University Curriculum Philosophy, Principles and Framework

Operational Definitions

Revised January 25, 2013

Curriculum – The Davenport University curriculum is a holistic degree program of learning that includes specified outcomes, academic and career-oriented subject matter and innovative processes facilitated through experiences that cultivate an appreciation of life-long learning and result in measurable student growth in knowledge and skills.

Profession Focused Curriculum – The curriculum philosophy adopted by Davenport University is to provide students an opportunity to begin studies in their major in their first year at DU.

Program -- An intentional set of structured experiences a student engages in while at Davenport University. A program may be curricular such as majors or minors; pre-curricular such as the transition program; or co-curricular such as a sports program or a combination.

Degrees – Davenport University awards degrees based on the definitions of each degree level as provided by the State of Michigan1. Davenport University awards three degrees: associate, bachelor and master.

1 Source: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Office of Postsecondary Services, Policies and Procedures on the Establishment and Approval of Nonpublic Colleges and Universities in Michigan, Appendix A page, October 2003.

(1) Master’s degree--shall be granted only after the successful completion of the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree and subsequent completion of at least 30 semester hours of graduate level credit.

(2) Bachelor’s degree--shall be granted only after the successful completion of at least 120 semester hours of collegiate level credit. Thirty semester hours (two minors of 15 semester hours each) shall be in general education. If, however, the degree to be granted is a Bachelor of Arts degree, than 60 semester hours must be in general
education which shall consist of at least one major (24 semester hours) and one minor (15 semester hours) in general education.

(3) **Associate degree**—shall be granted only after the successful completion of at least 60 semester hours of collegiate level credit of which 15 semesters hours shall be in general education. If, however, the degree to be granted is an Associate of Arts degree, then 30 semester hours must be in general education.

**Diploma Program** – A set of general education and professional / vocational undergraduate students that prepares students for a particular career. A diploma will have a minimum of 30 credit hours.

**Certificate** – A certificate certifies that the student has successfully completed a specific set of credit bearing courses with a professional focus and who has reached a specific standard of knowledge.

**Post-Baccalaureate Certificate** – The student must have completed a baccalaureate degree to pursue a post-baccalaureate certificate.

**Post-Graduate Certificate** – The student must have completed a graduate degree pursuing a post-graduate certificate.

**Major** – A set of courses that provide students with an understanding of a particular discipline. A major generally consists of a set number of required courses with a choice of several other specified courses within the discipline. A major will have a minimum of 24 credit hours and a maximum of TBD credit hours.

**Specialty** – A specialty is a set of courses designed to provide students with enhanced knowledge in a specific area within their major. “All Specialty classes are considered part of the major and will be included in the calculation of the major GPA for graduation requirements.” UG Catalog 2010-2011, page 82. Specialties are not available or required in all degrees.

**Minor** – A set of courses outside of the major designed to provide students with knowledge of a discipline outside the student’s major. Minors are not required but optional. A minor be a will have a minimum of 15 credit hours and cannot include more than seven courses.

**Course substitute** – A course with enough similar content that one course could substitute for another as a required course in a for credit program of study.

**Course equivalent** – These are two courses which are the same. The learning outcomes are close enough to be considered equivalent.

**Electives** – courses for credit that a student may choose to take as a part of their degree but are not required topics for the degree.

**Foundations of Business / Foundations of Health Professions / Foundations of Technology & Foundations of Mathematics and Science.** These are the foundational level courses within each school. These provide the foundational level knowledge necessary for success in the disciplinary major.
Foundations of Excellence – This is the term Davenport University adopted for General Education in 2003-2004 and continued to use through the 2010-2011 academic year.

Foundations of Learning – This is the term Davenport University used for its ‘pre-college’ courses in English and Math during the years 2003-2004 through 2010-2011. Beginning in 2011 these courses will be folded into the “Transitions Program.” All students were required to take these courses unless their skills level was such that they placed out of them based on ACT, SAT, or placement scores. These courses are pass / fail and do not count toward a degree program. To enable students to begin taking courses that would apply to their degree Du determined a list of courses that could be taken while getting their English and Math skills at college ready. In 2010-2011 there were 17 courses they could take.

Experiential Learning – “Personal experience outside of the classroom, as an integrated part of credit-bearing courses, that adds value to the individual’s educational objectives and development through practical application of program and course outcomes and the process of reflection.”

Credit-bearing experiential learning possibilities at Davenport include:

- Internships -- a structured work-based learning experience, within an approved host organization, for which a student earns academic credit. This experience may be paid or unpaid, based on the program.

- Practicums and Nursing clinical experiences--A practicum is a course or student exercise involving practical experience in a work setting (whether paid or unpaid) as well as theoretical study, including a supervised experience as part of professional pre-service education.

- A Clinical entails the practice of learned didactic and experiential skills, most frequently in health care and legal, under the supervision of a credentialed practitioner.

- Academic service-learning: direct or indirect service with non-profit or government organizations that meets identified community needs. Outcomes of service learning are further understanding of course or disciplinary content and an enhanced appreciation of civic responsibility.

- Course-embedded projects with business and industry: business plans and proposals, job shadowing experiences, field trips, interviews with professionals, and other projects

- Study Abroad experiences – ‘courses’ that place in a country or countries outside a student’s home country

Interdisciplinary Degrees – Required courses for a degree are from two or more schools; they are ‘co-owned’ by schools.

Transition Program – This is a program to aid prospective and new students to develop their pre-college academic requirements and to help them transition to the demands of an undergraduate university education.

Internationalization is the conscious and intentional effort to integrate international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the various components of the university life including the academic curriculum, the population of international students and scholars, development opportunities for faculty and staff, and student activities. Internationalization is intended to produce outcomes of enhanced global competencies for the academic community and to prepare graduates for successful engagement in a globally interconnected world.
Study abroad is a credit-generating academic program that takes place in a country or countries outside of a student’s home country. It includes both academic coursework and experiences designed to offer a global dimension to an academic discipline, and to actively engage participants with other countries and their cultures beyond what is possible at a student’s home campus. Study abroad intends to produce outcomes of enhanced global competencies for all participants.

Diversity values people and concepts from a wide range of backgrounds. It includes scholarly content that represents those from traditionally marginalized groups including, but not limited to, groups defined by boundaries of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, national origin, physical ability, age, religious affiliation and veteran status.

Existing DU Policies Which Affect Our Curriculum

Application of Previously Earned Credit:

It is the policy of Davenport University to acknowledge academic credits previously earned through Davenport University or one of its antecedents and to integrate that credit as fully as possible into a new degree program. Davenport University will assist students in choosing a program that will maximize the application of their earned academic credits. (Revised 3/20/2005, Implementation Fall 2005.)

- Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is an assessment process by which students can earn academic credit for the college-level knowledge and skills they can demonstrate through learning gained outside of the classroom in non-formal, education, work, and/or life experience settings.
- Davenport University examples of CPL:
  - Design of a portfolio demonstrating learning related to a specific course or competencies/outcomes in a Davenport University program
  - Passing of a CLEP/DSST or other nationally recognized exam, certification exam, or a DU Competency/Challenge exam
  - Review of professional certifications, licenses, or trainings for course credit

Definitions of ‘Outside” Bodies Which Affect Our Curriculum

Higher Learning Commission – The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is an independent corporation and one of two commission members of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), which is one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The Higher Learning Commission accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region.

Higher Learning Commission’s Statement on General Education:

Understanding and appreciating diverse cultures, mastering multiple modes of inquiry, effectively analyzing and communicating information, and recognizing the importance of creativity and values to the human spirit not only allow people to live richer lives but also are a foundation for most careers and for the informed exercise of local, national, and international citizenship. The Commission expects organizations of higher learning to address these important ends, and has embedded this expectation in its Criteria for Accreditation.

...As understood by the Commission general education is intended to impart common knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and to develop in them the skills and attitudes that an organization’s faculty believe every educated person should possess. From an organization’s general education, a student...
acquires a breadth of knowledge in the areas and proficiency in the skills that the organization identifies as hallmarks of being college educated. Moreover, effective general education helps students gain competence in the exercise of independent intellectual inquiry and also stimulates their examination and understanding of personal, social, and civic values.

Regardless of how a higher learning institution frames the general education necessary to fulfill its mission and goals, it clearly and publicly articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of the general education it provides for its students. It also shows its commitment to the centrality of general education by including an appropriate component of general education in all undergraduate programs of substantial length, whether they lead to certificates, diplomas, or degrees. Moreover, the organization’s faculty exercises oversight for general education and, working with the administration, regularly assesses its effectiveness against the organization’s stated goals for student learning.

(HLC’s Commission Statement on General Education, February 2003.)

MACRAO – “MACRAO is the acronym for the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. The purpose of this association is to provide for the exchange of information concerning items of interest to its members and to contribute to the advancement of education in Michigan.” (Definition from the MACRAO Transfer Agreement pamphlet, 2007.)

MACRAO Transfer Agreement – “The MACRAO Transfer Agreement is designed to facilitate transfer from community colleges to baccalaureate colleges and university. It provides for transferability of up to 30 semester credits to meet many (and in some cases all) of the General Education Requirements at participating Michigan four-year colleges and universities.” (Definition from the MACRAO Transfer Agreement pamphlet, 2007.)

MACRAO Transfer Agreement Requirements – “A minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework must be taken at one of Michigan’s participating community colleges. The courses needed to satisfy the MACRAO requirements are as follows:

- English Composition ....6 credit hours
- Science and Math .........8 credit hours. Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas. At least one science course must include a laboratory.”
- Social Science ...............8 credit hours. Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas.
- Humanities....................8 credit hours. Courses must be taken from a minimum of two subject areas.

Global competencies: A document produced by the American Council on Education (ACE) identifies the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to work and live productively in an internationally connected world as Global Competencies. Examples include the following:

- Knowledge of global issues
- Knowledge of different cultures
- Understanding of own culture in a global and comparative context
- Ability to use a foreign language
- Interpreting issues from more than one perspective
- Ability to adapt behavior
- Acceptance of difference and tolerance of cultural ambiguity
- Willingness to engage in diverse cultural situations