on ISP revisions; and develops an annual working agenda in consultation with the deans, the Provost, and the SEC that is shared with the campus at a fall meeting of the College Senate.

In 2015, the College adopted a five-year Strategic Plan and a new Provost arrived on campus. The new Provost conducted a comprehensive review of the ISP—considering the recommendations from the Interim Provost, the 2012 ISP Task Force Report, and the co-chairs Dr. Jennings and Dr. Podlesney. The Provost's review included meeting with academic departments, tenure-track and adjunct faculty, the Student Assembly, the Honors Council, the coordinators of IQL and ITW, and faculty who were critical and/or supportive of the ISP. The Provost asked academic departments, too, whether we should replace, make major changes, or minor changes to the ISP. The Provost also guided the campus in a response to a University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Trustee mandate, anticipating a NEASC accreditation requirement, to develop new College-Wide Learning Outcomes. In fact, the NEASC Interim 5th Year Report (2015) noted that future planning would "be guided by the principles outlined in the new Strategic Plan, the goals in the new College-Wide Learning Outcomes, the vision of the new administration, and its ongoing mission to serve the needs of promising students."

Following the Provost's Recommendations for the ISP, internal program reviews, and College-wide strategic planning efforts, Dr. Elizabeth Roos (Theater and Dance) accepted a one-year appointment as Director of the ISP. Dr. Roos led the ISPC, at the directive of the Provost, in a review of the ISP assessment process and the learning outcomes "with a goal of simplifying both the process and the outcomes." A campus-wide discussion led to seven outcomes (replacing the original disciplinary, skills, and integrative outcomes) that were approved by the Senate in the spring of 2016. In addition, in 2016, the Office of the Provost moved the ISP—and the Center for Creative Inquiry (CCI), the Center for Writing, and Faculty Enrichment—into the portfolio of the Dean of the Library. This change accompanied an administrative restructuring in Academic Affairs that combined the three schools at the College into two schools: Arts, Education, and Humanities (AEH) and Sciences, Sustainability, and Health (SSH).

In 2016, Dr. Mark C. Long (English) was appointed to a three-year term as ISP Director. Dr. Long and the ISPC conducted a comprehensive review of the ISP with an emphasis on 1) aligning Program policy and practice, 2) simplifying the ISP, and 3) re-engaging faculty, staff, and students with the promise of integrative learning. In its review, to take one example, the ISPC learned that students were being advised that 3-credit courses were equivalent to 4-credit courses and that some students were graduating with fewer than 40 credits. The ISPC confirmed the 40-credit minimum required by our accreditors and worked with the College to clarify that the unit of the credit hour is part of the federal financial aid calculation and functions as a kind of "academic currency" that cannot be changed. ISP policy had always been a minimum of 40 credits but the practice of allowing students to complete ten courses but not the 40-credit minimum was a result of continuing a transitional general education program that had moved students in catalog years prior to 2007 from the previous general education curriculum to the ISP. The Director worked with the Office of the Provost, the Registrar's Office, the Global Education Office, Academic and Career Advising, and the faculty, to communicate the minimum credit policy and to accommodate students who had been advised using the equivalency.

The ISPC also completed an ISP Redesign Proposal. The goals of the redesign were to simplify the Program, offer more flexibility, clarify program requirements, expand alternative courses for meeting the quantitative literacy (IQL) requirement, allow upper-level ISP courses to have prerequisites, and provide students with the option to transfer in one upper-level ISP course. The proposal, approved by the Senate in the spring of 2017, included revised Catalog language to clarify that the ISP perspectives (or breadth) requirement is a course (not a credit) requirement to accommodate students who take a mix of 4-credit and 3-credit courses.

The Annual Reports Folder in the Appendices to this Self-Study provides, in detail, more recent changes to the ISP. From 2016–2018 the ISPC reviewed and updated the ISPC Director and Coordinator Terms and Job Descriptions, updated the ISP Policies, revised the ISP Program Description and Requirements, and created Guidelines for ISP Course Substitutions and Waivers. In addition, the ISPC produced Guidelines for Community College Transfer Students and, as a part of a pilot promoting pathways through the ISP, worked with a member of the staff and faculty to promote a Pathways in Professional Learning. In addition, the ISPC designed a visual representation of the ISP, an Advising Guide, and produced a promotional video now embedded on the KSC Academics Home Page. A course profile of adjunct professor Leaf

Seligman's ITW course, Forgiveness and Reconciliation, is on the ISP home page and we have worked with faculty on two ISP course profiles: Dance as a Way of Knowing and Physics and Music. Finally, the ISPC regularly circulates a missive to the campus, the ISP News, and has developed materials to assist faculty, staff, and students with understanding changes to the Quantitative Literacy requirement at first-year student orientation.

Program Goals

The premise of the ISP is that students will experience education as more than a sequence of courses. "Engage and Connect," our new tagline for the Program, refers to what we hope our students will do—engage with their courses and connect their learning through different courses, the co-curriculum, and with their lives and communities beyond the classroom. "Engage and Connect" is an aspirational goal of the Program as well—a description of what faculty who teach in the Program enact together with colleagues and their students in the classroom.

The goals of the ISP are aligned with the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) standards related to general education: that the program of general education will 1) reflect the institution's definition of an educated person and prepare students for the world in which they will live; 2) provide adequate breadth in the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics and the social sciences; 3) assure that graduates completing an undergraduate program "demonstrate competence in written and oral communication in English; the ability for scientific and quantitative reasoning, for critical analysis and logical thinking; and the capability for continuing learning, including the skills of information literacy"; and 4) "demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific, historical, and social phenomena, and a knowledge and appreciation of the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of humankind."

Relationship of the Program to the Mission of College

The ISP exemplifies the mission and values of Keene State College. Indeed integrated (or connected) learning is infused throughout our institutional profile and planning documents. As the public liberal arts college of New Hampshire, the College's mission is to help students "achieve academic excellence through the integration of teaching, learning, scholarship, and service." Our web site description of the ISP mirrors the College's mission. "We believe in the value of a liberal arts education—that the best way we can prepare you for the future is to teach you to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, and to understand the connections between different branches of knowledge." The 2018–2021 strategic priorities for the College endorse "integrated academic experiences, grounded in the liberal arts," in conjunction with co-curricular experiences and opportunities for engagement that "create connections, and prepare our graduates to be leaders." And in our goals statement we affirm a campus-wide commitment to an integrated academic experience.

The ISP is designed to provide an integrated and transformative undergraduate experience for each of our students to prepare them for success in the workforce. National and regional organizations, business leaders, and employers consistently advocate for college graduates with integrated general competencies. For example, the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) recommends the integration of education in the sciences, engineering,

and medicine with the arts and humanities, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. "Perhaps more important than salary data," they write, "surveys of employers underscore the promise of interdisciplinary, experiential, and integrative educational opportunities across all disciplinary tracks. Studies show that on average employers are looking for broad competencies in college graduates rather than specific, content knowledge" (AACU 2013). The NASEM conclude that the "types of competencies typically cited by CEOs can be characterized as systemic rather than disciplinary—for example, written and oral communication, information literacy, along with civic responsibility and engagement, ethical reasoning, intercultural knowledge and actions, and propensity for lifelong learning. (2016). These competencies, and their integration, are what distinguishes the liberal arts education we offer our students at the College.

Relationship of the Program to the Strategic Plan

The ISP reflects the College's focus on "the intentional integration of learning across the college experience," the focus of the faculty on "progressive, engaged, and evidence-based pedagogy," and "the development of workplace readiness." The ISPC works to promote and implement what the Strategic Plan call for: a truly integrated academic experience—with common, clearly defined outcomes.

Relationship of Program to the College-Wide Learning Outcomes

Both the Learning Outcomes of the ISP and the College-Wide Learning Outcomes (CWLOs) affirm a commitment to College-wide learning. Both lists of outcomes envision students integrating their classroom experiences with the co-curriculum and communities beyond the classroom. And our assessments have generated evidence that integrated learning experiences have proliferated across the academic program as departments and programs have prioritized the education of the whole student—offering each student the experience of building authentic connections with people at the College—faculty, staff, peers, and members of the local and greater Monadnock community.

We are poised to build on the significant accomplishments of the CWLO Steering Committee. Since 2015, the Committee has conducted interviews, surveys, and inventories to learn how, regardless of major, the undergraduate experience will develop the CWLOs: Critical Thinking, Creative Inquiry, Intercultural Competence, Civic Engagement, Commitment to Well-Being, and Sustainability. Faculty and staff teams on the Steering Committee have developed rubrics and discussed assessment of each of the five areas. Building on the work of the CWLO Steering Committee, the Action Plan of this Self-Study begins by envisioning the place of the CWLOs in the academic program and meeting the expectation of our accreditors that we will focus on student achievement and assessment of the CWLOs.

Relationship of the Program to the Academic and Co-Curricular Plan

The overarching planning themes of the 2016 Academic and Co-Curricular Plan (ACPC) align with our current strategic priorities and college-wide planning efforts. The ACPC and the ISP both depend for their success on the collaborative work of faculty and staff empowering students

to make deliberate decisions about their activities and choices. The focus on the student as a whole person, ensuring equitable access to activities and programs, and efficiency and innovation in faculty and staff collaborations, are even more relevant today than when the ACPC was developed.

The ISP and the ACPC foreground collaborative efforts that have distinguished KSC from other institutions. In the spring of 2016, the Focus on the First Year Student implementation plan sought to coordinate activities and programs to "contribute to all dimensions of student development and help them identify ways to link learning inside and outside of the classroom" and make "the College-Wide Learning Outcomes visible and relevant to first-year students." In addition, in 2006, KSC was recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for making community engagement a part of our mission. KSC was one of sixty-two institutions in the group that was classified for both curricular engagement and outreach. (At the time, in the fall of 2005, about forty-three percent of the student body participated in community- or service-based learning.) The term "curricular engagement" (teaching and scholarship that engages the college and the community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration) and "outreach and partnerships" (the application of institutional resources for community use and collaborative interactions with community) refer to the kinds of integrative learning we value at the College.

Assessment of Student Learning

Background and Overview

The original ISP design incorporated the essential learning outcomes for a liberal education in the AAC&U Greater Expectations Report (2002). Early program documents, including the comprehensive report Assessing Academic/Intellectual Skills in Keene State College's Integrative Studies Program (year), focus on not merely assessing student learning but bringing faculty together to discuss the findings in relationship to their methods of teaching and student learning. "Developing outcomes and effectively assessing them will not result in improvement in learning unless faculty are prepared to engage in ongoing discussions about curriculum development and effective pedagogical methods," the authors insist, "and unless they are willing to participate in ongoing instructional development as part of their professional responsibilities. However, for us to move in this direction," the authors conclude, "a significant change must occur in higher education. Faculty must see themselves as educators, not just scholars in disciplinary or interdisciplinary areas."

In 2016 the ISPC developed a simplified and sustainable assessment schedule. In the multi-year cycle, the outcomes are assessed over three academic years and, in the fourth year, a report on the assessment of all the outcomes is written and disseminated before the three-year cycle begins again.

- **2016-2017:** Critical Thinking and Writing
- **2017-2018:** Information Literacy and Quantitative Literacy
- **2018-2019:** Integrative Learning and Creative Thinking
- **2019-2020:** Prepare and disseminate report on assessment of all outcomes

- **2020-2021:** Cycle begins again with Critical Thinking and Writing

In the fall of 2017, the ISPC incorporated into the schedule an annual Fall ISP Assessment Workshop. These workshops included faculty involved in the prior academic year's assessment efforts reporting on what they did, what went well, and what could be improved. Once the findings from the prior year were presented, faculty discussed concrete activities that could be done to improve student outcome achievement. In addition, in the spring of 2018, the ISPC determined that the Academic Perspectives Outcome should be assessed by department using student data collected from a portion of the disciplinary and interdisciplinary courses. The ISPC recommended that assessment be incorporated into the annual program assessments.

Over the years faculty at the College have collaborated in ongoing instructional development; and this work has received support from the administration. Faculty include the ISP outcomes on their syllabus, or in their course materials. All perspectives and interdisciplinary course syllabi include Integrative Learning and Academic Perspectives. Faculty then choose at least two of the five remaining outcomes: Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Writing, Quantitative Literacy, and Information Literacy. For example, the syllabus for an upper-level interdisciplinary economics course, II ECON 310 Game Theory, includes specific course outcomes ("By examining the game theoretical tools, you will hopefully develop a commitment to finding effective strategies for agents in strategic situations to address social issues" and "You will be able to analyze the main assumptions and limitations of rational choice theory from multiple behavioral and social perspectives") as well as ISP outcomes, in this case the Interdisciplinary Outcome and quantitative literacy ("This course will help you cross disciplinary boundaries to reveal new patterns and connections that reframe your knowledge about human behavior. At the end, you will have acquired a new set of tools to analyze social behavior from multiple perspectives" and "The skill that you are expected to gain is "Quantitative Reasoning." You will be able to develop and apply appropriate quantitative problem-solving skills in the context of various economic and social issues.")

The ISPC has completed the first three-year cycle of assessment. The results of these assessments are summarized below. The iterative process of the assessment cycle will help us to refine our methods and gather data beyond a single assessment in the cycle. In addition, we have sought to correlate our local assessment results with the findings of other institutional and cross-institutional assessments of student learning.

<u>Integrative Learning Outcome</u>

> *"The ISP is designed to foster in our students the capacity to integrate learning within the curriculum, between the curriculum and the co-curriculum, and with communities beyond the classroom. Integrative learning is both a framework for teaching and learning in all ISP courses and also a summative learning outcome for the program."*

In the spring of 2019, the ISPC conducted a pilot assessment of the Integrative Learning outcome. We surveyed twenty-one tenure-track faculty and twenty-six adjuncts or lecturers who teaching forty-seven sections of upper-level ISP courses. Our survey suggested that upper-level ISP courses are providing intentional and well-developed integrative experiences. The following

strategies—organized into the definition of integration in the Program's integrative learning outcomes—were reported by the faculty:

1. Integrative Learning that identifies and discusses ways that student learning in one course informs and deepens learning in one or more other courses:

- **Reading** from multiple disciplines and critically thinking about the connections across and between multiple disciplines;
- **Discussions** that invite connections with other courses in other fields, such as safety, management, health, psychology and sociology;
- **Other Courses** utilizing knowledge from other courses the students have completed;
- **Scholarly Methods from Multiple Disciplines**—including politics, law, history, rhetoric, and management;
- **Cultural Artifacts** various and different types of cultural artifacts;
- **Comparative Cultural Scholarship** Arab and Western scholarship;
- **History** using multiple aspects of a civilization (extending over more than 3000 years) including politics, economics, religion, social structure, science and technology, philosophy, letters, and the visual arts, as well as geography and environment.

2. Integrative Learning that identifies and discusses the ways that student learning in one or more courses is connected to their out-of-class experiences:

- **Applied Learning** exploring and practicing some of the strategic and tactical skills required in successful progressive grassroots issue and electoral campaigns;
- **Problem Solving Beyond the Classroom** in scenarios that reflect situations students may encounter outside of school, within their careers, or in their majors; considering how the concepts and policies learned in class could impact all aspects of life;
- **Connections** between everyday life and human experience;
- **Metacognition** in exercises to help students integrate the variety of readings and perspectives: between texts, between texts and themselves, and between themselves and the larger world;
- **Reflective Practice** to help students reflect on their life experience with environmental issues and activism and to relate it to the readings;

- **Apply critical thinking skills** toward students' real-life scenarios like interacting with people as well as applying it to their work/careers while also connecting it to other disciplines;

- **Connection between sports and other spheres of social life**, such as family, education, politics, the economy, the media, and religion.

What we have learned about integrative learning experiences at the College is consistent with the findings of a multi-year project on forms of integrative learning funded by the Teagle Foundation and the AAC&U at nine liberal arts colleges. The inventories in the project revealed "previously established curricular elements that fostered integrative learning and only needed strengthening or connecting rather than requiring an entirely new initiative." These are useful findings for KSC, as some of our faculty have expressed skepticism that meaningful integrative learning is happening—faculty opinions consistent with the findings of Hovland, Anderson and Ferren in Interrogating Integrative Learning (*Liberal Learning* Fall/Winter 2015). At the same time, the authors report that faculty in their study affirmed "a growing appreciation of education as a creative experience for each student"—a trend we also see happening at KSC. They add that these experiences "allowed students to draw upon previous learning to address complex problems and develop new insights." And they note that "any formulaic list of structures, outcomes, assignments, and pedagogies intended to promote integrative learning cannot fully capture the spirit of inquiry, discovery, and personal connections that are necessary for deep and meaningful learning." And, as the coauthors conclude, "In short, to advance integrative work requires a shift in emphasis from what faculty can do to what students can do"—which is precisely the distinction we make in the ISP between program design and, as we write in our materials, our understanding that "integrative learning is something *students* do."

Writing Outcome

> *"Keene State College students will effectively form, support, and convey an idea in written format, considering purpose, audience, and context"*

The success of our writing initiatives at the College has been a result of supporting ongoing faculty conversations about writing in the ISP and in the disciplines. Moreover, the ISP has been assessing writing for over ten years. Our Thinking and Writing web site makes visible some of this campus-wide conversation from 2007–2017. The site includes assessment results as well the scholarship on writing acquisition, learning transfer, and faculty development that have informed and transformed our approach to writing as we moved from a cultural of complaint, through a culture of conversation, need this comma? to a culture of commitment.

This shift in our approach to writing was at the same time a result of a ten-year faculty institute on the teaching of writing, the Calderwood Institute, that over eighty faculty completed. Our ISP writing assessment report, released in the fall of the 2009-2010 academic year, demonstrated that the first-year writing course (ITW) is far and away the best predictor of first-to-second-year retention. And according to a 2011 study by the Office of Institutional Research, earning credit for Thinking and Writing increases the probability of being retained by 32.4 percentage points—from 52.8% to 85.2%. This assessment also showed us that completing ITW does more to

improve the probability of retention for women, racial/ethnic minority students, first-generation students, low-income students, and non-residents than for their peers who are not in these groups. (Catherine Turrentine, "Predictors of Retention and Progression Toward Graduation. Part Two: Factors Predicting First-to-Second-Year Retention and Progression to Sophomore Status for the 2010 Cohort." Keene State College Office of Institutional Research December 2011.)

More recently, in a 2017 ISP Written Communication Outcome Assessment, the ISPC found that upon completing only one writing course (ITW), a sizable minority of KSC students (25%) demonstrated ISP Writing outcome achievement by obtaining Proficient or Exemplary ratings across all seven of the dimensions of writing ability assessed by the rubric. Between 43% of students achieved proficiency in Organization and sources and 71% in Editing. As we explain in the Report, "the findings indicate that students acquire a solid writing foundation in ITW, but further development of writing skills from subsequent courses is required for nearly all students (only 2/99 papers received Exemplary scores across all 7 dimensions). These findings, in conjunction with studies of writing in general education, writing across the curriculum, and writing in the disciplines, increase our confidence that more than one writing course will enable more of our students to make measurable academic progress while supporting them as they meet the challenges of college-level thinking and writing.

The ITW learning outcomes have been widely affirmed by the faculty—specifically the commitment to core elements of the writing process: reading, critical (and creative) thinking, and information literacy. However, the signature pedagogical strategy of ITW—a semester-long research project—has been less-widely accepted and has led some members of the faculty to express concerns about the pedagogical method. ("Formulate an original, complex and debatable claim, thesis, or hypothesis relating to the course theme or topic and develop that claim, thesis, or hypothesis in a semester-long researched writing project.") In addition, members of the faculty have questioned what they see as a restrictive focus on a particular genre of writing (argument) as well as a particular form (the longer essay).

The Action Plan in this Self-Study includes a proposal for a first-year seminar that will retain the general outcomes of the ITW course, respond to concerns about pedagogical method, and articulate our first-year writing experience within an integrated sequence of writing experiences in the ISP and in the disciplines.

Quantitative Literacy Outcome

> *"Keene State College students will read and interpret quantitative information critically and apply quantitative methods and concepts to solve a problem or support an argument.*"

A Programmatic Assessment of Quantitative Literacy (QL) in the ISP was conducted in the spring of 2018 by the QL Co-Coordinators, Dr. Mike Cullinane & Dr. Joe Witkowski (Mathematics). As part of the programmatic assessment of the ISP, this QL learning outcome is periodically assessed, currently on the standard three-year cycle. A total of 138 students enrolled in sections of IQL 101 (Integrative Quantitative Literacy) completed the assessment, either as

part of a final exam or as an in-class assignment sometime during the last three weeks of the semester.

The assessment itself consisted of four multiple choice items designed to assess a student's ability to read and interpret quantitative information critically; eleven multiple choice items designed to assess a student's ability to apply quantitative methods and concepts to solve a problem; and three free-response items designed to assess a student's ability to apply quantitative methods and concepts to support an argument.

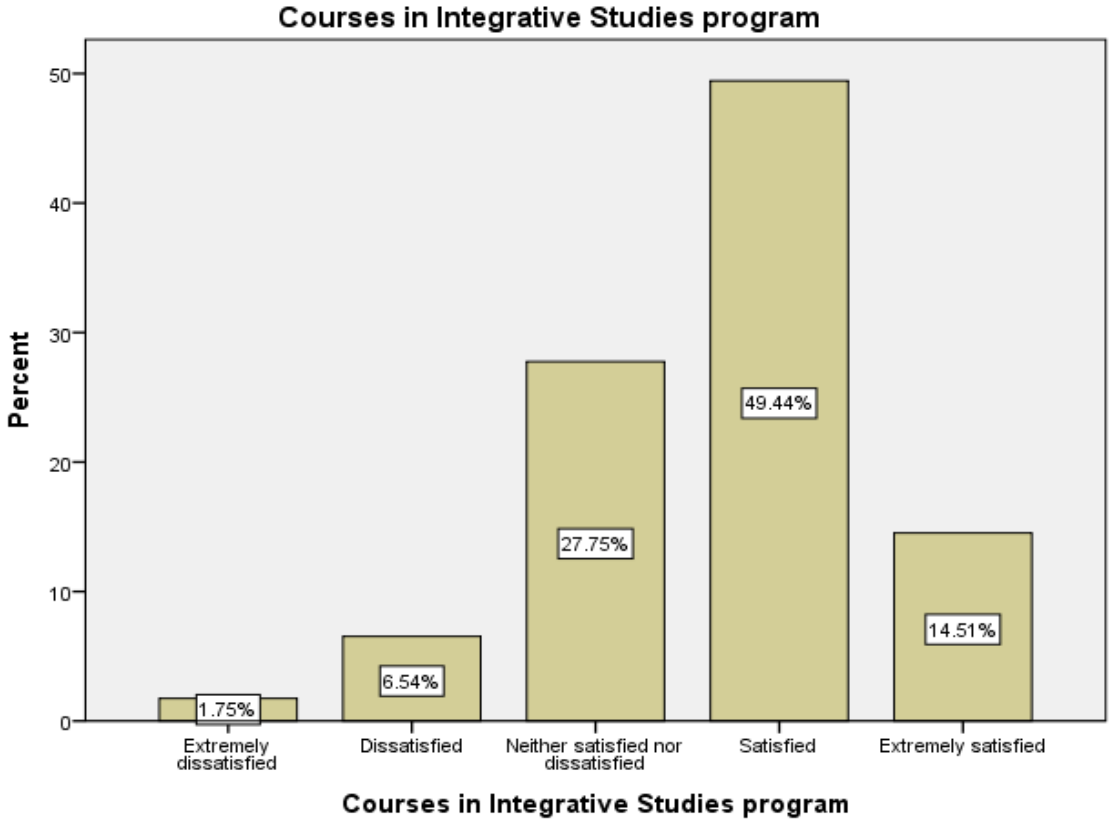
	Exemplary	Proficient	Expectation Not Met
Part One	5 (3.6%)	63 (45.7%)	70 (50.7%)
Part Two	16 (11.6%)	57 (41.3%)	65 (47.1%)
Part Three #1	2 (1.4%)	64 (46.7%)	72 (52.2%)
Part Three #2	5 (3.6%)	61 (44.2%)	72 (52.2%)
Part Three #3	4 (2.9%)	29 (21.0%)	105 (76.1%)

The goal is that at least 80% of students be deemed proficient or exemplary in each of Part One and Part Two, as well as for each of the three items in Part Three. The data in the table show that students fell short of this benchmark, though we believe the performance demonstrated by KSC students on this assessment is, unfortunately, not dissimilar to the general performance of college students across the United States in their first two years of study. For instance, in 2013 approximately 29.1% of all regularly-admitted first-time freshmen in the California State University System were enrolled in developmental or remedial mathematics courses. Thus, we would consider the overall performance of students participating in this assessment as consistent with what studies show is the current preparation of college-bound high school graduates.

In response to ongoing assessment findings, the IQL 101 curriculum was re-designed to include open-source materials that provide increased student support including screencasts, videos, and interactive homework assignments. And, as we elaborate below in the Action Plan of this Self-Study, by including a QL Across the Curriculum follow-up course we will continue to engage students in situations that will permit further development and application of their quantitative reasoning skills.

Graduating Seniors Survey Results 2019

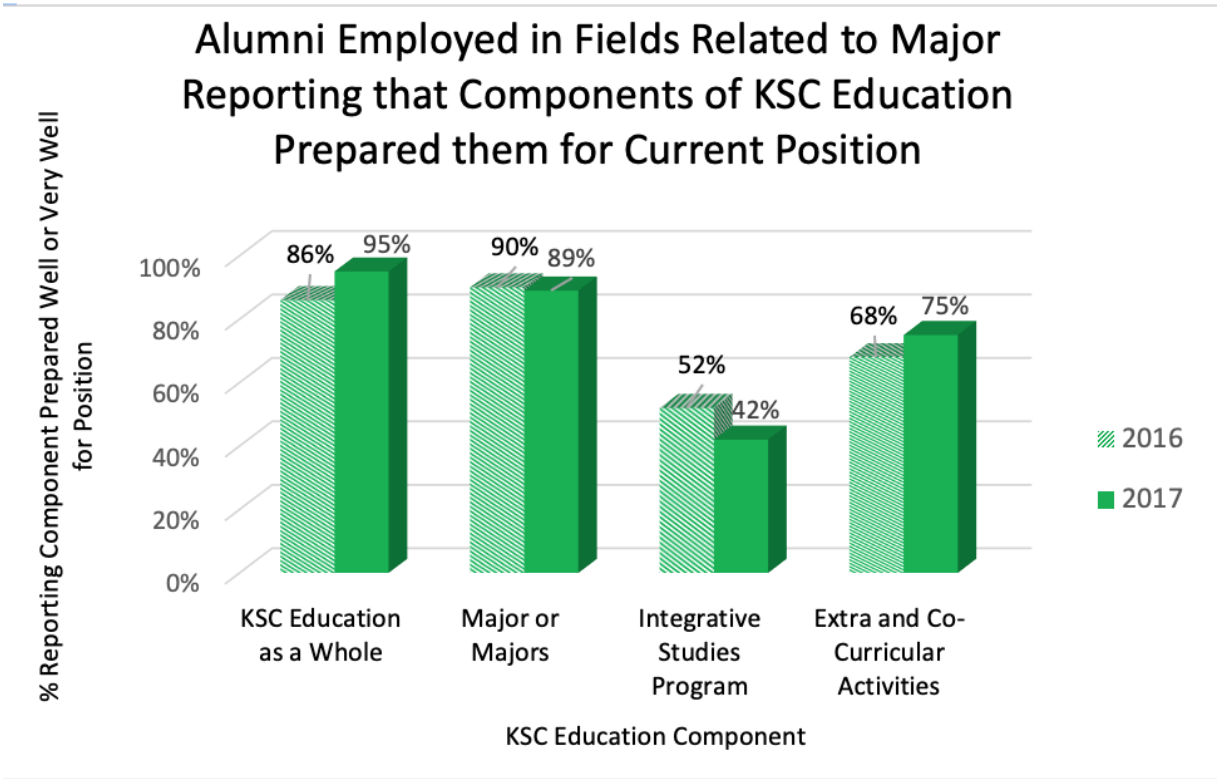
With the assistance of George Smeaton, Director for Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research, we have included a question on the Graduating Seniors Survey. The graph below shows that 64% of the students surveyed were satisfied or extremely satisfied with their ISP courses.



Alumni Surveys

On an Alumni Survey completed by KSC's class of 2015, we asked, "What experience did you have at KSC—inside or outside the classroom—that has proved most valuable for whatever you are doing now in your life?" One alumnus described the ISP in a response to this item. The student writes, "My integrated studies courses proved helpful as they gave me the generalist educational background that I need out here to teach every class." While this is only one comment, we are confident that if one student had such a positive reaction to the ISP, others did as well. However, the graph below summarizes data obtained from KSC alumni in 2016 and in 2017 one year after graduation.

The graph shows that a relatively low percentage of our graduates identify the ISP in their self-assessment of the components of their degree that prepared them for their current position in the workplace. Moreover, the graph suggests that students do not readily relate their general education courses to fields related to their major course of study. This may suggest that the College more deliberately promote the ISP, and the ISP Learning Outcomes, as a significant opportunity for building job-related skills.



Survey of Faculty on the Strengths and Weaknesses of the ISP

In the spring of 2019, an informal survey of faculty and staff helped us to learn more about how members of our community are currently articulating the strengths and challenges of the ISP. For this Self-Study, and in their role as Co-Chairs of Standard Four in the Academic Program as part of the College's NECHE accreditation, Mark C. Long (Director of the ISP) and Michael Cullinane (Coordinator of Quantitative Literacy) First names already met with academic programs, faculty and staff groups, and campus offices, to gather information about the ISP. Our survey solicited feedback from focus groups and individuals—academic programs, campus offices (the offices of the deans, Continuing Education, Academic and Career Advising, the Office of the Registrar) and committees (including the Senate and Senate subcommittees, as well as the Sustainability Council, to take two examples), and individuals in departments or in other roles at the College.

Over twenty academic programs and dozens of individuals provided feedback about the Program. The respondents noted with approval the changes that have been made to the Program following the series of reviews between 2011–2105. Comments with the most frequency included allowing for an academic discipline to be repeated, the regular publication of the ISP Advising Guide, more consistent and useful communication about the ISP, and expansion of course options for satisfying the QL requirement. In addition to favorable comments about the simplification of the Program Learning Outcomes, moreover, respondents advocated for flexible program requirements and the need for developing student competencies in reading, writing, speaking, and quantitative reasoning.

The comments below are selected from the discussions with academic departments, meetings with campus offices and groups, some of which included students, and written notes from individuals who responded to our requests for individual feedback. The comments have been grouped to represent the major trends in the feedback we received.

Program Outcomes

- I wonder if or how the ISP is helping to meet the college-wide learning outcomes? It seems to me that the ISP, or the Gen Ed program, is where we should be delivering the college-wide learning outcomes. Would be nice if each ISP course explained which college wide learning outcome it meets. If it can't meet one, maybe it should not be an ISP course?

- I do not understand why there are ISP learning outcomes that are different from the college-wide learning outcomes.

- Students are totally confused as to what ISP is or means. They don't get it. They see it as hoops to jump through. They don't understand its purpose in their education. Despite your wonderful efforts to emphasize streams, students are never that strategic or forward thinking. I don't think I would have been either (when I was an undergraduate!).

- Generally a challenge for students to understand and navigate learning outcomes, especially the various sets of learning outcomes across the institution (CWLO, ISP, major). Not clear to students how these various sets of outcomes relate to one another.

- How can we link the ISP to the CWLOs and the strategic priorities and the identity of the College? For example, given all the competing priorities in the ISP, how does sustainability fit?

- Young people on campus can't communicate about political and environmental issues. Usually the discussions are just emotional and feel threatening and are compromising relationships. How do we help students feel more confident discussing complex issues productively and generatively?

- Not necessarily clear to new faculty how ISP differs from a traditional distribution-based general education program. This includes issues such as the codes IH, IN, etc., but also more substantive matters such as the purposes of the program for students (perhaps more discussion of ISP could become part of new faculty orientation).

- Generally difficult to work with students in ISP courses when there are no content prerequisites. No common knowledge base on which students can build. Surprised that a 200-level course had no content prerequisites.

- Additional suggestions: Might there be some ISP courses (e.g., World Civilization) beyond ITW 101 that all KSC students would take? What role can ISP play in a January term? Develop more 1- and 2-credit ISP courses. Some transfer students who bring in

primarily 3-credit courses would benefit from creation of more 1- and 2-credit courses (to fulfill the 40-credit minimum). Replace the ISP elective with a language requirement.

- Unclear/hard to concisely describe differences and advantages over other gen-ed models (Once-novel outcomes are no longer as unique compared to other institutions)

Program Flexibility

- The ISP did a tremendous service to students and faculty by diversifying course offerings in a way that the previous general education model did not permit.

- Supportive of recent changes such as the allowance for a student to repeat a discipline (helps some students to pursue a minor, better for scheduling). Also happy that students may transfer in one upper-level course to use toward ISP upper-level requirement.

- Appreciate the greater flexibility provided by some of the recent changes in the program (repeating a discipline, permitting an upper-level ISP course to have a specific lower-level ISP course as a prerequisite, allowing one of the upper-level ISP courses to be transferred in).

- I greatly appreciate the interest and ability of ISP leadership to 'amend' the program over the past 12 years, to reflect concerns of students & faculty, and to 'unshackle' some of the rigidity of the program in its earlier iterations.

- Is there a way to reduce the number of ISP credits students need to have completed before taking upper-level ISP courses, say down to 16 from 24, in order to create more flexibility?

- The college should better highlight how the ISP connects to the various major programs offered, how the ISP is flexible in many ways and can be leveraged by students and academic programs. Generally, the college must do a much better job of marketing the ISP to current and prospective students, and their parents (how the development of skills is important to employers, for example).

- Might there be even more flexibility for students to repeat a discipline (without having to necessarily "tap" the ISP elective)?

- Upper-level ISP requirement is a barrier as students in the junior/senior years want (and should) focus on the major.

- Would be convenient if all 100-level KSC courses were ISP courses.

- Permit students transferring to KSC who possess associate degrees to just complete the two upper-level ISP course requirements.

- Still more prescriptive than some faculty would like.

- Should consider a model such as Plymouth State's in which students essentially create their own individualized general education program.

- Plymouth State now permits students to design individualized general education programs; could we consider this possibility at KSC?

- The greater selection of courses that can be used to satisfy the QL requirement is helpful, especially for transfer students (creates more flexibility).

- When a major designates that students must complete a particular ISP course, there is a reduction in students' ability to choose courses they might be interested in.

- Develop pathways/themes (e.g., sustainability, data analytics) that would permit students to better integrate their ISP coursework.

- Maybe the ISP could move to become more theme-based in order to unify a student's experience? Possible themes: sustainability, data analytics.

- Especially for undecided students, it is useful to have as many 100-level ISP courses as possible. Could all 100-level courses be ISP courses?

Course Options

- As an academic advisor, I thoroughly enjoy reviewing the ISP course offerings each semester with music students, and (almost) wish that I could be an undergraduate student taking such interesting courses.

- Suggested offering an ISP course, perhaps only two credits, in Excel. So many employers expect students to have already developed some skill with Excel, but not many opportunities available at KSC for students to do so. Communication faculty may attempt to develop and propose such a course.

- Here is an idea I have pitched to a few people about a first-year course with the thread of sustainability, community and place as the foundation. Modules could be developed about the Keene/Monadnock/NH area representing each discipline. Classes would be cross and co-taught, introducing students to the concept of relation of disciplines.

- Interdisciplinary (II) category can be challenging for utilization and course development, with separate committee for proposals etc. Would benefit students to revitalize collaborative intent of II courses.

Writing and Quantitative Literacy

- Believe students need more than ITW 101 and the QL course (cannot learn to write in only a single course; cannot develop quantitative skills in only a single course).

- Based on my students, most can write, although many cannot. I think we are doing better at teaching writing. Students at least seem to know that there are styles for references and that spelling matters. Apparently ITW is more successful than IQL

- I guess what I—and everyone else—needs to get used to is the idea that we will sacrifice some of our course content to teach basics of math or writing? I guess I sometimes think that "it takes too much time to teach the math"—but maybe it's time well-spent?

- In theory the ISP is well-intentioned, but on a practical level it is not as developmental as it claims to be. Beyond the requirement that 8 credits of the ISP must be completed at the upper level, it is not clear how the program design facilitates developmental work with the ISP learning outcomes. Could ISP courses be coded in some way so that it is clear which ISP learning outcomes are addressed?

- Students' reading comprehension needs attention throughout the curriculum. Practice and reinforcement.

- Need to follow up the ITW 101 course with more writing (sometimes occurs within a major program, but not always). Perhaps should consider formally introducing "writing intensive" courses.

- A two-semester writing requirement in the first year would help students begin learning how to write in college.

- Interest in ISP writing outcome and need to follow ITW with other writing courses.

- Student writing not always very solid even after ITW 101. Hope would be to provide more opportunities for students with weaker skills to further develop or refresh those skills.

- Importance of teaching composing in digital media. Multimodal composing is increasingly prevalent in the workplace. What experiences and tools should students have for transfer of academic writing to new information ecosystem?

- Suggestion that a public speaking course become a requirement for all students.

- Reading and writing literacies have changed (and are changing) dramatically. How has this affected how we teach reading and writing?

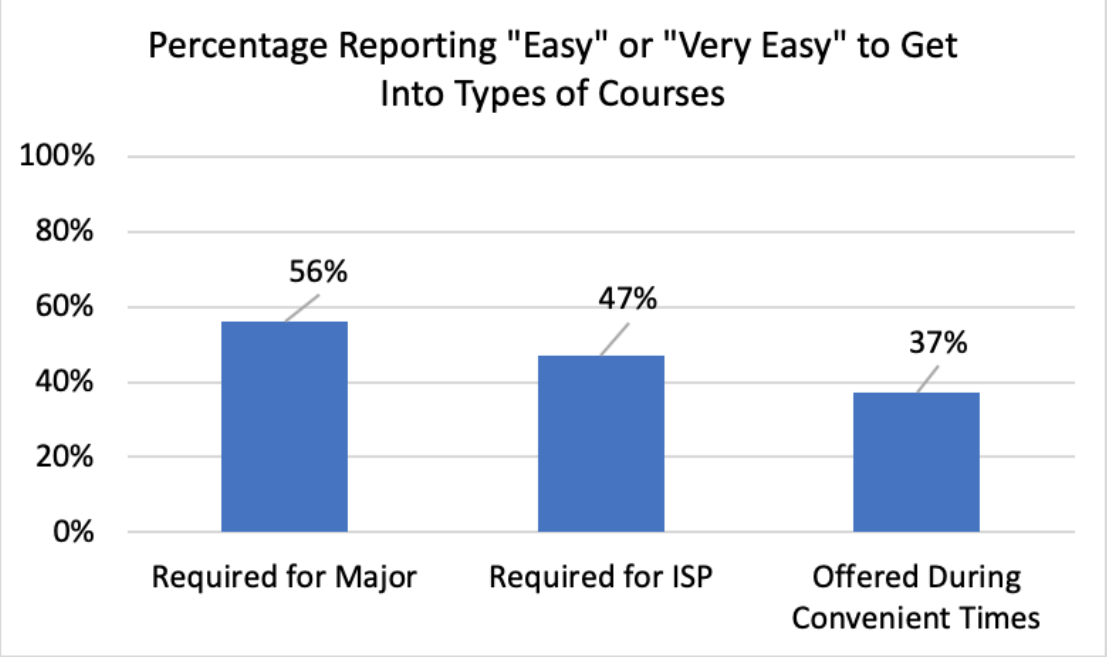
- Making evidence and research-based decisions about how we design and teaching writing courses.

- Not clear that ITW 101 is helping students develop disciplinary-based writing skills (or that ITW 101 is providing foundation for doing so)

Scheduling

- Scheduling ISP courses is a problem. How are courses equitably distributed across disciplines that want to contribute to the ISP? advantages for some disciplines and disadvantages for others.
  (We note in the graph below that graduating students reported a relatively low (47%) satisfaction with course availability for sections that meet ISP requirements.)

From Class of 2019 Graduating Senior Survey



- Concerned about the varying levels of reliance on the ISP by departments (some departments offer many ISP courses, others do not offer any or very few); relates to "fairness" in examining department workloads and staffing.

- Why do majors with high number of students staff multiple sections of ISP by adjuncts? (Public Speaking in Communications, 11 sections in fall 2019, 1 taught by TT faculty).

- Difficult for Communication faculty to develop and teach ISP courses because of their responsibilities to teaching other courses. Some concern about how school deans may be restricting the number of ISP courses and ISP course sections in certain departments in order to "help" other departments who have lower-enrolled courses. Question about

whether school deans are looking carefully enough at the role of adjunct faculty in the offering of ISP courses; it would seem to be "fairer" to reduce ISP sections taught by adjunct faculty in one department if that would permit full-time faculty in another department to retain or develop an ISP course.

- The reluctance of many FTTT faculty (including those in my own department) to teach courses for non-majors; this attitude, sadly, afflicts general education programs across higher education. The fiscal challenges at Keene State compound the problem, too, as programs are struggling to find human resources to cover courses within the majors.

Prefixes

- It's really hard for me to find a list of all the courses GEOG offers (because they are listed under GEOG, INGEOG, ISGEOG and maybe more prefixes.

- Not clear that changing prefixes IA, IN, etc., to suffixes will solve any problems; may just create a new set of problems.

- Cumbersome labeling makes online catalog hard to navigate and data gathering challenging

- ISP designation too often used to preserve enrollments while non-ISP designation now a disincentive for non-majors or students seeking college electives

- Searching for ISP courses can be difficult; would recommend changing the prefix codes (IH, IN, etc.) to suffix codes so that it is easier for students and their advisors to find courses during registration.

- Students do not understand what a discipline is. Searching for ISP courses is difficult using Self-Service, and so recommendation to change prefixes to suffixes.

- No problem with the prefix codes IA, IH, etc. Fine as is.

- Recommend consideration be given to prefixes such as IS-CS (use of "dash/hyphen" to separate ISP category from disciplinary prefix). Do not want to go to suffixes as that may increase the chance that a student enrolls in a non-ISP course thinking that it would count toward ISP.

Additional Comments

- Labor-intensive oversight system of committees, chairs, and coordinators and labor-intensive history of program politics, study committees, reports, reform efforts, etc.

- Concerned about the "cost" of ISP (too expensive): ITW 101 and IQL 101.

- Some departments offering essentially the same course in two versions, one for ISP and one for majors.

- Art History: why is this course an IA? Students are confused.

- Appreciate increasing the level of communication between ISP & the campus, most especially to inform faculty, students, and staff of changes to the program's requirements; there is a strong need to explain the program to a new cohort of students, faculty, and staff each year.

- Information about which ISP learning outcomes are addressed by a particular ISP course would be useful to students and their advisors when students are selecting courses. For instance, if an advisor knows that a student really needs to work on critical thinking, being able to search for ISP courses that address this learning outcome would be helpful.

- Can we reduce textbook costs for our students? What if lower-level ISP courses used OERs and we made this cost savings visible for prospective and incoming students? We have good examples on campus: The use of My Open Math in QL courses; ISP Physics course using instructor developed textbook; Biology department faculty saving students hundreds of thousands of dollars; sections of German and History using OER Textbooks; CC-licensed and public domain materials, and new instructor developed workbooks.

- What about a sophomore Domains Project? High impact practice in second year to address problems with persistence and retention. Can we scale the Domains pilot? Is the USNH funding for Domains going to be available?

- Continue to develop more 1-credit and 2-credit ISP courses as they can be especially helpful to transfer students who need to meet the minimum 40 ISP credits requirement.

These selected comments have helped reinforce priorities in the Action Plan for this Self-Study. In particular, the ISPC notes the widely-shared desire for flexible program requirements and opportunities for students to work more closely with advisors and mentors as they build a more relevant and meaningful experience in the ISP. And we note respondents' comments about students needing more consistent work in writing and quantitative reasoning.

Design of Program

The Program design engages students in breadth of subject matter; methodologies of primary domains of knowledge, and their relationships to one another; as well as reading and writing, creative and critical thinking, quantitative literacy, and information literacy.

The Bachelor's Degree section of the KSC College Catalog (see Requirements below) includes an introduction, the Program Learning Outcomes, and the Program Requirements. Students begin the Program by completing ITW 101 Thinking and Writing (ITW) and the Quantitative Literacy (QL) requirement. Students then take perspectives courses in six academic disciplines in four

content areas, the arts (IA), humanities (IH), natural sciences (IN), and social sciences (IS), as well as an interdisciplinary (II) requirement.

All course codes for the ISP began with an I. The foundational courses were ITW (Integrative Thinking and Writing) and IQL (Integrated Quantitative Literacy). Perspectives or area courses (IA, IH, IS, IN, II) were followed by a disciplinary code. For example, an ISP course in Theater and Dance (TAD) would use the Arts (IA) followed by the code for the department proposing the course and the course number: IA TAD 102.

Requirements 40 credits minimum

Students complete a total of 40 credits as follows, including a minimum of two courses (8 credits) at the 300 or 400 level. Perspectives or Interdisciplinary (II) courses may require a specific lower level ISP course besides ITW and QL as a prerequisite.

I. Foundations (8 credits)

- Thinking and Writing (4 credits) Students are expected to complete ITW 101 within their first two semesters.

- Quantitative Literacy (4 credits) Students are expected to complete the quantitative literacy (QL) requirement within their first three semesters. Students may meet the QL requirement by successfully completing IQL 101, MATH 120, MATH 130, MATH 135, MATH 141, MATH 151, MATH 172, MATH 175, MGT 140 or PSYC 251.

II. Three perspectives courses in the Arts and Humanities (12 credits) Courses must be taken in three different disciplines.

- 1 course in the Humanities (IH)
- 1 course in the Fine and Performing Arts (IA)
- 1 course in either the Humanities or the Fine and Performing Arts (IH or IA)

III. Three perspectives courses in the Sciences (12 credits) Courses must be taken in three different disciplines.

- 1 course in the Natural Sciences (IN)
- 1 course in the Social Sciences (IS)
- 1 course in either the Natural or Social Sciences (IN or IS)

IV. One course in Interdisciplinary Studies (4 credits) Course may be in any academic discipline and must have an Integrative Interdisciplinary (II) prefix.

V. One additional course in the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences or Interdisciplinary area (4 credits) This ISP elective may be in any academic discipline or interdisciplinary area that carries an ISP prefix (IA, IH, IN, IS, II).

Upper-Level Course Requirement

A minimum of two upper-level (300 or 400) ISP courses must be completed in areas II, III, IV and V above, one of which must be completed at Keene State College. Students may enroll in upper-level Integrative Studies Program (ISP) courses once they have completed a minimum of 24 credits at the lower-level (100 or 200 level), including ITW 101 and the quantitative literacy (QL) requirement.

The ISP design has proven to be a functional model for delivering general education. Since the program was implemented, academic programs have articulated the ISP with their program offerings, taking advantage of the flexibility provided by the multiple area requirements. One potential complication with the various levels of programs using ISP courses as disciplinary requirements is that changes to the ISP will be challenging for some programs more than others.

To make the ISP more flexible for transfer students, and to improve time to degree, in 2017–18 the ISPC made clarifications/changes that have assisted our transfer students and those people advising them. The retroactive program change approved by the Registrar has been useful to nontraditional students who may be using an earlier catalog year as well:

- *Articulated and Clarified Transfer Credits Policy* the KSC Credit Transfer Policy allows credits to be allocated to Integrative Studies Program requirements or electives. Advanced Placement (AP) and College-Level Examination Policy (CLEP) equivalencies are available at Academic and Career Advising (ACA) web site on the Credit by Examination page. Study-Away credits may be used to fulfill one upper-level ISP course with the approval of the Director or Associate Director of the Global Education Office (GEO);

- *Program Redesign* that was unanimously passed by Senate in Spring 2017. Policy changes approved as retroactive to earlier catalog years include:

    - *One of the two required upper level ISP courses must be taken in residence at KSC*. Past policy requires both of the upper level courses be taken in residence. The change allows flexibility for students studying away and transfer students;

    - *Perspectives courses must be taken in six distinct discipline*. If a seventh Perspectives course is taken, as the ISP elective, a discipline may be repeated. Past policy requires all Perspectives courses to be from separate disciplines. The change allows for a student to take two courses in the same area, deepening a student's connections with that field. We also see this as opening a pathway for a student to explore a minor. Nurses could take a second Spanish course focusing on vocabulary of the profession. A science major could explore further in an allied field. An artist could count two courses towards a minor;

    - *Upper level Perspectives or II courses may require a specific lower level ISP course besides ITW and IQL as a prerequisite*. Past policy precluded disciplinary prerequisites. This proposal may work in tandem with the one above. We see a benefit to students to allowing further exploration in a field outside the major. However, the majority of seats offered at the upper level will need to be without disciplinary requirements as only one discipline may be repeated.

Strategies for Supporting Student Success

In emphasizing the acquisition of broad competencies and connections, the ISP empowers students in an interconnected world. Since the completion of the Davis Faculty Institutes, and the

culmination of the ten-year Calderwood Institute on the Teaching of Writing, the ISPC has sponsored annual faculty development workshops and initiatives to support student success. Most recently, the organization and delivery of annual workshops for faculty have included in 2016 Dr. Kathryn Tirabassi (Director of the Center for Writing) and Dr. Mark C. Long (Director of the ISP) offering learning community discussions around John Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning. Integrating Writing and Thinking and Active Learning*. The ISP also co-sponsored an *Open Access Resources Workshop* that offered members of the faculty and opportunity explore the relations between open and integrative continues, facilitated by Jenny Darrow, Director of Academic Technology, and Dr. Karen Cangialosi, KSC Academic Technology Steering Committee (ATSC) Chair.

We believe in the value of these workshops. We also know from past institutional initiatives, and from research in faculty development, that we must build a robust and ongoing opportunities for faculty to collaborate and to innovate: to discuss the philosophy and practice of teaching and the ongoing work of curriculum development in the academic program that is required of every student at the College. In the Action Plan of this Self-Study, we advocate for re-establishing a commitment to supporting a collaborative culture of innovation in teaching and learning at the College.

Advising

Faculty advisors and departments advise students in making course choices and program planning in the ISP. However, there is anecdotal evidence that students may not be receiving the guidance they need. When students talk about "getting a course out of the way," for example, it is reasonable to assume that they are echoing a way of speaking about required program requirements learned from their conversations with their peers—and in some cases from staff and faculty. Attitudes about general education (and the ISP) are many and, in one sense, given the priority students, families, and faculty place on the choice of a major, these attitudes are expected. On the other hand, these self-perpetuating discourses disempower students by devaluing part of their academic program.

Fewer students should be seeking to get a course "out of the way," to routinely choose courses merely because they fulfill a program requirement, or show up in the office of an advisor or the Director of the ISP in the senior year with a request to substitute a course or waive a requirement. Rather students should be encouraged to plan their ISP courses in the same way that they plan courses in the major and/or the minor—ideally building an integrated academic program. Our Academic and Co-Curricular Plan offers guidance: for it places emphasis on a more comprehensive and individualized approach to advising is consistent with the recognition that all advising and program planning should provide inspiration and mentoring in making the most of each dimension of the academic program.

The ISPC has collaborated with our staff and faculty colleagues, and student orientation staff, among others, to change this discourse. In 2016 the ISPC produced an advising guide for faculty, staff, and students, that deliberately uses language to value the courses and the distribution areas and requirements so that students may come to appreciate (and get the most out of) the value of

this dimension of the academic program. We have also worked to make visible the experiences students have in their ISP courses—for example in the video of professor Leaf Seligman's ITW course on Forgiveness and Reconciliation and student Sarah Dugas commenting on her experiences in the ISP. The members of the ISPC have also learned that the flexibility of the program requirements our colleagues endorse offer students more agency in personalizing the ISP.

Contribution to Other Academic Programs on Campus

The ISP provides foundational courses in writing and quantitative literacy, and the Program makes significant contributions to other academic programs as program curricula include ISP courses.

ISP courses may meet major, minor, and elective requirements, and most academic majors include one or more lower-level ISP courses as required or foundational. Some academic majors include one or more "allied" courses (for instance, Architecture includes IA Art 103 Three-Dimensional Design) or "related" (The BA and BS in Biology lists IN CHEM 111 General Chemistry I). In other academic majors, ISP courses are more ubiquitous (close to half of the course offerings in the majors in History and Holocaust and Genocide Studies are offered in the ISP). Over time, too, the required foundational course Integrative Quantitative Literacy (IQL) has evolved into a quantitative literacy requirement that allows students to meet the Quantitative Literacy (QL) requirement by successfully completing alternative courses, a list that now includes MATH 120, MATH 141, MATH 172, MATH 175, or MGT 140. Finally, the policy on Experimental Courses in the Senate Curriculum Committee Guidelines allows creative course development opportunities in the ISP using variable credit (1-4) 199 (basic) and 399 (advanced) courses with permission of the program's faculty and the appropriate school dean. (Experimental courses may not be repeated more than twice.)

One of the strengths of the Program design, according to a majority of faculty and program chairs, is its flexible program requirements and elective course. This flexibility has allowed academic disciplines to integrate ISP experiences into the major (and minor). In addition, the flexible program has created opportunities for generative intersections between major programs and general education—fostering both faculty and student investment in the value of these courses.

Courses Offered and Students Served

The ISP offers lower-level (100 and 200) and upper-level (300 and 400) courses. All but a few course sections have an ISP area prefix (IA, IH, IS, IN, II) followed by a disciplinary prefix. Some ISP courses (i.e. Public Speaking, some Education II courses) are required for the major. Some ISP courses (i.e. History, Women and Gender Studies) count for both the major and for ISP. Others (English and Film Studies) generally have separate curricula for ISP and the major. In both schools, decisions about course offerings have been department-level decisions. More recently departments have sought to streamline teaching resources and reduce duplication by eliminating lower-level non-ISP major courses or transferring those courses to the ISP. The ISP

designation has also been used by departments (and deans) as a tool to ensure enrollments for courses that might otherwise struggle to attract students.

Departments schedule their own ISP courses. In the School of Arts, Education, and Humanities (AEH), draft schedules are submitted in November. Each proposed schedule for fall and spring is reviewed by the offices of the deans in the two schools. For all courses (ISP and non-ISP) a review is made to assure that there are no time conflicts, whether there are any overloads, and if the overall balance of offerings is sufficient (including that not too many courses are concentrated in prime time), that the offerings appear consistent with current major numbers, and that if more than one section is offered per semester or year of a course, that those courses enrolled reasonably well in the five years prior. Ultimately, the departments create schedules and the dean's office is responsible for keeping within budgets to make sure the College is offering enough seats to ensure student choice but not so many that we have too many empty seats.

The School of Science, Sustainability, and Health (SSH) follows a similar model. Departments draft a schedule for the coming year and then the office of the dean combines, reviews and adjusts the results with a mind for total school offerings. However, SSH begins the scheduling process by providing departments with a scheduling advice page to guide chairs with ghosting sections, or seats within sections to balance section demand. The practice in the SSH is to try to run ISP courses at 90% or more of their total capped enrollments and to let major and elective courses run with lower fill rates (as long as they are above a minimum).

In Fall of 2018, SSH worked on an Excel-based predictive model for ISP seat demand built on past data: overall and course-level fall and spring demand; actual seats per category at R+30 percentage likely seat demand broken into class (first-year, sophomore, etc.) and ISP category. SSH reports that from the predicted number of students in each class they hoped to be able to predict demand and use that information for scheduling. Unfortunately, when they ran the model with 2018–2019 data the scheduling numbers generated were not as accurate those generated by the current process outlined above. The effort, however, did help SSH with long-term planning data. First, they learned that course caps and class sizes vary between ISP categories, with five-year averages of student numbers: IA 20.5, IH 21.0, II 22.2, IN 22.4, IS 29.4, and all courses 22.6 (including ITW and IQL). They also reported learning that over the past several years the number of seats offered in ISP by SSH has been between 45% and 50% of the College total and that the total margin between capacity and actual enrollment for these courses is less than 10%.

The ISPC has worked with the Center for Academic and Career Advising (ACA) to serve the needs of transfer students. The ISPC has also collaborated with other campus offices, staff, and USNH system colleagues to assess and better accommodate our transfer students. Since 2017, the ISPC has made the transfer process more efficient and effective through curriculum clarification and changes; outreach and conversation with USNH; and collaboration with the ACA, who do the transfer equivalency work for ISP based on the premise that a stronger partnership with community colleges is clearly a strategic opportunity for the College.

In the fall of 2017, the Provost's office requested that the ISPC propose a direct transfer agreement for students who have completed an Associate Degree. The charge was to develop draft language for a proposal we can take to our accreditors to see if they would be able to

approve such an agreement. The goal, to make it easier for NH students who have an associate degree to "plug into" KSC, was predicated on the idea that NEASC might allow students to come in with a guarantee that their associates degree will be equivalent to our general education requirements (ISP) with the expectation that they would take two upper-level integrative requirements in the Program. One challenge was that some of these students might have fewer than 40 credits of general education when they graduate and that is the minimum for NEASC. The other challenge was that a number of our majors require particular courses in our ISP that count as required or recommended courses and this could present an additional layer of complexity.

We reached out to our accreditors about this credit issue. They confirmed that a credit hour is a federally defined unit: the credit hour is part of the federal financial aid calculation and functions as a sort of "academic currency" that cannot be changed. We can never, for example, give a student four credits in return for a course that was taken at another institution for 3 credits (which was a suggestion made by a number of faculty in discussions of this issue). Our accreditors were quite clear that we cannot do this. A note from Barbara Brittingham, at that time the President of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, responded to our query. "You've interpreted the 3-credit/4-credit transfer situation correctly," she wrote. "If you have a regular stream of students from one or a few community colleges, you can put them on a 'guided pathway' that lets them land predictably at Keene State, which will still mean their 3 credit courses arrive with 3 credits at Keene, but might alleviate some of the confusion or uncertainty. Dr. Brittingham added, "As for waiving the rest of general education when community college students show up with presumably 20 or 21 credits of general education, that would not be a practice consistent with the Standards in New England."

The ISPC also consulted with professional staff in the ACA to go over the details of the transfer student process. ACA does almost all of the transfer equivalencies for academic credits applied to the ISP. And the College's May 2017 Transfer Student Study Group Report suggested our transfer protocols and processes were working relatively well. We did learn that direct transfer agreements (DTAs) appear to be a common way to create a pathway for students seeking to complete at a 4-year institution. Former associate provost, Dr. Glenn Geizer-Getz, also looked into our work on articulation agreements. He learned that the vast majority of our current agreements were approved in 2012 and reported that articulation agreements have made no observable impact on enrollments at Keene State in recent years. In tracking enrollments of transfer students since then, the College has found that they follow the same downward curve as our other student populations.

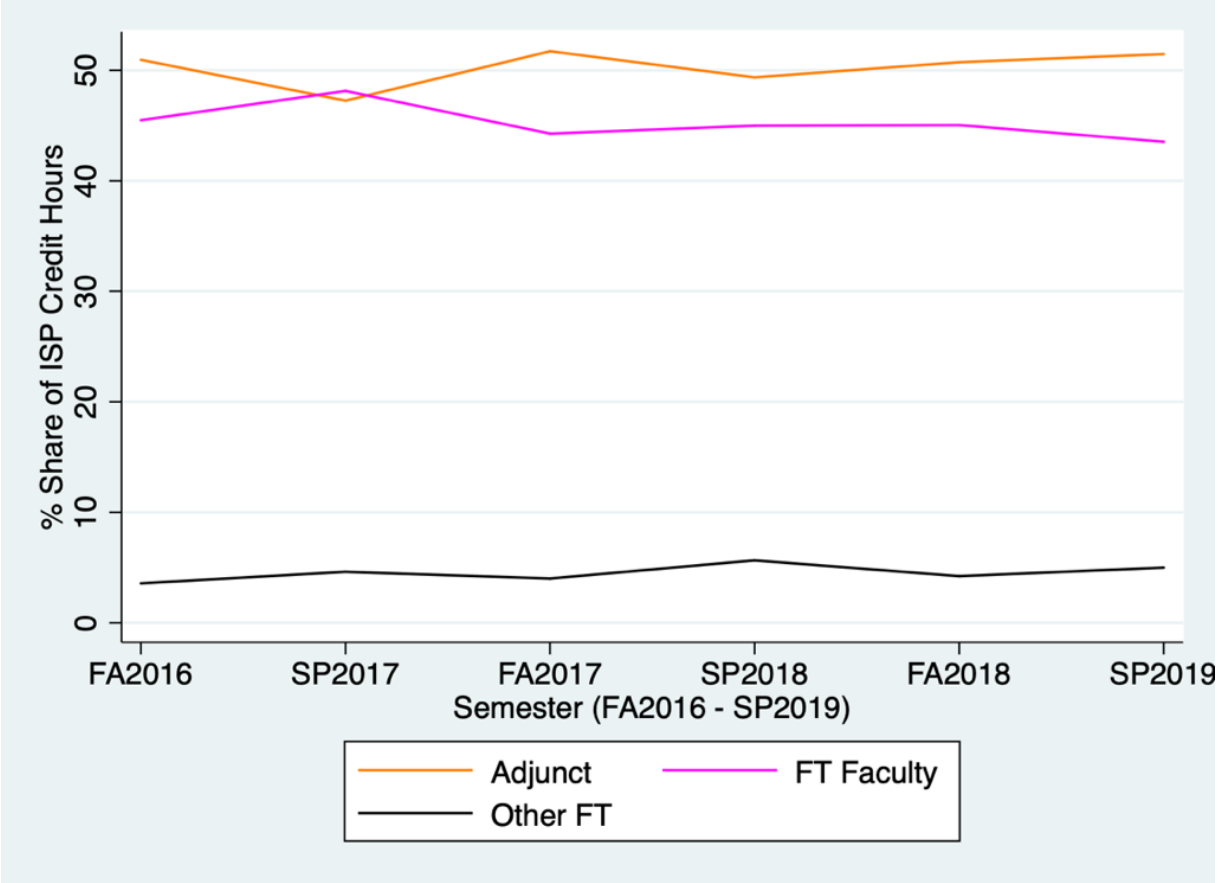
In January 2018, Elizabeth MacIntire, Outreach Enrollment Coordinator in the office of Partnerships & Shared Services at University System of New Hampshire, contacted the Director of the ISP as part of her work on a general education assessment across the system schools. MacIntire spent a day on campus and met with the Dean and Director, and the Integrative Studies Program Committee. The ISPC also reviewed examples of Dual Admission Programs (MassTransfer) that offer one model of a Dual Admission & CCSNH courses that satisfy Gen Eds across USNH insitutions). Elizabeth MacIntire and Marylynn Costa (Director of Shared Services Program at the University System of New Hampshire) shared other transfer programs that are in place. They also mentioned the NH Dual Admission program is a CCSNH and USNH

partnership where students are required to complete their associate degree and are guaranteed transfer into USNH if they meet certain criteria (i.e. 2.5 GPA). She suggested that we could effectively apply a similar model to a general education "block" at KSC.

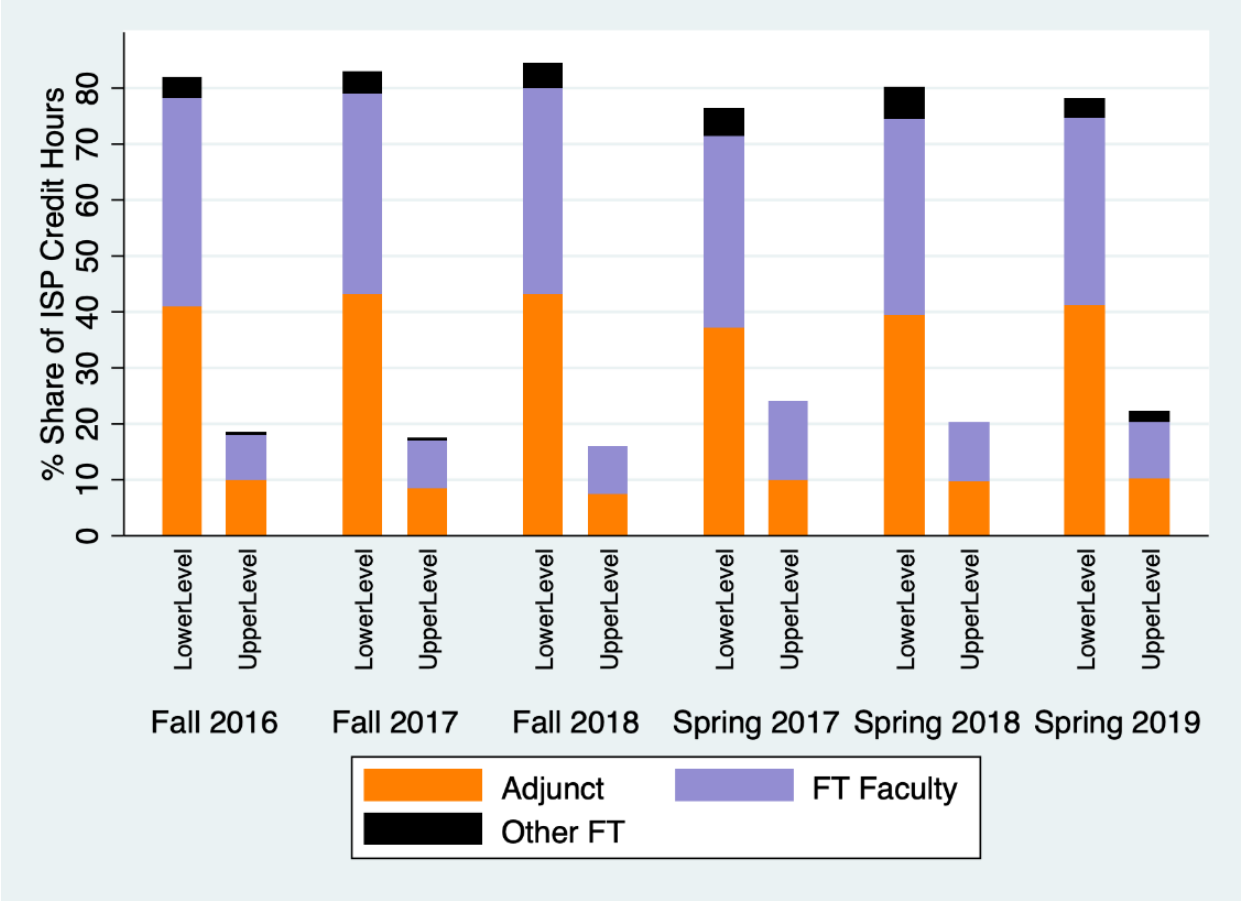
Tenure Track, Adjunct, and Other Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

ISP courses are taught by tenure-track and adjunct faculty with appointments in academic programs, as well as by qualified members of the staff who work with department chairs or program coordinators when building the schedule for an academic year. In the process described in details above, the deans work with department and program chairs, and with one another, to determine the number of sections of ISP courses that will be offered by full-time faculty. Teaching assignments and ISP teaching loads vary widely across the academic programs. While some departments depend on ISP courses either for their major or for credit hour generation, others are unable to realistically participate in the ISP because they are understaffed and struggle to meet the demands of their high-enrolled programs.

Approximately 50% of the credit hours in the ISP are taught by non-tenure track faculty. A recent breakdown of credit hours by faculty type show that in the fall of 2018, at the lower level, 43.7% of the credit hours were taught by adjunct faculty and 51.3% of the credit hours were taught by tenure-track faculty. At the upper level, in the fall of 2019, 47.9% of the credit hours were taught by adjunct faculty and 52.1% were taught by tenure-track faculty.



Adjunct faculty are hired in departments and their working conditions and evaluation are guided by the Keene State College Adjunct Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. All adjunct faculty appointments and assignments are made by the dean of the school, or his/her designee, in consultation with department chairpersons. Annual reviews of adjunct performance are conducted by the department chairperson. Adjunct faculty members are also formally evaluated in their eighth semester of service, in their sixteenth semester of service, and in each eighth semester thereafter.



The College depends on qualified adjunct faculty to deliver the ISP. This dependence on contingent labor is part of a long-term trend in higher education, and the U.S. workforce. However, this model has resource implications for the College. The most pressing implication is that the expenditures for adjunct faculty to teach the first-year writing course (ITW) in FY18-FY19 was $211,428.

The contributions of adjunct faculty who teach courses in the ISP are significant. They are generally well-trained, engaged, and excellent teachers. At the same time, there are a number of reasons to staff first-year courses with full-time faculty members. Research consistently suggests that first- and second-year students have more opportunities in courses taught by professors with institutional support and who, for the most part, can be relied upon for the long-term support and

mentoring of students throughout their academic careers, and in the years following graduation from the College.

Resources

In FY18 the ISP budget consolidated its budget lines. The consolidation of the three separate budgets (ISP, IQL, ITW) into one resulted in an approximately 50% reduction in total operating funds. The consolidation was proposed to facilitate budget management and to combine funds, e.g., for travel and more effective planning;

	Salaries (no fringe)	**Travel**	**Supplies**	**Print/Copy**	**Professional Services**	**Total**	**Total without salaries**	**Spent**
FY2019	$185,642.36	$375.00	$500.00	$120.00	$650.00	$187,287.36	$1,645.00	$226,631.42
FY2018	$220,642.35	$750.00	$1,250.00	$300.00	$1,097.00	$224,039.35	$3,397.00	$207,267.42
FY2017	$14,850.00	$3,500.00	$4,552	$357.00	$1,857.00	$25,116.00	$10,265.00	$14,092.70
FY2016	$11,350.00	$2,701.00	$2,158.00	$500.00	$2,000.00	$18,709.00	$7,359.00	$13,483,30
FY2015	$14,350.00	$3,500.00	$2,658.00	$500.00	$2,000.00	$23,008.00	$8,658.00	$6,920.80

Additional information will make visible the recent history and present budget for the ISP:

- In the five-year period FY15-FY19 there has been a significant reduction in total budget, not including salaries and wages;

- The combined operational budgets (not including salaries and wages) of the ISP (including ITW and IQL) decreased from a high of $10,265 in FY17 to $1,645 in FY19. This is a 96.98% reduction. The average annual budget is $6,627;

- The FY19 operating budget ($1,645.00) is barely sufficient to support travel to a general education conference for the Director or one of the coordinators;

- There are ongoing printing/copying costs for adjunct faculty who only teach ITW as well as interest in professional development work that could include outside facilitators if funds were available (and would likely be necessary if the ISP is revised);

- In every year the adjusted budget reflects reductions in at least some fund lines from what was originally budgeted (requested during budget preparations);

- Expenditures for adjunct faculty to teach ITW have averaged $211,428 in FY18-FY19. Prior to FY18, the adjunct funds for ITW were managed with the total adjunct faculty

budget for the School of Arts & Humanities making it difficult to determine the cost just for ITW faculty;

- The stipends and course releases for the ITW and IQL coordinators are included in the KSCEA collective bargaining agreement. The stipend and course releases for the Director of the ISP are not included in the current CBA. They are included in the appointment letter from the Provost;

- With virtually no institutional funding beyond salaries, and the high ITW adjunct costs, there is currently no funding stream to conduct faculty enrichment and development.

Summary of Strengths of the Program

The strengths of the ISP include:

- *Breadth and Connection* In emphasizing the acquisition of broad competencies and the understanding of the complex and changing nature of inquiry and knowledge, the ISP empowers students in an interconnected world;

- *Flexibility* The design of the Program has generated curricular incentives for new course offerings and pathways of learning to meet the diverse range of student interests and needs at the College;

- *Choice* The disciplinary choices within the perspectives areas—and more recent clarification of requirements to assure that the ISP elective creates more options—has allowed for productive synergies across the ISP and academic majors;

- *Preparation for the Workplace* The intellectual breadth and skill development in the ISP makes KSC graduates employable: in 2018 Keene State was voted number one for the employability of our graduates in the state, and number eighteen in the country;

- *Preparation for Graduate School* The ISP and the academic major provides our graduates with the general knowledge and competencies that are required for success in the specialized academic work of graduate and professional schools.

Summary of Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Program

The Challenge of General Education

The challenge of the ISP is the challenge of general education. It follows that questions and concerns about the ISP are very often questions and concerns about general education. How do we define breadth? What is the relationship between breadth and depth in our distribution of courses and requirements? What programs are given the opportunity to offer courses in general education? How do we assure that students both acquire content knowledge and develop skills?

How do we draw on shared ideas and culture as well as reflect experiences and values that are not shared or that have been devalued?

The *opportunity* is for the College to renew its efforts to empower students with the understanding that the general education curriculum reflects the institution's definition of an educated person and what the faculty have determined will prepare students for the world in which they will live. We also know that surveys of employers call for the skills and habits of mind the ISP delivers. But the students do not see the value, and the administration has not developed a College-wide strategy to promote the value of general education in the academic program.

The Challenge of Program Design: Integrative Learning

The *challenge* of integrative learning is that the curriculum, the disciplines, the schools, student affairs, and other campus offices are independently operating parts of an institution that as a result often work against students attempting to combine the parts of their undergraduate experience into a meaningful whole.

The *opportunity* of integrative learning is that through collaborative projects and initiatives the faculty may more effectively enact pedagogical strategies and activities through which students experience the power of making connections. Our other opportunity is that existing planning documents—such as the Academic and Co-Curricular Plan and the College-Wide Learning Outcomes—outline proposals and practices that would further the College's efforts to help students integrate learning across their course experiences, the co-curriculum, and with communities beyond the classroom.

The Challenge of Leadership

The oversight of the ISP has been a challenge since the initial co-director model of one administrator and one faculty member. The series of interim directors that followed offered little continuity and a labor-intensive period of program politics, study committees, reports, and reform efforts between 2011–2015—a period in which there were a series of changes in the administrative leadership in academic affairs and a structural realignment of the academic program that created the two schools: Arts, Education, and Humanities (AEH) and Sciences, Sustainability, and Health (SSH).

The *challenge* is how best to grant administrative agency to the ISPC: to more effectively integrate the project of general education at the College as well as to empower a committed and representative group of faculty dedicated to cross-disciplinary and inter-school collaboration. In 2016, the three-year appointment of a Director strengthened the Program; however, the reappointment of the Director for a two-year term in 2018, and the reduction in the course release (and a proposed elimination of the stipend), are further indicators that faculty leadership in general education is not a priority of the administration.

The *opportunity* is to recognize that administrative agency and continuity is central and not peripheral to the success of the Program. This recognition would build on the 2017 ISPC review

and update of the descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the ISP leadership, the Action Plan in the Self-Study that proposes a change to the contractual ITW and QL Coordinators, and the recent ISPC discussions of the future of the non-contractual Interdisciplinary Coordinator position. The recognition of the benefits of leadership of the largest academic program at the College might lead to another opportunity: to consider alternative models of administrative oversight. One model might be to redefine the Director position as a vice provost of undergraduate education who would be responsible for the central role of general education in the academic program at the College.

The Challenge of Collaboration

The concept and practice of integrative learning is predicated on collaboration. The *challenge* of the ISP is valuing and promoting disciplinary (and interdisciplinary) cultures and initiatives at the same time that the Program challenges these cultures to define their purviews beyond traditional or even parochial concerns.

The *opportunity* is to value the disciplines (and the interdisciplinary programs that function like disciplines in the College's administrative structure) at the same time that disciplinary priorities are not allowed to work against college-wide efforts to strengthen the overall quality of the academic program.

The Challenge of the Budget

The experience of students in an academic program is inextricably linked to the institutional commitment to the program. And it may be obvious to say that one of the obligations of college leaders is to prioritize and then to provide resources that will build successful programs—in this case, the program that makes up one-third of the academic credits of every student at the College. However, as detailed in the Budget section of this Self-Study, *the strategic financial approach of the College to the ISP has been disinvestment*. In addition to all but eliminating the budget, the Director of the ISP course release was reduced by one course for the Director's two-year appointment. This reduction in course release is a formidable *challenge*: it makes it more difficult to provide leadership and vision for the program—particularly in a moment in the College when grant writing is imperative for sustaining curricular development and pedagogical collaboration.

The short-term cost savings approach, while understandable, has supplanted a longer-term vision for generative teaching and learning in the Program. And this approach has consequences: 1) the ISPC has no budget for faculty development, enrichment, or collaboration; 2) there is no budget for the Director, or members of the ISP, to attend conferences, workshops, institutes or seminars in general education and integrative studies; 3) there is no money for program assessment, despite the NECHE accreditation requirement for ongoing assessment of the academic program; and 4) there is less time to work with colleagues to develop grant proposals and to work on multi-year curricular initiatives. The *opportunity* is to reverse the trend of disinvestment and resume short- medium- and long-range investments in the Program. All but eliminating the budget for the ISP may be an inevitable consequence of a budget crisis. But the failure to budget for the ISP is an indicator of the College's commitment to general education.

The Challenge of Assessment

The *challenge* is that the ISPC has no budget for assessment activities and so has had to write grants to support this ongoing work. The KSCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement (Article XI p 44) states that "Because the Integrative Studies Program is a developing initiative, funding will be allocated annually for the life of this contract to compensate the faculty for completing outcomes-based assessment of the program." This has not happened, and in fact to carry out the mandated assessment of the Program the Director has been encouraged to use the Assessment Pool. The Memorandum of Agreement on Assessment in the CBA states that "These funds are not to replace existing funds provided by the Provost's office for NCATE, VSA, Integrative Studies and other continuing forms of programmatic accreditation or any other college activity or program for which funds are presently allocated." The challenge is therefore that we appear not to be following the KSCEA contract.

The ISP assessment process has been simplified and strengthened. It is working well—though it could be even more efficient. The *opportunity* is to learn from the first full cycle of assessing the program outcomes, refine our methods of assessment based on our earlier work, and conduct ongoing program assessment *with a continuing funding stream provided by the College*. In addition, it has long been clear that to effectively assess student learning at the College we would do well to have an e-portfolio of some kind. The *opportunity* is to invest in an e-portfolio, such as Portfolium, a product that offers a) a life-long repository of student work that students can share with employers, b) an assessment tool that enables custom-designed rubrics to be utilized for assessment of college-wide and program-level student learning outcomes, and c) a means for guiding students through their education while awarding them badges for completion.

An e-portfolio has the potential to foster student success as well. It could make achievement of our CWLOs a priority for students and faculty. It could help students make sense of the ISP while giving them badges for completion of key components. And it could give us a comprehensive means of assessing CWLO, ISP, and program outcomes, and in so doing would address key NECHE concerns from our last site visit about the CWLOs. Finally, the *opportunity* of an e-portfolio would include building on the pedagogical work of open education at the College. Since 2015, the College's Domain of One's Own project, KSCopen, has fostered student engagement and agency by facilitating deeper reflection, integrative opportunities, and metacognitive activities. A small but growing group of faculty are using Open Pedagogy to enable students to shape the public knowledge commons of which they are a part. Faculty are fostering student engagement by creating, adapting, or updating open educational resources (OER) with students, building course policies, outcomes, assignments, rubrics, and schedules of work collaboratively with students, and facilitating student-created and student-controlled learning environments in which students and faculty work together to design authentic learning experiences.

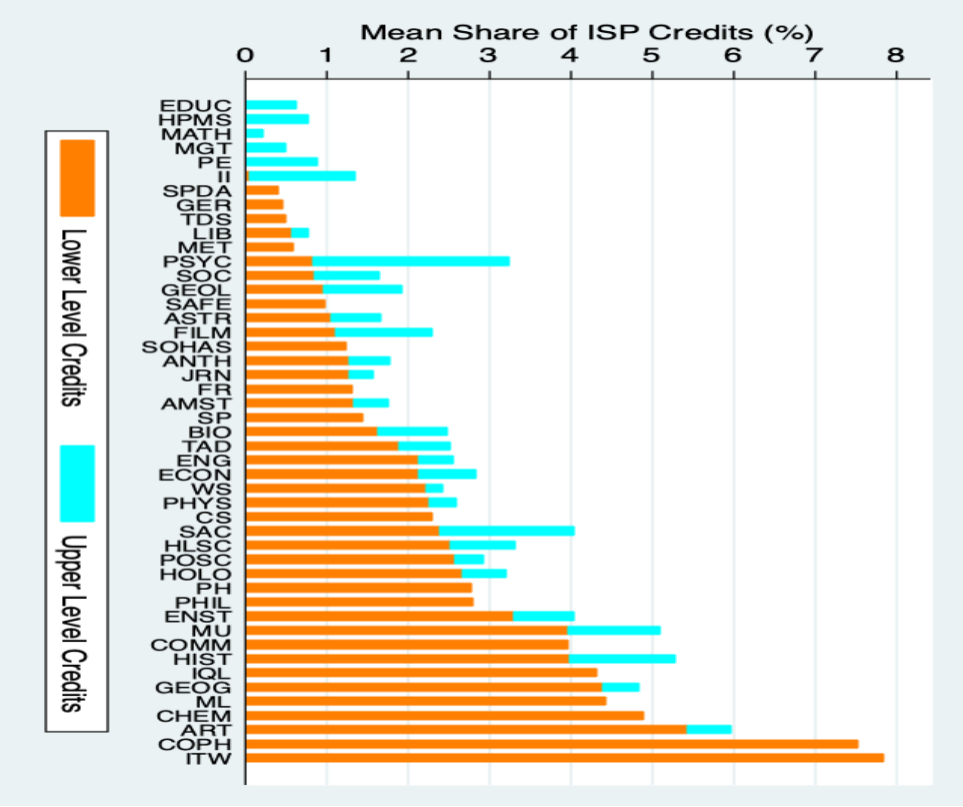
The Challenge of Scheduling and Staffing

In past years, the *challenges* of scheduling and staffing the ISP have included scheduling sufficient sections of upper-level ISP courses, managing enrollments in course sections, balancing the needs of delivering academic programs that rely on ISP courses and other

academic programs with either the desire and/or the capacity to contribute to general education at the College. From the view of the ISPC, the flexibility of the Program, one of its strengths, is also one of its challenges. The section offerings by discipline make it clear that particular programs benefit from the ISP while others may not. For particular programs, access to sections at both the lower- and upper-level are nearly guaranteed as these sections serve as requirements in majors. Other programs do not have access, raising questions of equity in course offerings and the diversity of courses offered for our students. In the end, the challenge is that the chairs and deans determine the needs of academic programs (as they should) but the broader needs of the general education program are by definition secondary.

The *opportunity* is to develop a staffing plan beyond the necessary but, we argue, not sufficient planning of the course schedule by discipline for the academic year. How might we plan for and develop more capacity for more tenure-track faculty to teach lower-level ISP courses? How do we include in course scheduling considerations of Program breadth and other College-wide priorities, such as the CWLOs? How do we ameliorate structural barriers to programs who wish to contribute to the ISP?

Office of Institutional Research data captures the mean share of credit hours by department, including percentage of credit hours at the lower and upper levels.



From distribution of credit hours shown on this chart, we see that a small group of academic programs delivers over half the credit hours in the ISP. The graph also shows the percentage of upper-level courses, also concentrated in a different small group of academic programs One

question that follows from this visualization is whether programs with a high credit share are having difficulty delivering these courses. A related question is whether other programs might desire or benefit from a larger role in delivering the ISP. Finally, and this is a question we have fielded for years: how does reliance on adjunct faculty delivering credit hours in one academic program preclude other programs from offering a larger share of credit hours if they wish to do so?

The Challenge of Teaching Writing and Learning to Write

The *challenge* of teaching writing and of our students learning to write is less about our first-year writing course and more about *what does not come afterward*. Since 2007 our writing assessments have consistently demonstrated that students acquire a useful foundation in the first-year writing course; and the ITW course has been positively correlated with student success and persistence at the College. The challenge for students is that the opportunity to develop writing skills in subsequent courses is in no way guaranteed. KSC is a notable outlier among institutional comparators, and colleges and universities nationally, which provide students with writing-intensive work across the academic program—from the first to the senior year.

The *opportunity* is that since the early 1990s the faculty have generated proposals for developing writing across the curriculum (WAC). The Writing Task Force, the Center for Research and Writing, and faculty institutes on writing have led to writing in the disciplines (WID) courses, course sequences, and curriculum proposals. In addition, a proposal for a First-Year Reading and Writing seminar that is being developed by a working group on campus provides evidence that discipline-based writing courses are of interest to the faculty at the College.

The Prefix Challenge

ISP courses have a perspective area prefix followed by a disciplinary prefix and a course number. When the ISP was designed, the rationale for the Area Prefix + Discipline was that ISP courses focus on area requirements in perspectives areas (IA, IH, IN, IS) rather than on the discipline. The perspectives area prefixes, some have argued, make it difficult to track disciplinary breadth in the perspectives area —for advisors and for students. These concerns appear to be anecdotal, as other faculty report few difficulties with ISP prefixes, and the staff and faculty who work daily with the ISP—the Registrar, Academic and Career Advising, the Director of the Program—report that students have few problems understanding and navigating the ISP and disciplinary prefix sequence.

The *opportunity* is to create a shared understanding of the challenge. In a request from the ISPC, the Registrar provided the following additional information regarding prefixes that may be helpful in addressing the questions and concerns associated with the ISP prefixes:

- One of the current prefix challenges is if a subject meets more than one perspective area. We might presume the software would understand it is the same subject. It doesn't. IA ENG and IH ENG are two different subjects to the computer as soon as it reaches a different letter;

- The cost of changing course prefixes (such as making the area prefix a suffix) is prohibitive, especially given the challenges with the budget at the College. For what is seemingly a small change represents weeks of reprogramming by an outside vendor; and the change touches every part of what we do with the curriculum including degree audit;

- From a practical perspective, making a change would have significant implications. In effect, every existing ISP course would need to be deleted and replaced. All catalog copy and programming such as prerequisites, program requirements, degree audit programming, etc., would require revisions. The Student Information System (SIS) is driven by course prefix and number. Any change effectively establishes a new course. We have eighty-five ISP prefixes. Each prefix is actually treated by the SIS as a different subject;

- Students struggle with the term "discipline," in general, a term that is not familiar to them. The Registrar's Office replaces "discipline" with "subject" in its communications;

- There is little to no misunderstanding about our prefixes from other schools that receive our transcripts.

The ISPC has reviewed the available information about the prefixes. And we are aware that a proposal for a Liberal Arts Core curriculum includes a change from ISP prefixes to suffixes. However, based on the information we have, there appear to be significant challenges to changing the ISP prefixes—challenges that led the Provost to recommend no change in the 2015 review of the ISP.

Other Challenges and Opportunities

The two areas that received the highest frequency of response from faculty over the past five years are: 1) advocacy for *flexible* general education program requirements and 2) the need to provide more opportunities for students to develop competency in reading, writing, speaking, and quantitative reasoning. Other challenges and opportunities that the ISPC has heard from the members of the campus community in its oversight responsibilities include:

- *Developmental Considerations*: How do we create opportunities for students to develop core skills / outcomes across their ten courses? Is it possible to tag courses with outcomes (writing, critical thinking, information literacy, etc.) in Program Planning?

- *Connections*: How do we help students build meaningful connections (or pathways) through the ISP?

- *Marketing*: How do we communicate the value of general education? Is the "liberal arts" more aligned with what the Program does, or does the aspirational language of "integration" more directly align the component parts of a bachelor's degree?

- *Advising* How do we advise our students about the ISP in every conversation about course and program planning so that the students learn the value and opportunities of a

general studies program? Every member of the faculty is responsible for advising students in the ISP;

- *Course descriptions*: While course descriptions do what they advertise, section descriptions could be more explicit about what a student is signing up for—say, in terms of outcomes chosen for a section. A review of selected syllabi from ISP courses will affirm the diversity of subject areas for students to choose from. However, it is not always clear what the differences are between a course with an ISP prefix and a disciplinary course;

- *Required Courses* Do the current interdisciplinary requirement and elective provide flexibility to accommodate student interests and individualized program planning? (Faculty have argued for other required courses, including a language course, a diversity requirement, or an integrative sustainability or systems-thinking requirement.)

- *Curriculum Planning and Program Development* Since KSC moved from three to two schools, the First Year Experience (FYE) working group, the Liberal Arts Core group, and the SSH Seminar series have been working on proposals. How do we assure that ISP (or ISP-related) proposals are informed by assessment of the ISP and include considerations that may not be visible to faculty and/or administrators who do not sit on the ISPC?

- *Relation between ISP and other courses* Faculty have desired to equate ISP with non-ISP courses (e.g., FILM 270 changed to IHFILM 260) usually with the intention of addressing major requirements, which has led to non-ISP courses satisfying an ISP requirement; similarly, faculty have requested to equate lower level ISP courses with upper-level ISP courses; faculty have asked to cross-list non-ISP and ISP sections when building the course schedule; and chairs have requested that we reserve seats in ISP sections for majors or other agendas (e.g. course pairing fall to spring) that can result in registration challenges (seat allocation) and retroactive requests from students to receive ISP credit for non-ISP course/section;

- *Unregulated use of experimental course numbers* Experimental courses have been used in part as a loophole to establish new ISP prefixes and avoid curriculum review/oversight. The curriculum committees are charged with assuring that an experimental course is only offered twice. When an experimental course satisfies an ISP requirement, but not a program requirement, the Registrar's office must make a manual course substitution.

Integrative Studies Programmatic Action Plan

1. Introduction: Goals and Proposed Actions

This Action Plan is designed to integrate and implement planning efforts at the College. It challenges the faculty and the administration to respond to the students we are teaching and the social and cultural changes in the world today. Rather than creating wholly new initiatives, the Action Plan taps emergent energies our campus already underway and engages with faculty who are committed to innovative pedagogical and curricular projects; and rather than developing pedagogical or curriculum models *for* the faculty we advocate support to *empower faculty* to connect pedagogical and curricular innovation to *the transformative intellectual work of teaching and learning together*.

The ISPC is interested in supporting planning efforts that have identified possible changes to the ISP, most notably the first-year experience (FYE) committee and the faculty group working on a proposal for a liberal arts core curriculum. For example, the ISPC can leverage shared assumptions, research evidence, and support for the effectiveness of writing in the disciplines, building on decades of collaboration with the Center for Writing. We support an emerging College-wide commitment to Writing in the Disciplines (WID) to provide students with critical writing and reading skills taught by faculty in specific disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas beyond the first-year writing requirement. Similarly, we endorse the interest across the academic program in developing QL courses that would be discipline-based and that would build on our first-year QL courses.

We recommend moving forward with the Action Plan ("Plan") of this Self-Study through a Senate charge for the Director of the ISP to convene an **Academic Innovation Planning Group** at the College. This group would work with the Provost to develop a timeline for the design and implementation of a more integrated academic program. This timeline would be developed using the recommendations and Action Steps of the Self-Study, the multi-year assessment of the ISP that informs the Action Steps, the general education projections (and other relevant projections) in the College's NECHE Self-Study, the initiatives and proposals that have been generated by the CWLO Steering Committee, the Academic and Co-Curricular Plan, the Liberal Arts Core Working Group, and the FYE committee.

The three goals of the ISP Action Plan are designed to foster student success in the academic program and advance the strategic priorities of the College:

- Integrate the College-Wide Learning Outcomes (CWLOs) with the ISP
- Develop and Implement Writing and QL Across the Curriculum
- Facilitate Faculty Collaboration on Curriculum and Pedagogy

The goals of the Plan, and the thirteen proposed actions between 2020–2027, are scaffolded in relation to the College's strategic planning process, the timeline for completion of the NECHE accreditation review, and the College's budget projections, as we currently understand them. Moreover, the goals of the Plan, and the proposed Action Steps, reflect four years of intellectual work planning around faculty and administrative reviews and reports between 2011–2015, as

well as multiple years of assessment of the ISP Outcomes. The proposed immediate actions in year one (2020–2021) and year two (2021–2022)

- arise out of challenges and opportunities identified in internal reviews and recommendations by faculty and the administration;

- address longstanding structural barriers to curriculum and program development while taking into consideration budget limitations;

- depend upon a renewed commitment to supporting meaningful and ongoing faculty collaborations through the support of multi-year teaching and learning institutes or communities.

Years three-seven (2022–2027) of the Plan are dedicated to strengthening the campus-wide commitment to academic innovation. We advocate for resources to support meaningful opportunities for faculty to collaborate in instructional development and incorporate research on student learning and our assessment findings. The Action Plan of this Self-Study calls for a renewed recognition of the importance of instructional development activities that promote a shared vision of the primacy of innovative teaching and learning in the academic program—both in the disciplines as well as beyond disciplinary priorities.

2.Overview of Action Steps by Academic Year

Year One (2020–2021)

1. Integrate the College-Wide Learning Outcomes with the College's Academic Program
2. Redefine the ITW and QL Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities
3. Submit Proposal for First-Year Creative and Critical Inquiry (CCI) Seminar
4. Begin Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative
5. Begin QL Across the Curriculum Initiative

Year Two (2021–2022)

2.6 Support Faculty Collaboration and Development of Writing-Intensive and Writing-in-the-Discipline (WID) Courses as well as QL Across the Curriculum courses
2.7 ISP First-Year Teaching and Learning Initiative
2.8 ISP Teaching Fellows Initiative
2.9 Mentoring Project
2.10 Individualized Pathways
2.11 Develop Coordinated Multi-Year ISP Staffing Plan

Year Three (2021–2022)

3.12 Implement Multi-Year ISP Staffing Plan

Year Four (2022–2023) through Year Seven (2026-2027)

4.13 Assess Results and Continue Implementing Multi-Year ISP Staffing Plan

3. Action Plan: Actions and Rationale

Year One (2020–2021)

The five proposed actions in year one address structural barriers to ongoing program and curriculum development and they require few resources. (If external grant funding is received, the proposed actions in the first two years of this plan may be accelerated.)

1.1 Integrate the College-Wide Learning Outcomes with the College's Academic Program

Faculty incorporate the College Wide Learning Outcomes (CWLOs) into all lower-level ISP courses to promote integrative learning among our students and to encourage shared ownership of the program.

We recommend a deliberate strategy on faculty and staff advisers engaging students with the CWLOs. The KSC Academic and Co-Curricular Plan provides a useful framework and a set of working principles for integrating the CWLOs into the ISP. And teams on the CWLO Steering Committee have already developed rubrics that will assist faculty in grounding their courses in the CWLOs. The primary goal is to empower students to get the most out of their academic program by engaging in the courses and connecting their learning experiences at the College.

A recent survey completed by provosts or chief academic officers at 325 AAC&U member colleges and universities show that a growing majority of colleges have intended learning goals or outcomes for all students. However, our Graduating Senior Survey makes clear that students at KSC are not aware of program outcomes—whether disciplinary, ISP, or college wide. And as reported in "Recent Trends in General Education Design, Learning Outcomes, and Teaching Approaches Key Findings from a Survey among Administrators at AAC&U Member Institutions" (2016), "Only nine percent of the provosts, asked whether they believed students were aware of the desired learning outcomes at their institutions, reported that they believed all students understood the desired learning outcomes, and only thirty-six percent said that a majority of students understood them.

The ISPC began to envision pathways by taking course offerings in one semester (Fall 2017) and grouping them in different ways. The examples below, developed more recently, demonstrate the integrative potential of the ISP using the College-Wide Learning Outcomes (CWLOs). Each grouping features lower- and upper-level courses. And in most cases, course sections and subjects will work in more than one area. The course groupings remind us how courses in the ISP might connect to one other, the major program of study, and one or more of the CWLOs.

<u>Critical Thinking</u>
ITW 101 Vietnam War in Film
IH FILM 260 Why Movies Affect Us
IS ANTH 323 Anthro Conflict and Violence
IH HGS 381 Human Trafficking Across the Globe
IA FILM 332 Creative Digital Nonfiction
IH JRN 101 Media and Society
IHJRN 399 Families & Mass Media

<u>Civic Engagement</u>
ITW 101 Thinking, Writing, Citizenship
IS POSC 220 Global Politics
IS SOC 310 Social Problems
II Math 315 Voting Power and Apportionment

Sustainability
ITW 101 Ecology of Food
IN BIO 101 Evolution and Human Behavior
II ENST 150 Global Environmental Change
IN GEOL 320 Earth's Climate: Past & Future
IS ENST 382 Environmental Advocacy

Creative Inquiry
IA 113 TAD Dance as a Way of Knowing
IN INFO 320 Participatory Cultures
IA FILM 331 Storytelling In Video
II PHYS 305 Physics of Music

Intercultural Competence
II WGS 101 Intro Women's and Gender Studies
IS ANTH 110 Cultural Anthropology
II EDUC 306 Women and Education
IS ANTH 315 Gender and Culture
IS ANTH 399 Orangasli Cultures of Malaysia

Well Being
IA MU 104 Listening to Music
II ENST 110 Food, Health, Environment
IS PH 285 Health in Society
IN BIO 303 Barely Tolerating Yourself
II HPC 311 Outdoor Recreation Leadership

Faculty have suggested that course sections might choose multiple CWLOs to emphasize the relationships between and among courses and the CWLOs. We recommend that the College explore digital platforms such as Portfolium, mentioned above. If e-portfolios are set up with sections for each CWLO, and if these are introduced to students in their first-year course, the CWLOs will be a more salient aspect of ISP courses for both students and faculty. A platform such as Portfolium would allow is to use Digital Badges for promoting student success and making our ongoing programmatic assessment more transparent, efficient, and effective.

1.2 Redefine the ITW and QL Coordinator Roles

The Coordinator of Thinking and Writing becomes the Coordinator of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and the Coordinator of Quantitative Literacy becomes the Coordinator of Quantitative Literacy Across the Curriculum (QLAC).

This Action Step aligns position titles with a renewed commitment to developing student competencies in each of these core intellectual competencies and—in years two through seven of this Plan—provides leadership for faculty developing course sequences in writing and QL in the disciplines and in the ISP.

This action will build on current and past intellectual work in the ISPC and the Center for Research and Writing, and the Mason Library and the Teaching and Learning Collaborative, thereby leveraging existing institutional structures for this initiative. The KSCEA compensation for each coordinator will remain the same. The KSCEA Contract includes, under the Interdisciplinary Program Chairs, Annual Reassigned Time of 8 credits and an Annual Stipend of $3500 for the Coordinator of Integrated Thinking and Writing and the Coordinator of Integrated Quantitative Literacy. The Director of the ISP and the Provost will work together to align the compensation with the coordinator roles and responsibilities as we define them.

1.3 Submit Proposal for First-Year Creative and Critical Inquiry (CCI) Seminar

The CCI seminar introduces students to the culture of undergraduate research at the College. The seminar is designed as the first of an integrated sequence of writing-intensive courses—in the ISP and in the disciplines—that all students will complete across their four-years of undergraduate study.

The CCI seminar retains the demonstrated strengths of the ITW course—one of the most successful initiatives at the College. The CCI seminar will offer faculty in the disciplines a seminar-type course to engage first-year students with their scholarly expertise. Having successfully moved the first-year writing course out of a single department (English), affirming the shared ownership of the teaching of writing across the curriculum, the CCI will be an ongoing collaborative project by faculty, staff, and trained student mentors who will work from best practices in the teaching of writing, learning transfer, and high impact practices, to design, implement, and assess the pedagogical methods used in the course.

The CCI retains the existing ITW tagline, a course that "exemplifies the liberal arts mission of Keene State College by challenging our first-year students to engage in genuine academic scholarship," and continues a tradition of faculty working together to re-examine assumptions about expectations in lower-division courses and effective methods for integrating the teaching of reading, thinking, and writing.

1.4 Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Initiative: Phase One

The WAC Coordinator works with academic program chairs to identify existing writing courses both in the ISP and in the disciplines, as well as with chairs interested in developing discipline-based courses for a second writing course to follow the Critical and Creative Inquiry (CCI) seminar. The work of the WAC Coordinator in phase one will build on an inventory of writing-intensive and writing instructional courses in the disciplines that the ISPC has planned for the spring of 2020.

The WAC initiative builds on over two decades of sustained intellectual work in faculty collaboration and curriculum development in the disciplines to improve student learning outcomes in thinking and writing across the academic program. It is grounded in decades of research, longitudinal studies of student writers, and theories and research-findings in learning transfer. And it continues and strengthens the collaboration between the Center for Writing (now the Center for Research and Writing) and the ISP. In fact the ISPC and the Center have already designed and piloted a writing rubric and envisioned a multi-year assessment of writing across the curriculum to build on and implement a developmental writing-instructional curriculum.

In addition to Institutional Research suggesting that our first-year writing course is the most reliable predictor of success and persistence in the first year at the College, especially for at-risk students, multiple longitudinal studies of student writers have demonstrated that writers make gains across their four-years of undergraduate study, particularly when there is explicit instruction that helps students to transfer what they've learned about writing in one course (or context) to another context (See Eodice, Geller and Lerner 2017; Yancey, Robertson, Taczak 2014; Clark and Hernandez 2011; Beaufort 2007; Wardle 2007).

1.5 Initiate QL Across the Curriculum Initiative

The QL Across the Curriculum (QLAC) Coordinator works with academic program chairs to identify QL courses in both the ISP and the disciplines to coordinate discipline-based courses for a second QLAC course requirement.

Just as the development of college-level writing should not be confined to a single course, students' quantitative reasoning should continue beyond the foundational QL requirement of the ISP. The QL Across the Curriculum (QLAC) curriculum requires students to complete at least one additional QL-intensive course, likely in-the-disciplines but possibly within the ISP. The initiative enacts integrative learning by assuring that students develop QL competencies in ISP and discipline-based courses. By addressing directly the disintegrated structure of the academic program, this initiative promotes student learning through curriculum and faculty collaboration through pedagogical discussions.

This Action Step responds directly to more than a decade of assessment of QL. And it builds on nearly two decades of dedicated work in faculty collaboration and curriculum development. The most recent assessment report of QL in the ISP (Spring 2018) reveals that 1) only about 50% of first-year students are proficient with reading and interpreting quantitative information critically, 2) only about 50% of first-year students are able to suitably apply quantitative methods and concepts to solve a problem; and 3) only 25% of first-year students are able to apply quantitative methods and concepts to support an argument. In response to these findings, the IQL 101 curriculum was re-designed to include open-source materials that provide increased student support including screencasts, videos, and interactive homework assignments. By including a QL Across the Curriculum follow-up course, we continue to engage students in situations to further develop and apply their quantitative reasoning skills.

Year Two (2021–2022)

Actions 2.6 and 2.7 in year two have resource implications (unlike the first five actions in year one that require few resources). While modest, the cost of supporting faculty collaboration, pedagogical development, and curriculum planning will directly impact the student experience in the academic program, as well as cultivate pedagogical reflection and commitment across the two schools. In addition, in year two, we identify the cost of supporting peer-to-peer mentoring.

2.6 Provide Support for Faculty Collaboration and Department-Based Development of Writing-Intensive and Writing-in-the-Discipline (WID) Courses

In year two the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiative builds on over a decade of successful Faculty Collaboration and Development and over ten years of writing assessment at the College.

This Action Step builds on successful faculty collaboration in writing pedagogy and curriculum at the College in the Calderwood Institute on the Teaching of Writing—an intensive week-long summer seminar and in-semester mentoring that reached eighty members of the faculty. The

action will provide incentives for faculty to access the resources and theory on student learning in their own disciplinary cultures of writing and support faculty and departments as they work with effective methods of teaching writing in the disciplines and in the ISP.

The WAC initiative responds to our assessments of writing and will allow us to "close the loop" of our assessment work. This action will be supported by a developmental approach to assessing writing piloted by Dr. Kathryn Tirabassi and Dr. Mark C. Long in the spring of 2018, and the ongoing collaborative work by the ISPC and the Center for Research and Writing. Our alignment of WAC and WID, moreover, will benefit from current research on learning transfer and its curricular implications. Our plan has been and will be to bring in an expert on writing transfer and portfolio-based assessment, Dr. Kathleen Blake Yancey, to assess writing and learning transfer as a part of our program commitment to integrative learning.

2.7 ISP First-Year Teaching and Learning Initiative

The First-Year Teaching and Learning Initiative leverages the fourth contact hour of the four-credit course (15 additional contact hours each semester) in all first-year ISP courses to acculturate students to what the campus offers them: opportunities for engaged learning, support and peer mentoring, undergraduate research, and meaningful service experiences beyond the classroom.

In working from, and experimenting with, current research on learning, pedagogy, and curriculum, participating faculty will work with John C. Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* in a renewed institutional commitment to the ISP, with the goal of broad participation of faculty in FYE and co-curricular collaboration. The ISP First-Year Initiative, however, does not begin with a ready-made curriculum but rather with broad goals for faculty teaching in the ISP, to include:

- building CWLOs more deliberately into ISP courses as well as into the ISP curriculum;

- infusing high-impact practices that have measurable effects on improving student learning outcomes and persistence in the first year by making full use of the 4+4 course model;

- advocating that all entry-level ISP courses begin with the learning competencies students bring to the course by using an asset-based as opposed to deficit-based pedagogical assumptions for curriculum design and development ("incomes" (Guerra 2008) or "funds of knowledge" (Estaban-Guitart and Moll 2014; Moje et al. 2004; Zippin 2009);

- integrating existing models and developing peer mentoring, teaching fellows, and teaching assistants to build capacity for more upper-level students to engage with more first-year students;

- applying open educational practices to promote equity and access (reduce textbook costs); empower students (learner-driven curricula and learning), promote community and collaboration (sharing and making public student scholarship), and teaching digital

literacy and digital tools;

- using collaborative advising to assure students will experience meaningful relationships with faculty, staff, and peers.

Along with the emphasis on WAC, the ISP First-Year Teaching and Learning Initiative responds to our assessments of writing and will allow us to "close the loop" of our assessment work.

2.8 Recruit and Collaborate with Faculty in an ISP Teaching Fellows Initiative

Participating faculty teach first-year and upper-level courses and work together to create an ISP focused on scaffolding development from lower-level courses across four years of study and integrating ISP experiences with the major, co-curricular activities, and the high-impact practice of capstone courses and projects.

The goals of the Teaching Fellows Initiative include promoting student success and persistence in the Program, engaging more tenure-track faculty in teaching in the ISP, and sustaining an intellectual culture of collaborative teaching, pedagogical support, and curriculum development at the College.

Chairs and deans work with Teaching Fellow candidates to plan a 50% course load in the ISP across two academic years. Many members of the faculty already have a 50% ISP course load; for others the teaching fellow model will require medium-term planning and a modest change in load. Other interested members of the faculty may need to work with their chair to plan a schedule that will incorporate the teaching of three ISP courses in two successive academic years. While demands of home departments may make it difficult to teach in the ISP, with administrative commitment we are confident that creative solutions, with support from the administration, will make wider participation possible.

The Teaching Fellows will build the CWLOs into the curriculum; support first year student success through high impact practices, including introducing students to a culture of undergraduate research; create resources with the support of faculty enrichment and digital learning—including open practices to reduce textbook costs and to engage students in the ISP; continue to develop the first-year reading and writing seminar; and continue using John C. Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom.* Teaching Fellow cohorts will have support from the Teaching and Learning Collaborative that includes Faculty Enrichment, Digital Learning, the Center for Creative Inquiry, the Center for Writing, and the Open Learning Lab.

2.9 Research & Writing Embedded Fellows

The Research & Writing Embedded Fellows & Faculty Fellows program provides peer-to-peer support to students in first-year ISP courses.

The benefits of peer-to-peer models and other academic support areas are well established. Significant research in both writing composition and information literacy reflect the need for students to be explicitly taught both information literacy and writing in an integrative,

scaffolded, and contextual manner. This first-year program builds on existing structures and programs that provide peer-to-peer research and writing tutoring services and in-class workshops for courses in the Mason Library and Center for Research and Writing—facilitating an integrative first-year research and writing experience within existing courses and structures.

The anxiety that first-year students often experience when confronted with their first college level research and writing intensive project is well-documented. This anxiety and unfamiliarity with the academic support available on campus, from the library or the College's Center for Research and Writing, can create barriers to students' success. The peer to peer Research & Writing Embedded Fellows program lessens this anxiety and facilitate students' self-advocacy from their more experienced peers. It offers an opportunity to offer peer support to first-year students, a professionalizing experience for undergraduate fellows, and academic support for faculty participating in the Research & Writing Faculty Fellows program.

2.10 Individualized Pathways

This Action Step promotes student planning in the ISP through advising and mentoring through individualized pathways.

The goal is for students to experience education as more than a sequence of courses. This Action Step builds confidence, agency, and mentoring support for students as they create a pathway that will integrate their experiences at Keene State College. The Pathways Initiative will address the challenge of general education mentioned above and provide incentives for students, faculty, and staff to think more intentionally about the integrity of the courses in the Program.

Course sequences encourage students to approach course selection and program planning in a fundamentally different way—taking from approaches to the whole student that integrate academic success, extracurricular engagement, and career preparation, such as the Carleton College Pathways. Curricular pathways have been successful at supporting students as they integrate their major and their ISP into a meaningful whole.

2.11 Develop an ISP Staffing Plan

Collaborate with the Office of the Provost, chairs and the deans to study and then create a multi-year staffing plan to prioritize breadth, equity, and access through resources to support a distribution of sections across the disciplines in the two schools.

This Action Step will change the story of the first-year at the College. Our proposed staffing plan challenges the institution to prioritize the meaningful and lasting relationships that our students tell us they value, that research shows leads to success and persistence in the first year, and that will distinguish our curriculum.

We propose a course schedule that will acknowledge the central place of the ISP in the experience of every student at the College and the vital role of tenure-track faculty in teaching and mentoring our first-year students. First, the Provost's office will charge the deans and chairs to build a course schedule for AY 2022–2023 that will make it possible for more tenure-track

faculty to teach first-year students, including fist-year writing and 100-Level ISPs; and second, the Academic Affairs Council and the Director of the ISP will create a multi-year staffing plan with targets to increase the percentage of tenure-track faculty teaching first-year ISP courses.

The scheduling model is designed to make the staffing of the ISP a shared priority within each academic program. The longer-term goal of the staffing plan is to align resources and faculty to make it possible for more programs to contribute to the ISP and for more tenure-track faculty to work with our first- and second-year students. The outcomes of our proposed scheduling model include improving first-year retention, assuring breadth in program offerings, prioritizing both the major and the breadth of course offerings in the program that serves every student at the College, and fostering intellectual integration.

Year Three (2022–2023)

The resource implications of an ISP Staffing Plan will be determined in part by changes to the academic program undertaken by the College in 2020–2021 and in 2021–2022—including hiring to increase capacity to deliver the general education program at the College, in addition to continuing to support faculty collaboration, pedagogical development, and curriculum planning.

3.12 Implement Multi-Year ISP Staffing Plan

Implement the multi-year staffing plan to prioritize breadth, equity, and access—and to identify resources and create targets for distributing sections across the disciplines in the two schools—so that more programs contribute to the ISP and more tenure-track faculty are able to work with first- and second-year students.

Year Four–Seven (2023–2024 through 2026-2027)

4.13 Assess Results and Continue Implementing Multi-Year ISP Staffing Plan

Meet targets of the multi-year staffing plan to distribute ISP sections across the disciplines in the two schools and to distribute sections across the disciplines in the two schools so that more programs contribute to the ISP and more tenure-track faculty are able to work with first- and second-year students.

Conclusion of Action Plan

To develop the Action Plan for this Self-Study, the ISPC has reviewed over ten years of ISP assessment—and considered the College's declining enrollments, budget challenges, and campus-wide initiatives. The Committee's planning was guided by the College's interim (2015) NECHE accreditation report, the 2016 Academic and Co-Curricular Plan (including the spring 2017 "Focus on the First Year" initiative), the College-Wide Learning Outcomes (and the ongoing work of the CWLO Steering Committee), and the objectives in the President's Bridge Strategic Plan (2018–2021). The Plan has also considered trends in general education and emerging research on high impact practices, learning transfer, and student persistence.

Our vision is a transformative institutional, programmatic, and curricular commitment to the engagement of faculty and students in the project of connected teaching and learning in the ISP and the academic program of which it is a part. The ISPC urges the administration and the faculty to engage in a campus-wide exploration of the complexities of the higher education, and the students we teach, drawing on evidence-based research at the intersection of pedagogy, curriculum, and institutional change. The Plan challenges our faculty and the administration

- to *affirm* the distinct disciplinary expertise and cultures at the College and (re)envision these cultures as part of a more engaged and integrated academic program;
- to *collaborate* across the two schools to connect technology and the arts, humanities and sciences;
- to *engage* at the intersection of our traditional teaching and research methods and student-centered practices;
- to *think (and rethink)* pedagogy, learning, and research in the digital age;
- to *connect* our experiences working with students by sharing reflections, collaborating on common projects, and brainstorming new ways teach and learn.

Because many of the transformative curriculum and program developments at KSC have been the result of external funding, this Action Plan is predicated on collaboration. To this end, in the spring of 2020, the Director of the ISP will invite members of the campus community to work on two grant applications. The first opportunity is a Davis Foundation Grant that support more effective teaching and learning and/or controlling costs—and that give preference to projects aimed at strengthening the general education core of the undergraduate experience. The second opportunity is the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEH offers Planning Grants (12 months; up to $35,000) and Implementation grants (18-36 months; up to $100,000). These grants are designed to support innovative curricular programs that bring humanities faculty together with their counterparts outside the humanities—in the social and natural sciences, and in pre-service or professional programs.

Members of the ISPC (2019–20): Dr. Mark C. Long (English, Director of ISP); Dr. Michael Cullinane (Mathematics, Coordinator of Quantitative Literacy); Dr. Steven Harfenist (Physics, Coordinator of II Courses); Irene McGarrity (Mason Library and Coordinator of Thinking and Writing) Dr. William McCulloch (Economics); Dr. Elizabeth Dolinger (Mason Library); Dr. Jeffrey Timmer (Human Performance and Movement Sciences); Dr. Randall Hoyt (Art and Graphic Design); Robert Schaumann (KSCAA Representative); Ex-Officio. Dr. George Smeaton (Director for Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research).

Self-Study Appendices

The documents in the appendices to this Self-Study are in a Dropbox folder. The Curriculum vitae of all faculty (tenured, tenure-track, contract lecturers, and adjunct) and (in addition to the eleven sample syllabi listed below) an archive of course syllabi by semester are linked to a Google Folder for Standard Four: Academic Programs for NECHE Accreditation.

ISP Advising Guides

Fall/Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Spring 2019

ISP Annual Reports

2015–16, 2016–17, 2017–18, 2018–19

Assessment

Academic Perspectives: Assessment Outline for Academic Perspectives, Disciplinary ISP, Assessment Report (Comm Phil 2019)

Grant and Funding Proposals; Academic Affairs Assessment Grant Proposal (Information Literacy) 2018, Academic Affairs Assessment Grant Proposal (Writing) Spring 2018, ISP Academic Affairs Assessment Grants Proposal (Creative Thinking and Integrative Learning) Spring 2019

Reports and Results: Assessing Academic and Intellectual Skills in KSCs ISP, Written Communication 2016–17, Assessment of Writing Power Point Presentation for Campus, ISP Assessment Report Fall 2018, Creative Thinking Spring 2019, Integrative Learning Spring 2019, Graduating Senior Survey Results 2019

Rubrics: Information Literacy, Writing Spring 2017, Integrative Learning Spring 2019, Integrative Learning Qualtrics Format, Creative Thinking Spring 2019, Creative Thinking Qualtrics Format

Budget

ISP Budget Overview 2015–2019

Communication and Outreach

ISP News Fall 2018, ISP News Spring 2019, Guidelines for CC Transfers, NSSE Recruitment Letter, Math and QL for Orientation Staff 2018, Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award Leaf Seligman, ISP Diagram, MCL Letter to ACTA, ISP Course Profile: Dance as a Way of Knowing, ISP Course Profile: Physics and Music, ISP Web Page Google Analytics

Faculty Workshops

New Directions in the ISP Spring 2017, Supporting Student Writers Spring 2017, Writing to Learn Spring 2017, Meaningful Writing Workshop Spring 2018

General Education Resources and Research

AACU Greater Expectations Report 2002, ACRL Framework for Information Literacy 2015, Anson and Moore The Question of Transfer 2017, ITW 101 Faculty Resources (Folder), KSC Academic and Cocurricular Plan Spring 2016, Elon Statement on Writing Transfer 2013, KSC Transfer Student Study Group 2017, AACU High Impact Practices 2013, Humanities and the Workforce 2018, Bass and Eynon Open and Integrative 2016, Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing 2011, Humanities and the Workforce 2018, Integrating STEM with Arts and Humanities 2016, Understanding and Assessing Intercultural Competence 2007, WPA Writing Outcomes Statement 2014

Program Review Data Fall 2018

ISP Program Review 2019

Program Review Data for ISP, KSC Program Review Handbook 2019–20

ISPC Meeting Minutes

ISPC Senate Charge (AY 2017–2018), ISPC Agenda and Goals (AY 2016–2017), ISPC Meeting Minutes 2016-17 (folder), ISPC Meeting Minutes 2017-18 (folder), ISPC Meeting Minutes 2018-19 (folder), ISPC Membership and Charge

Policy and Guidelines

ISP Policies (Revised) Spring 2017, Interdisciplinary Course Guidelines 2018–2019, ISP Requirements Program Change 2017, Guidelines for ISP Course Substitutions and Waivers, QL Core Principles and Practices 2017, ITW Core Principles and Practices

Program Administration

ISPC Director and Coordinator Terms and Job Descriptions, ISP Director Responsibilities, ISP Deliverables AY 2016-17 and 2017-18, ITW Coordinator Description and Materials 2017, ISPC Membership and Charge, ITW Coordinator Position Announcement

Program Proposals

External Proposals: Peace Corps Proposal (not funded), Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant 2017, Title III Strengthening Institutions Abstract, Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant Budget 2017

ISPC and Campus Proposals and Recommendations

1991 General Education Proposal, 1997 General Education Task Force Update, 2004 Keene Academic Plan, 2006 Integrative Studies Program Proposal, ISP Advisory Board Response to Task Force Report 2012, ISP Director Recommendations Fall 2013, Doreksi ISP Proposal (Minors) 2013, Co-Chair, Recommendations (Podlesny and Jennings) 2014, Provost Recommendations for ISP Spring 2015, ACP Focus on the First Year Spring 2016, ISPC Course Clusters Proposal Spring 2017, ISPC Staffing Proposal Spring 2017, ISP Teaching Fellows Proposal Fall 2018, Teaching Fellows Dear colleagues, ITW and CCI Seminar Proposal Fall 2018, ISP Pathways: Partners in Professional Learning, The Research & Writing Embedded Fellows & Faculty Fellows program, Liberal Arts Core Proposal Spring 2019

Senate Curriculum Proposals

ISP Program Redesign Proposal 2016, Proposed ISP Amendment Policy 2016, MATH 130 Course Proposal Form 2017, MATH 135 Course Proposal Form 2017, MATH 151 Course Proposal Form 2017, II 190 Course Proposal Form 2019

Sample Syllabi

IS PSYC 100-01 Intro to Ecopsychology, IA ART 105 Graphic Design Process , ITW 101 Exploring the Disability History Museum , IS POSC 110 Governing America, II EDUC 306 Women & Education , IH ENG 195 Dystopian Literature after *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, IH HGS 355 Religion and Violence , II ECON 310 Game Theory , II 310 Math The Evolution of Mathematics , II PSYC 350 When Harm Is Done, II MGT 305 Organizational Diversity

Students

Student Interviews, First Year Research & Writing Award 2018-2019, First Year Research & Writing Award 2018-2019, First Year Research & Writing Award Application Cover Sheet