

## **Mason Core Committee Meeting November 18, 2021**

**In Attendance:** Bethany Usher (co-chair), Laura Poms (co-chair), Lauren Cattaneo, Matt Cronin, Jane Hooper, Moses Hunsaker, Ben Steger, Debra Stroiney, Anne Verhoeven, Liz White, Courtney Wooten, Shun Ye, Gina Polychronopoulos (ex-officio), Shelley Reid (ex-officio), Krista Shires (coordinator)

**Guests:** Tory Sarro, Thomas Polk, Sheena Serselv, Sarah Squire, Christine Rosenfeld, Cortney Hughes-Rinker, Rosemary Zagari, Ted Kinnaman, Anajanette Trebing, Matthew Karush, Joan Bristol, Lance Schmeidler, Breonna Riddick, Elizabeth Demulder, Alison Landsberg, Ren Guerriero, William Gibson, Liz Bartles, Darren Troxler, Diana Keay, Amanda Ogisi, Jill Bowen, Kathleen Hoepf, Toni Garcia, Erin McSherry, Garry Sparks, John Turner, Kelly Dunne, Kelly Knight, Lisa Breglia, Michele Trejo, Troy Lowery, Catherine Gallagher, Jennifer Brielmaier

### **Agenda:**

#### **Announcements**

- Meeting management – the meetings are open to anyone from the GMU community that wishes to attend. You must have a GMU email account registered/set up for zoom to be able to access the meetings. Please note that while meetings are open, the committee will adhere to the agenda in order to be able to complete it in a timely manner. There will be a town hall with opportunities for feedback or questions related to the Mason Core.
- SACS- The SACSCOC Accreditation report has come back favorably and with overwhelmingly positive results. The [Accreditation results](#) are available on the [Provost's Office website](#).
- Websites- Information regarding the proposed enhancement of the Mason Core is available on the [Mason Core website](#) as well as the [Provost's website](#). This will be updated as more information is available and will include the task force list, town hall information, and a feedback form.
- ARIE Support – The university is currently looking to hire a faculty member to oversee the curriculum for a possible new course.

**Task Forces: updates from 3 existing task forces** (summary slides provided below)

- **Just Society**
- **Global**
- **Capstone**

**History** (summary slides provided below)

#### **Student Government Presentation**

- The Student Government presented a request for the inclusion of PSYC 100 to the Mason Core focused on trauma, well-being, and coping mechanisms

**Timeline review for Mason Core Enhancement**

- The Mason Core Committee shared a timeline from 2017-2021 highlighting the history of discussions around the structure and content of the Mason Core

**Course Proposals**

- BUS 210 (Quantitative Reasoning) : Approved

# Mason Core Committee

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NOVEMBER 18, 2021

The paradox of education is precisely this—that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.

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JAMES BALDWIN (1963)

# Agenda

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1. Announcements
  - Meeting management
  - SACS
  - Websites
  - ARIE Support
2. Task Forces: updates from 3 existing task forces
  - Just Society
  - Global
  - Capstone
3. History
4. Student Government Presentation
5. Timeline review for Mason Core Enhancement
6. Course Proposals
  - BUS 210 (Quantitative Reasoning)

# Expectations for Participants and Visitors

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Members of the Mason community are welcome to attend Mason Core meetings as observers.

During meetings, only members of the committee or scheduled guests are expected to participate in the meeting unless invited during a discussion period.

# Task Force: Capstone

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# Task Force: Capstone Report

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## **Justification**

The reason for the disparate categories of Capstone and Synthesis seems no longer necessary and can be quite confusing for faculty submitting courses. A review of several other institutes indicated that a single category is the common approach. Combining out categories into an overarching Culminating Experience still captures the intent of both Core categories and is inclusive of all disciplines.

## **Recommendations**

- Merge Capstone and Synthesis into one Mason Core category Culminating Experience.
- Allow LAUs to define the amount intra- and interdisciplinary skills required/involved/integrated in their zenith course.
- Grandfather all Synthesis and Capstone course into this new category.
- New courses in this category will be at the 400 level (at least 3 credits), ideally taken after 85 credits, and the capacity is limited to 30 students. (Note: Capstones were restricted to 4xx while Synthesis was allowed to be 3xx and 4xx.)



# Task Force: Capstone Report

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## **Proposed Definition: Culminating Experience (Zenith)**

The purpose of the culminating experience is to provide a high impact, culminating element of an undergraduate education, to develop a more comprehensive, and integrative understanding across the Mason undergraduate experience, and to utilize critical thinking skills. Culminating experience courses provide students opportunities to apply and communicate their knowledge and generally involve integrative, applied, and experiential projects. Students in a culminating experience course are to be assessed using a set of identified learning outcomes.

## **Proposed LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Compose (create?) appropriate and effective communications in field-appropriate modalities. Communicate effectively and with awareness of audience, purpose, and context in modalities appropriate to the field (e.g., written, oral, visual, material, embodied, multimodal )
- Integrate knowledge and skills acquired from the Mason undergraduate experience, including Mason Core.
- Apply appropriate discipline/field/profession-specific competencies to an authentic problem or situation beyond the traditional classroom making connections from coursework in their program. Choose one of the following:
  - Demonstrate mastery within the field of study.
  - Apply creative critical thinking toward a solution.

# Task Force: Global + Report

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THE WORKING GROUPS DISCUSSED PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS. THEIR OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE SHARED WHEN THE REPORT IS COMPLETE

# Task Force: Just Society Report

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THE WORKING GROUPS DISCUSSED PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS. THEIR OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE SHARED WHEN THE REPORT IS COMPLETE

# Western Civilization/World History Update

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# WC/WH Update: Jane Hooper

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## ~~WESTERN CIVILIZATION~~/WORLD HISTORY

**Learning Outcomes:** Courses must meet at least three of the five following outcomes.

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of ~~Western civilization or~~ world history.
2. Demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in ~~Western civilization or~~ world history.
3. Identify, evaluate, and appropriately cite online and print resources.
4. Develop multiple historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, music) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.
5. Communicate effectively— through speech, writing, and use of digital media—their understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the history of ~~Western civilization or~~ the world.

# WC/WH Update: Jane Hooper

Department	Course Number	Course Title
HIST	<u>HIST 100</u>	<del>History of Western Civilization</del>
HIST	<u>HIST 125</u>	Introduction to World History

**Required:** One approved course

## Justification:

Currently most students take HIST 100 or HIST 125 to fulfill their general education requirement. The teaching and pedagogies of HIST 100 and 125 have become more aligned and should be merged into a single HIST 125 class that will focus on global perspectives of the past. Through the study of global history, students will gain an understanding of how modern systems of political, economic, and social meaning developed. By focusing on the diverse historical experiences that reflect the diverse backgrounds of Mason students, students will be able to see how the histories of their families and communities fit within, and contribute to, the larger story of the history of the modern world.

# Student Government Presentation

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# Timeline for developing Mason Core Enhancements

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# History of Mason Core Discussions

MC Teams attend AAC&U General Education and Assessment Institutes

2017-2018

2018-2019

2019-2020

2020-2021

2020-2021

Coronavirus pandemic

Student advocacy for diversity emphasis in Mason Core

Mason Core Formal Assessment (all categories)

Mason Core Enhancements

Mason Core  
Conversations

Diversity/Well-Being/ARIE Course working group and pilots

Anti-Racism and Inclusive  
Excellence Task Force

Mason Internationalization  
Collaborative, Curriculum  
Committee

President Cabrera's 2018  
Annual Goal: "In collaboration  
with the faculty, develop a  
foundational course for all  
undergraduate students which  
reflects the university's values  
and commitment to diversity,  
inclusion and wellbeing"

# Timeline and Process

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- ☒ June 2021: Team from Mason Core Committee participates in the AAC&U Institute on General Education and Assessment to brainstorm potential Mason Core updates and enhancements, and shares the results in a workshop with committee members for feedback.
- ☒ September 2021: Mason Core Committee forms Task Forces to create proposals for updates in three areas: Just Society, Global, and Capstone.
- ☒ November 2021: Task Forces submit proposals to the Mason Core Committee for consideration.
- ☐ December 2021: Mason Core Committee to create a draft plan or plans for potential enhancements to the Mason Core and share with the university community via this website, the Mason Core newsletter, the Provost newsletter, and social media.
- ☐ December 2021-January 2022: Feedback accepted via website form, and in a digital townhall, and in meetings with interested groups. January 20 is tentative date for digital Town Hall. *Please email [MasonCor@gmu.edu](mailto:MasonCor@gmu.edu) to inquire about scheduling a visit with your team.*
- ☐ February-March 2022: Mason Core committee uses feedback to update Mason Core requirements proposal and create final recommended plan.
- ☐ March-April 2022: Faculty Senate considers updates to the Mason Core requirements.

# Mason Core Course Proposal Review

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# Mason Core Proposal

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Category	Title
<b>Quantitative Reasoning</b>	<u>BUS 210: Business Analytics I</u>