

The Sophia Program in Liberal Learning: Saint Mary's College

Curriculum Guide 3.0

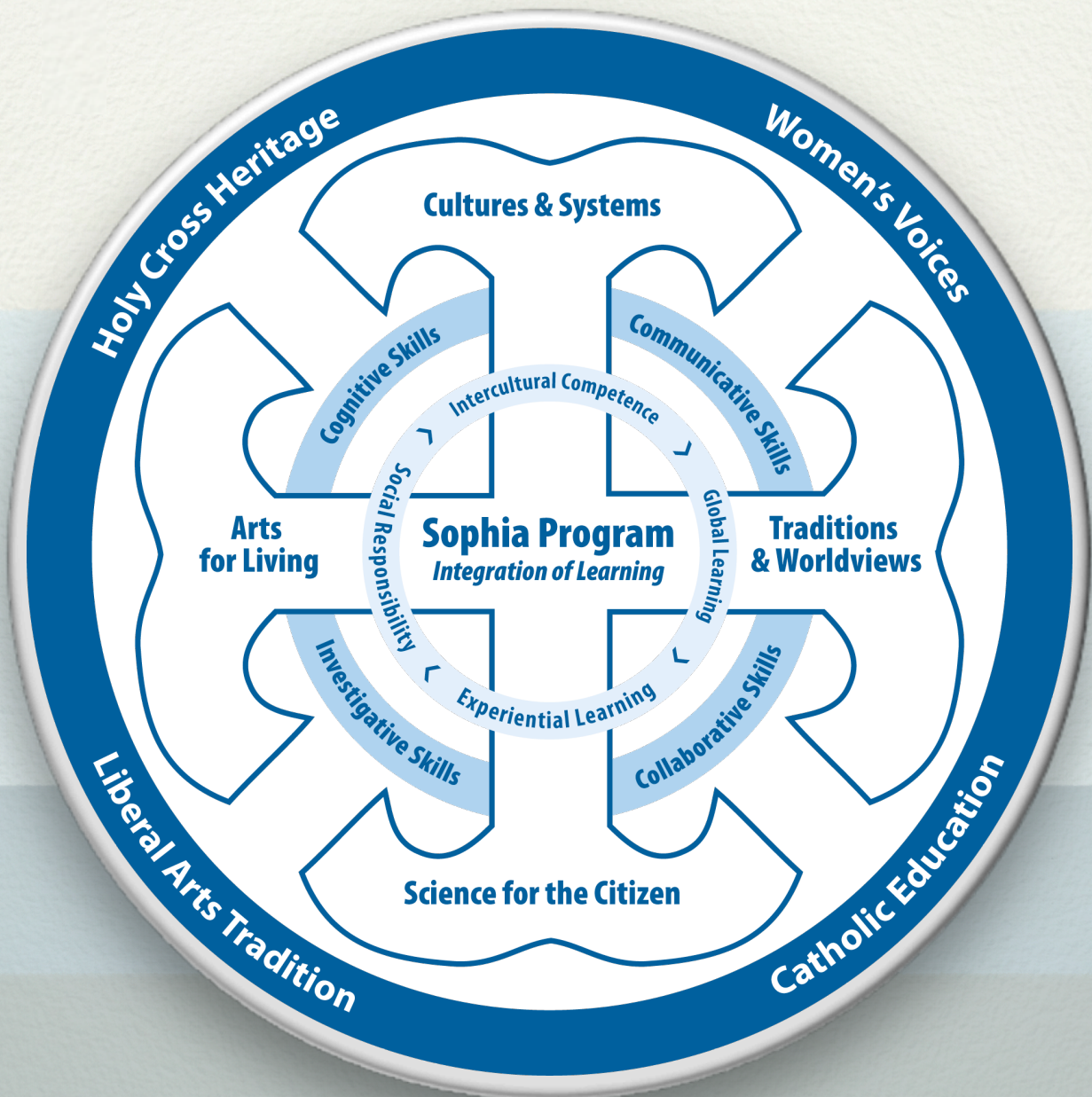


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I. The Context for Innovation

In various fits, stops, and starts, Saint Mary's College has been trying to reform its General Education curriculum for the better part of the past twenty years. The current program has, with very minor modifications along the way, served students and faculty for almost four decades. While many attempts were made to change this curriculum, none has progressed as far as the new program presented in this Curriculum Guide. The leadership of a new President, who made general education reform a priority from her first days on campus, has been pivotal in moving forward with the present curricular revision. On November 2, 2005, President Carol Mooney met with the College's Faculty Assembly to propose a new standing General Education Committee under the Academic Affairs Council, and to outline a process for the eventual reform of the General Education curriculum.

The Ad Hoc Committee on General Education began its work the following fall (2006) under the guidance of Interim Vice-President and Dean of Faculty, Professor Jill Vihtelic, and its new Associate Dean of Faculty, Dr. Joseph Incandela. In August of 2007, President Mooney asked that the Ad Hoc Committee report directly to the new Senior Vice President and Dean of Faculty, Dr. Patricia Fleming. While administrative leadership is needed to ensure effective design and successful implementation of a new general education curriculum, revising such a crucially important aspect of the education we offer requires the generous efforts of many members of our community. Foremost is the faculty. Thanks to the involvement of approximately a third of full-time faculty (drawn from virtually every academic department and program on campus) who served on committees, design teams, or advisory panels; scores of others who came one or more times to all-day development workshops, GenEd lunches, and meetings with departments and programs; as well as many articulate and committed members of the student body who contributed their ideas, their energy, and in many cases even the wording found in the new requirements; the revision of the General Education curriculum is nearing completion almost three and a half years since President Mooney's charge established the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education.

During that committee's first year (AY 06-07), conversations centered around various conceptual schemes that might define a new curriculum. This approach was succeeded in the second year (AY 07-08) by one that focused first on the learning we intend that our students achieve during the four years they are enrolled at Saint Mary's College. From that point on, learning outcomes have formed the basis of our curricular revision. That means that we seek to be very explicit about what knowledge, skills, and dispositions a student should gain through the courses and experiences comprising the Sophia Program. The creative arrangement of learning outcomes into a curriculum shows how the particular elements of a Saint Mary's education follow from the College's Mission Statement. Such a curriculum, based upon learning outcomes derived from the Mission Statement, gives students a greater sense of the purpose of each requirement through clear articulation of its place in the whole and makes their education more transparent and intentional through advance notice of what they should expect to gain from it.

Based upon the College's Mission Statement, we put forward three main sets of learning outcomes:

- ① **Knowledge Acquisition & Integration of Learning**
- ② **Cognitive & Communicative Skills**
- ③ **Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility**

We distinguish between broad college-wide outcomes and those specific learning outcomes included in a general education curriculum. These are respectively referred to as "liberal learning outcomes" and "sub-outcomes." Each liberal learning outcome has particular sub-outcomes that show how the higher-level outcome will be realized in the general education curriculum. Our design, then, shows how each requirement is fulfilled and what the rules are for how each will tracked by the College in the student's record. Among the newer elements of what we propose are the following:

- ❖ A Critical Thinking Seminar for first-year students which will be related to the Cross Currents Program

- ❖ A common experience for first-year students featuring lectures, performances, or shows; also related to Cross Currents
- ❖ A professional arts requirement, which includes the professional disciplines in the Sophia Program for the first time ever
- ❖ A learning outcome associated with the creative and performing arts, resulting in the requirement that all students engage in some direct creative activity
- ❖ Learning outcomes in the sciences requiring students to apply scientific knowledge to critical issues facing them as citizens, resulting in course content that modifies our current general education requirement in both the social and natural sciences
- ❖ Skills for the 21st century in information literacy, technological literacy, and media literacy
- ❖ A set of learning outcomes focused on social responsibility that emphasizes our identity as a Holy Cross institution under the sponsorship and charism of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, resulting in:
 - Requirements for the first time in experiential learning
 - The introduction of requirements in global learning
- ❖ New learning outcomes and concomitant requirements in encountering and reflecting upon diversity
- ❖ A more uniform General Education Curriculum across all degrees at the College
- ❖ Learning outcomes achieved through courses or experiences where Women's Voices are highlighted and diffused throughout the curriculum in a way that is unique among all our Women's College and Women's Catholic College Peers

While the design we have created introduces many new elements into general education, it is also guided by the long-established principle that general education conveys breadth of learning while the student's major conveys depth. We continue to see these as complementary and equally necessary in a Saint Mary's graduate. The introduction of learning outcomes into our program, though, allows for a more permeable border between these two components of the education we offer. In this way, it also allows credit-heavy majors to participate more in the Sophia Program than they previously have.

Throughout the revision process, we returned to the notion of “finitude” as marking the boundaries of possible innovation. We have tried to be both realistic about our resources—human and material—and creative in our conception of a general education for the twenty-first century at Saint Mary’s. Nearing the end of this process, we have done far more than merely rearrange the furniture in the existing Sophia Program. Rather, we believe we have renovated an educational space that will be cleaner, more functional, and more exciting for both students and faculty to inhabit.



II. Foundations for Revision

A. Learning Outcomes: What they are & why they help

Nothing will have a greater effect on the success of the new General Education curriculum than the work done with learning outcomes. General and specific learning outcomes in large part determine the shape of the program, its rules and requirements, its governance, and its ability to be assessed. Recommendation 1 (“Design a New General Education Program”) of Goal #1 (“Educational Excellence Equal to that of the Best Colleges in the Country”) of the Saint Mary’s Strategic Plan, *The Path to Leadership 2012*, states this:

Our first steps are to review and design an improved General Education Program. The process will involve wide discussion and dissemination within the College community of three elements:

1. the learning goals and outcomes of the liberal education we seek to provide our students in their four years with us;
2. the specific learning outcomes of the General Education Curriculum which will help us realize those four-year goals; and
3. the schematics for and requirements of the General Education Curriculum.

By “learning outcomes,” we mean the effect of instruction in the student, or “the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students have attained as a result of their involvement in a particular set of educational experiences.” We contrast this term with course *goals* or *objectives*, which exhibit the hopes or intentions of the instructor in her or his teaching, rather than the achievement of those hopes or intentions in the student. None of these terms should replace the other(s), and all should find homes on syllabi and within course planning. Their directionality is indeed complementary: learning goals are directed from instructor to student; learning outcomes are achieved by (and within) the student in response.

We consider the use of learning outcomes beneficial to both faculty teaching and student learning. First and perhaps most importantly, learning outcomes give us a college-wide common vocabulary with which to discuss student learning. As such, learning outcomes turn a collection of courses into a *program*. In so doing, this language (a) encourages migration out of disciplinary silos, (b) opens up an avenue for more efficient governance and course certification, and (c) helps with assessing how well the program is doing what it claims to do, which in turn will assist us in improving what we need to do better. We also make our curriculum more transparent and understandable both for faculty and for students. For faculty, this yields benefits in course design and planning. For students, it makes learning both more intentional (in knowing where a particular educational experience is supposed to take them, they can notice more along the way) and more integrated (they can see both before and during their education how each part of the curriculum assembles into a larger whole).

The college-wide learning outcomes listed below were derived first and foremost from the College's Mission Statement and refined through the "wide discussion" mentioned in the Strategic Plan and included in President Mooney's charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education. These discussions involved conversations with departments and interdisciplinary programs, sessions at faculty development days, and correspondence of various sorts and media. Their aim was to produce a succinct statement of the most basic components of a Saint Mary's education within the context of our identity as a Catholic college for women sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

B. Liberal Learning Outcomes

Saint Mary's College offers a liberal education committed to promoting a life of intellectual vigor, shaped by the distinctive tradition of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. This tradition promotes learning that encourages the growth of the whole person and the assumption of social responsibility. A Saint Mary's education, therefore, guides women to develop a strong sense of personal integrity, the capacity for dialogue with others, the ability to reflect on intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic traditions that shape our world, and a readiness for action in a global community. Saint Mary's is a place where women acquire the skills and knowledge to contribute confidently and creatively to the common good in a rapidly changing world. The college-wide learning outcomes for all students are as follows:

① Knowledge Acquisition & Integration of Learning

Catholic education in the liberal arts tradition values knowledge for its own sake and affirms the interconnectedness of all learning. Therefore...

- A Saint Mary's student exhibits sound knowledge of the formation of human identities, the development and functioning of diverse cultures and social groupings, the practice of creative artistry, the multi-faceted nature of religion and the Catholic tradition, the complexity of fundamental philosophical questions, and the intricate workings of the natural world.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates the ability to look at issues from multiple perspectives, recognizing the effect that differences in areas such as gender, religion, values, culture and privilege can have on the ways that people interpret and act in the world; and she makes connections across disparate settings and areas of study.

② Cognitive & Communicative Skills

As a women's college, Saint Mary's emphasizes the value of women's voices and their distinctive contribution to intellectual life. Therefore...

- A Saint Mary's student masters a broad set of sophisticated intellectual skills, including critical thinking, careful interpretation of complex texts and artifacts, accurate evaluation of data, investigative problem solving, quantitative reasoning, historical analysis, as well as technological, media, and information literacy. She reflects analytically on her experience as a woman, on the contributions of women's voices, and on constructions of gender.
- A Saint Mary's student communicates her ideas, insights, thought processes, and conclusions with accuracy, competence, and style in various media and contexts.

③ Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility

Furthermore, as a Catholic, women's college, Saint Mary's fosters respect and compassion for all people and honors leadership that improves the human community. Therefore...

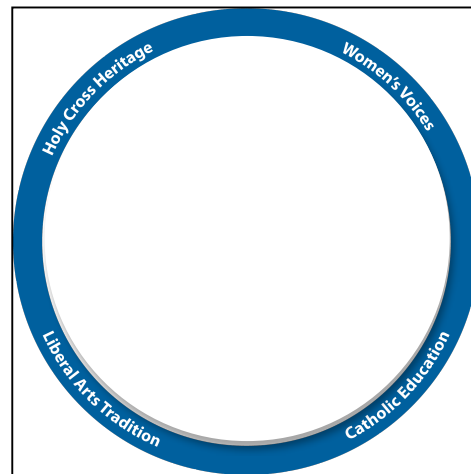
- A Saint Mary's student develops reflective and collaborative skills that enable her to learn from and participate in dialogue with diverse people and cultures. She does this by attaining competence in another language and by study and experience that reveal both cultural differences and the connections joining people in a global society.
- In keeping with the mission of the Sisters of the Holy Cross and their stance in solidarity with the poor and powerless, a Saint Mary's student will evaluate social conditions, discern human needs, and be able to respond as an agent of change.

C. The Sophia Program Diagram

These three sets of college-wide liberal learning outcomes form the basis of the Sophia Program diagram found on the cover of this *Curriculum Guide*. Understanding the composition of this diagram and what it represents is foundational for grasping what this new curriculum tries to achieve.

We begin with the four main aspects or values of a Saint Mary's education, which effectively surround all that we do at the College. These are depicted in the outer ring as Women's Voices, Catholic Education, Liberal Arts Tradition, and Holy Cross Heritage.

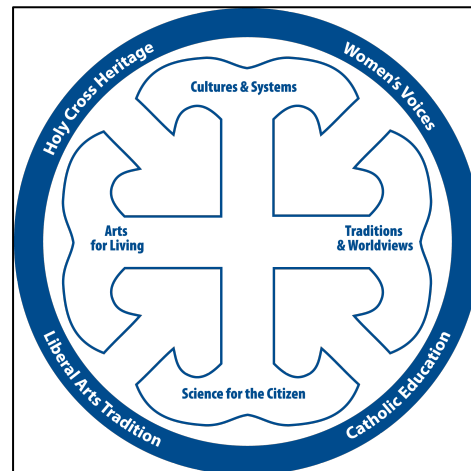
Figure 1



LO1

The French cross within the outer circle groups all knowledge outcomes under four headings within the Knowledge Outcomes of Learning Outcome 1: "Cultures & Systems," "Traditions & Worldviews," "Science for the Citizen," and "Arts for Living." Each of these has two - four areas underneath it that represent a category of learning outcomes. There are a total of 15 courses required around the arms of the cross. Each requirement has particular outcomes assigned to it (see pp. 18-22).

Figure 2



The introduction in the center of the design of an area known as “The Crossing” is meant to signify integration of learning across and through the middle of the diagram. Together with the knowledge outcomes corresponding to the course areas in the arms of the cross, the integration outcomes comprise the first main set of liberal learning outcomes entitled “Knowledge Acquisition & Integration of Learning.”

Figure 3

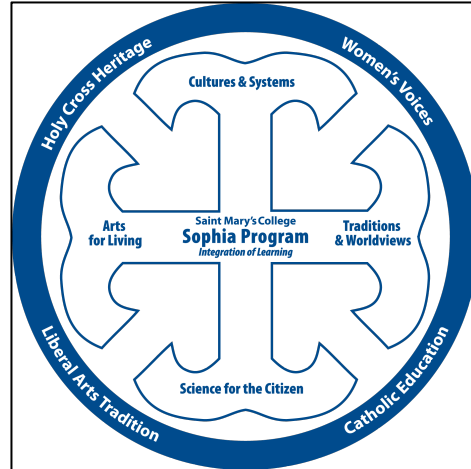


Figure 4

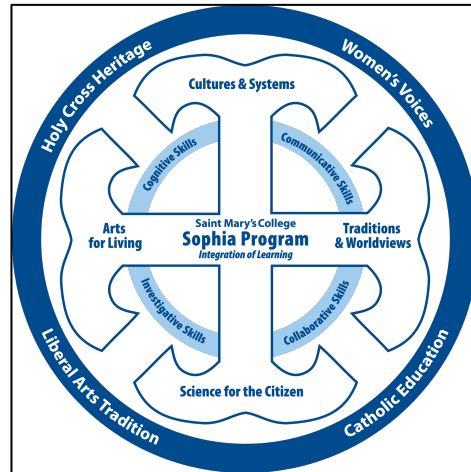
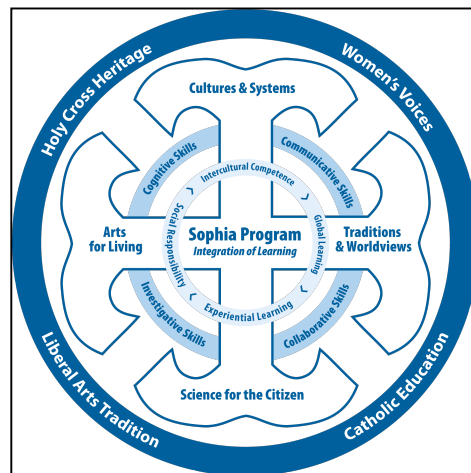


Figure 5



LO2

The Cognitive & Communicative skills outcomes are depicted in blue circular arcs linking the arms of the cross. These skills outcomes have their own sub-outcomes listed on pp. 28-31 of this *Guide*. Together, they comprise the second main set of liberal learning outcomes.

LO3

Finally, the outcomes for Social Responsibility & Intercultural Competence particularly relate to our Holy Cross heritage. These are contained in a circle at the center of the design to depict the centrality of the Holy Cross educational tradition for the Saint Mary’s Sophia Program. The sub-outcomes for LO3 appear on pp. 39-40.

If this diagram is now rotated and placed on its side, it becomes easier to see how the knowledge outcomes associated with LO1 form the footprint for this general education curriculum. Everything else (the integrative learning outcomes of LO1; the skills outcomes of LO2, including the requirements in Women’s Voices described below in section III.B.4; and the LO3 outcomes in Social Responsibility & Intercultural Competence) sits on top of these outcomes. This gives this particular general education program both three-dimensionality and texture.

FIGURE 6



In a recent book, philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre says that colleges and universities are “not only institutions within which different academic disciplines are pursued and taught, but also institutions that by their structure exhibit some view of how the different disciplines are related, of what it is in which the unity of knowledge and understanding consists.” The diagram explained above and used throughout this *Guide* depicts not only the components of a Saint Mary’s general education, but especially how we understand the relationship of what is taught and learned in light of the educational values we hold most dear.

D. Building on Liberal Learning Outcomes

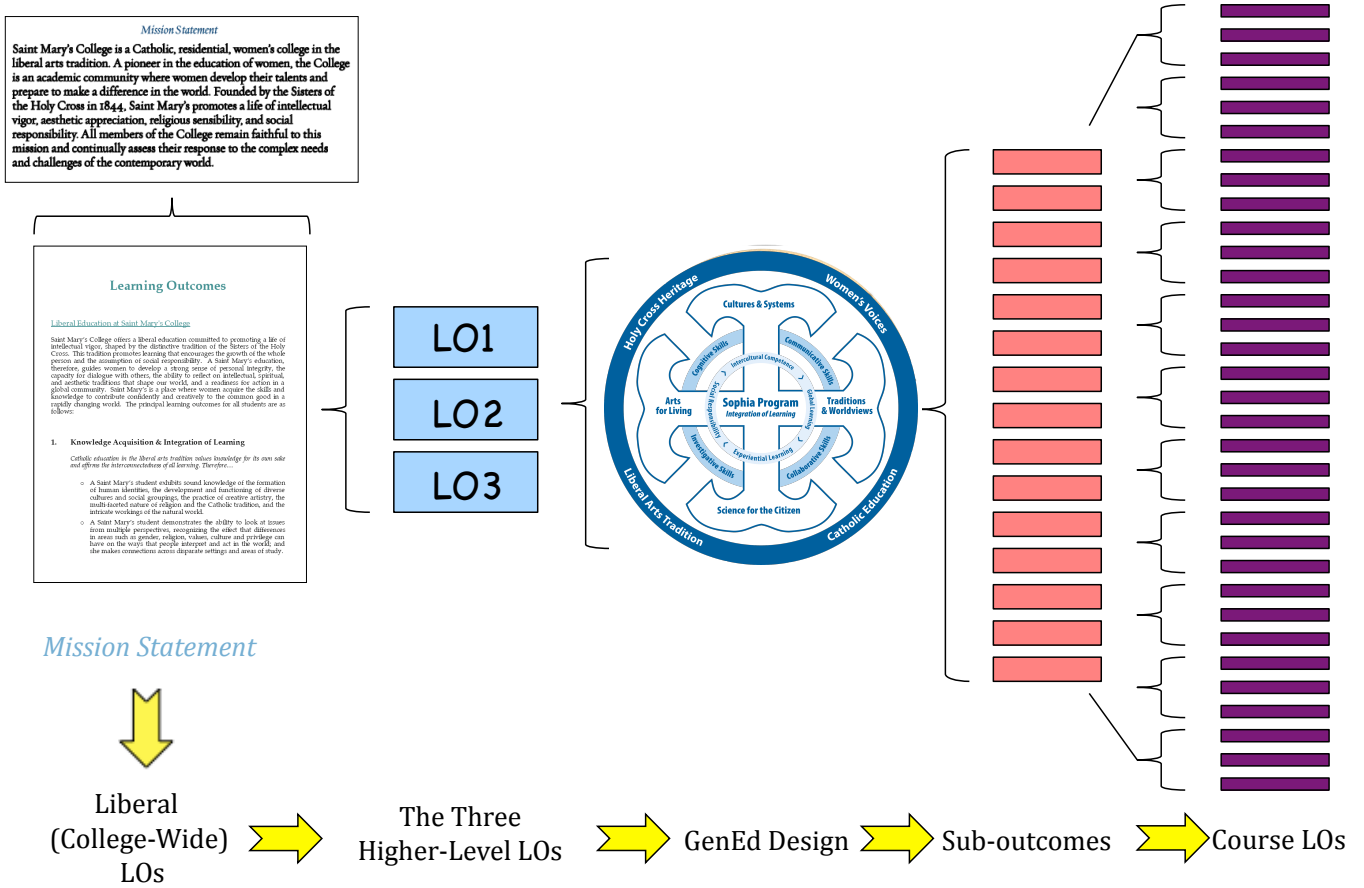
As said above, a Holy Cross education centers on educating the whole person. This notion is typically derived from Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau's oft-quoted statement from Circular Letter 36 that "the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart." One helpful way to parse this idea identifies the three key aspects of a Holy Cross pedagogy as *information*, *formation*, and *transformation*. We see a fortuitous resonance between these concepts and the liberal learning outcomes stated above, which leaves us confident that the curriculum we outline here is faithful to the tradition of the sponsoring congregation.

- ❖ Learning Outcome 1 (Knowledge) → **Information**
- ❖ Learning Outcome 2 (Skills) → **Formation**
- ❖ Learning Outcome 3 (Social Responsibility) → **Transformation**

But how do we translate the College's Mission Statement and these more general learning outcomes into a specific general education curriculum? Figure 7 on the next page both depicts the derivation of the learning outcomes from the College's Mission Statement and shows how the liberal (or higher-level) learning outcomes become progressively more refined in the sub-outcomes that guided us in the creation of the Sophia Program and finally in individual course outcomes. In this way, a programmatic structure is created that organizes a curriculum and grounds more particular learning outcomes within the larger contexts that produced them.

These sub-outcomes define the scope of the Sophia Program. Their relevance for a Saint Mary's education extends beyond the general education curriculum and should be addressed by major and minor programs in a variety of ways. In some cases the Sophia Program makes this relevance explicit by requiring majors to address certain outcomes, but this in no way exhausts the opportunities for major and minor programs to engage with these outcomes.

FIGURE 7



III. The General Education Curriculum

General education and the student's major are vital, complementary parts of a student's preparation for an active and meaningful life. The Sophia Program seeks to develop the breadth of knowledge and intellectual flexibility students need to apply their expertise appropriately inside and outside the classroom, foster the intellectual coherence enabling students to engage constructively with a diverse world, and encourage students to live intellectually active, socially responsible lives characterized by a lifelong love of learning. The specific learning outcomes discussed in the following sections articulate the ways in which these goals are realized.

A. **LO1: Knowledge Acquisition & Integration of Learning**

1. Knowledge Acquisition

Of all the learning outcomes, those pertaining to knowledge are perhaps the most straightforward, so they provide the primary structure for the general education curriculum. The sub-outcomes for knowledge acquisition are divided among fifteen course areas: a student must take one course in each of these areas to achieve the knowledge outcomes. For a course to occupy one of the areas, it must address the outcomes that define that area. Learning outcomes addressing skills (LO2) and action in the world (LO3) that are closely related to a particular knowledge outcome are also included: each area, then, typically has three or four outcomes.

This General Education Curriculum design moves away from a pure distribution model of course requirements. It will no longer be enough for students to choose classes based upon a menu requiring X number of courses from Y department. That is not to say that many LO1 areas won't remain comfortably and reliably occupied by certain departments—they will. But it is to say that a deeper level of engagement with the curriculum and its rationale will be required for all students because of the move towards learning outcomes. This deeper level of engagement with the curriculum, as well as the

articulation of learning outcomes for the general education program, were both called for in the Strategic Plan: “Every faculty member and every student should be able to readily recite the reasons for the components of Saint Mary’s General Education and the integral way it achieves the liberal learning objectives of our students’ four-year Saint Mary’s educational experience.”

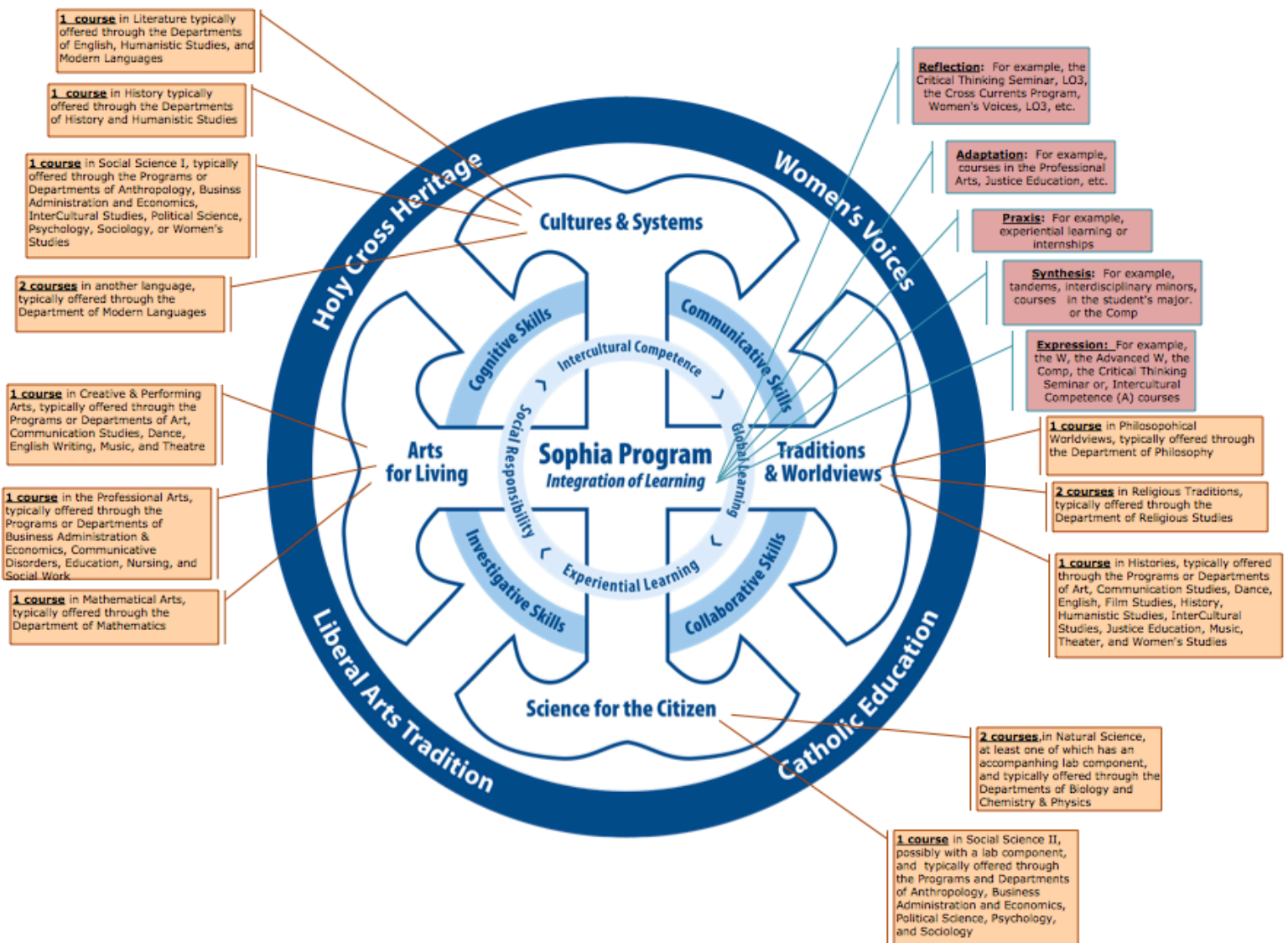
The role of the knowledge outcomes as the primary structural element of the new program is represented by the cross shape in the diagram that provides a visual representation of the whole program, which is displayed Figure 8 below. The knowledge we want our students to acquire is captured in four arms of the cross as **Arts for Living, Cultures & Systems, Traditions & Worldviews, and Science for the Citizen**:

FIGURE 8



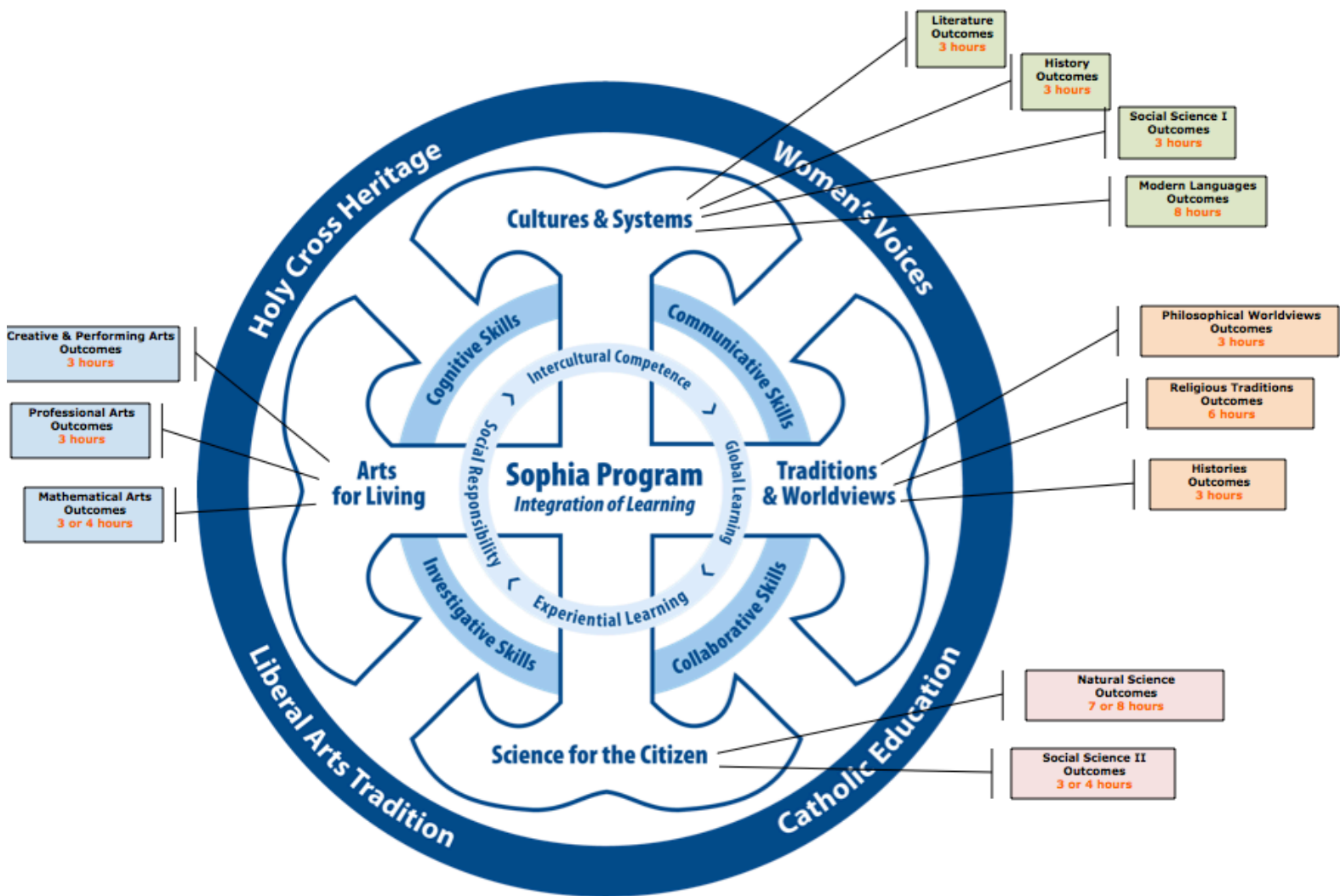
Each of these arms has two - four areas in it, and each of these areas has specific outcomes designated for it that further distinguish the learning to be acquired by our students in that area. For example, in the “**Arts for Living**” arm, we distinguish among outcomes related to the creative and performing arts, the professional arts, and the mathematical arts. Particular disciplines will contribute to these areas through offerings that fulfill the learning outcomes assigned to them. While many areas will indeed have fairly reliable occupants (see Figure 9 below), we hold open the possibility of novel partnerships based upon satisfaction of the requisite learning outcomes.

FIGURE 9



In the diagram below, distinctions in knowledge acquisition under each of the four main headings represent learning outcomes contained in fifteen courses totaling approximately fifty credit hours of coursework.

FIGURE 10



Rule:

Students will be expected to take a different course for each area in every arm of the cross. That is to say, there is no double-dipping of General Education requirements for the Knowledge Acquisition Outcomes in L01.

We distinguish *double-dipping* from *double-counting*. A course that addresses the learning outcomes of more than one requirement is said to double count. Students taking a course that double counts (but does not double dip) may choose which requirement they wish to fulfill with the credits earned from that course. *Double-dipping* describes a situation in which a student uses the credits earned from a double-counted course to fulfill more than one requirement simultaneously, such that fewer total credit hours are needed for the completion of the program. Neither double-dipping nor double-counting is allowed for courses within L01. L02 & L03 will have their own rules for both of these, which will be described later in this Guide.

Knowledge Acquisition Outcomes are organized by the arms of the cross and the course areas in which they will be fulfilled. These outcomes are listed below.

Arts for Living

Creative and Performing Arts

- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates a basic understanding of form, aesthetics, and/or theory in a creative or performing art.
- A Saint Mary's student practices a creative or performing art.
- A Saint Mary's student develops resources of creativity, experience, and perception, which enrich herself and her world.

Professional Arts

- A Saint Mary's student investigates issues of policy or systems through the lens of a professional practitioner.
- A Saint Mary's student applies knowledge of a profession in her decision making.

- A Saint Mary's student adapts learning from multiple academic disciplines to develop solutions for concrete real-world problems.

Mathematical Arts

- A Saint Mary's student formulates mathematical models using abstract and logical reasoning.
 - A Saint Mary's student uses and interprets mathematical models to analyze systems and patterns.
 - A Saint Mary's student uses mathematical language and concepts to phrase and answer questions pertaining to a variety of real-world contexts.
-

Cultures and Systems

Literature

- A Saint Mary's student applies knowledge of literary genres, terms, and/or theories to the interpretation of literary texts.
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes literary texts both as forms of cultural and artistic expression and as vehicles for enduring values.
- A Saint Mary's student recognizes how literary texts construct human identities.

History

- A Saint Mary's student identifies and understands salient developments in world or United States history.
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes the historical development of human cultures in their response to their physical, social, intellectual, and political environments and seeks explanations for those developments.
- A Saint Mary's student identifies and understands evidence of historical change from primary sources/records of the past and assesses historical interpretations in secondary sources.
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes how her assumptions about human identity have been influenced by her historical context, and how human identities have been constructed in history.

Modern Languages

- A Saint Mary's student communicates in a modern European language either at an advanced beginning or intermediate low level (depending upon her previous study), or at an appropriate level in another approved non-European or classical language.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates an understanding of the structure of this language by using the language with accuracy in speaking and writing.
- A Saint Mary's student identifies salient features of the geography, history, and culture of those that speak this language.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates intercultural understanding by recognizing and analyzing cultural misconceptions and the influence of her own cultural identity on her interactions with others.

Social Science I

- A Saint Mary's student identifies and explains social science concepts and theories about human behavior, systems, or cultures.
- A Saint Mary's student applies social science concepts and theories in her analysis of human behavior, systems, or cultures.
- A Saint Mary's student recognizes and explains effects of diversity and equity in specific areas such as class, race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and/or privilege.

Traditions and Worldviews

Philosophical Worldviews

- A Saint Mary's student identifies and understands significant features of and developments in philosophical traditions concerning the nature of knowledge, the nature of reality, and the nature of the good.
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes and compares philosophical views.
- A Saint Mary's student thinks philosophically about her interactions in the world.
- A Saint Mary's student raises questions on philosophical issues pertaining to the development of her own worldview.

Religious Traditions I

- A Saint Mary's student articulates an informed, broad understanding of the nature and complexities of religion and how religion interacts with other aspects of culture.
- A Saint Mary's student describes key elements in a religion (such as sacred texts, ritual, spirituality and prayer, religious language, moral code, view of human destiny or afterlife, explanation of human and natural evil, perspectives on gender), applies her understanding of these elements to specific religious traditions, and articulates commonalities and differences among religious perspectives.
- A Saint Mary's student engages perspectives that are new to her, both empathetically and critically, and engages in informed, civil, and open discourse about religious differences.
- A Saint Mary's student evaluates the meaning of religious claims made by others and, in response to those claims, reflects critically on her own religious perspectives.

Religious Traditions II

- A Saint Mary's student applies the broadened understanding of religion gained in the first course to a detailed examination of elements important to the Catholic Christian tradition (such as sacred or theological texts, ritual, spirituality and prayer, religious language, moral code, view of human destiny or afterlife, explanation of human and natural evil, perspectives on gender).
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes issues or questions that arise in relation to those elements.
- A Saint Mary's student engages perspectives that are new to her, both empathetically and critically, and engages in informed, civil, and open discourse about religious differences.
- A Saint Mary's student evaluates the meaning of theological claims and, in response to those claims, reflects critically on her own religious perspectives.

Histories

- A Saint Mary's student analyzes in depth historical developments of a particular aspect or issue in human culture, and/or its contemporary impact.
- A Saint Mary's student articulates the ways in which this development is affected by cultural factors such as gender, religion, values, and privilege.

Science for the Citizen

Natural Science

- A Saint Mary's student uses scientific methods to investigate questions appropriate to the natural sciences.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates specific knowledge of processes and principles underlying natural phenomena.
- A Saint Mary's student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates critical scientific issues and approaches pertaining to the issues that face her as a citizen.

Social Science II

- A Saint Mary's student utilizes scientific knowledge to evaluate claims about human behavior.
- A Saint Mary's student uses scientific methods to investigate questions appropriate to particular social sciences.
- A Saint Mary's student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates critical scientific issues and approaches pertaining to the issues that face her as a citizen.

2. Integration of Learning

Integration of learning is one of those educational goals that enjoys universal (or near-universal) commendation. It is regarded as essential to building skills for lifelong learning (since life does not come neatly bundled in 3- or 4-credit installments) and especially to navigating successfully the proliferating streams of information that mark life in the twenty-first century.

We specify five learning outcomes for integration of learning captured in the center of the cross diagram (see Figure 3 above) as:

- ❖ Reflection
- ❖ Adaptation
- ❖ Praxis
- ❖ Synthesis
- ❖ Expression

Addressing these outcomes, which are further specified below, will not require a student to take any additional credit hours beyond what she is would otherwise take to fulfill her other general education and major requirements. Integration of learning in its various aspects (reflection, adaptation, praxis, synthesis, and expression) will occur in conjunction with the rest of the student's education. We expect that for most students, synthesis will happen primarily through the major, and we will expect departments to describe the various ways in which this happens.

Integration of learning is not a spectator sport. Students themselves must bear the responsibility of integrating their own learning. We expect, for reasons mentioned above, that the proposed new program will encourage this to a point. The use of an Electronic Portfolio as a vehicle to achieve integration of learning is one approach adopted by many institutions. There is no shortage of good models for doing so. Electronic portfolios have been introduced at Saint Mary's College as a pilot project only for advising purposes through the Cross Currents program. It may be possible to build on this project to give the ePortfolio broader use throughout the College both as an electronic repository for student work (W portfolio, Advanced W portfolio, comp, other notable assignments and projects) and as a place for integrative reflection by the student on what she has produced. Powerful forms of integration would occur when the student reflected on her Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility (LO3) experiences and courses or responded to short prompts which asked her to bring previously hidden trajectories in her education to the surface and bundle them in meaningful ways.

Rule:

Students will be expected to fulfill all five Integration of Learning Outcomes in conjunction with their other required work in general education and the major. Each of these Outcomes, therefore, double-dips with other parts of a Saint Mary's education.

Integration of Learning Outcomes are fulfilled in the ways described below through other general education courses, non-credit-bearing experiences, and the major or minor.

- **Reflection:** A Saint Mary's student evaluates changes in her own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors.
 - ✓ **Fulfilled for all students in:**
 - *The Critical Thinking Seminar*
 - *Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility (LO3) courses*
 - *The Cross Currents program*
 - *Women's Voices courses*
 - *LO3 courses*

- **Adaptation:** A Saint Mary's student adapts learning from multiple academic disciplines to develop solutions for concrete real-world problems.
 - ✓ **Fulfilled for all students in:**
 - *Professional Arts courses*
 - ✓ **Can also be fulfilled in:**
 - *Justice Education Courses*

- **Praxis:** A Saint Mary's student articulates connections between academic and real-world knowledge by relating relevant experience outside the classroom to a field of academic study.
 - ✓ **Fulfilled for all students in:**
 - *Experiential learning*
 - ✓ **Can also be fulfilled in:**
 - *Internships*

- **Synthesis:** A Saint Mary's student synthesizes examples, facts, issues, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective into a coherent whole.
 - ✓ **Fulfilled for all students in:**
 - *The Comp*
 - *Courses throughout her major*
 - ✓ **Can also be fulfilled in:**
 - *Tandems*
 - *Interdisciplinary Minors*

- **Expression:** A Saint Mary's student makes sophisticated communication choices to connect what is being communicated (content) with how it is communicated (form) to meet the needs of the situation.

✓ **Fulfilled for all students in:**

- *The Critical Thinking Seminar*
- *W courses*
- *The Advanced W*
- *The Comp*
- *Intercultural Competence (A) courses*



Mary, Seat of Wisdom
Saint Mary's College Student Center

B. LO2: Cognitive & Communicative Skills

1. Skills Categories

The Ad Hoc Committee identified twelve skills that we regarded as having broad applicability beyond individual LO1 areas (those skills that were particular to a single area only have been included in the learning outcomes for those areas). We have grouped these skills into four categories to organize them. The headings attached to these categories offer conceptual hooks for approaching the skills and are not meant to define them, exhaust their range, or suggest a hierarchy in their ordering. They are as follows:

- ❖ Cognitive Skills
- ❖ Communicative Skills
- ❖ Investigative Skills
- ❖ Collaborative Skills

There is obvious overlap here: collaborative skills mix with communicative ones, and investigative skills intertwine with cognitive ones (among other examples). Accordingly, the addition of “Investigative Skills” and “Collaborative Skills” provides greater specification to, respectively, “Cognitive Skills” and “Communicative Skills.” In this way, the investigative and collaborative categories make explicit the implied breadth of the liberal learning outcome titled “Cognitive & Communicative Skills.” There is organizational value in this four-part architecture, which now forms part of the GenEd diagram (see Figure 2 above).

Since the learning outcomes are meant as four-year learning outcomes, the curricular structure that addresses skills is not limited to general education courses, although all skills will be at least introduced through the courses in the arms of the cross. For each skill outcome below, we indicate the general education areas that address that skill and whether the skill is partly fulfilled through the major (as are Critical Thinking, Writing Competence, Oral Competence, Problem Solving, and Information Literacy). Departments will need to show how their programs address those skills.

We consider information literacy, technological literacy, and media literacy, “21st century skills.” Our expectation is that information literacy will become an established part of the Critical Thinking Seminar. Technological literacy and media literacy, however, will most likely require additional structures, personnel, or faculty development resources before they can be reliably taught to all Saint Mary’s students across the curriculum. At present, then, we are designating these skills as “pilot skills” and encourage the faculty to address them as much as possible right now in their courses. Because of the importance we attach to these skills for living well in the information age, we suggest that the College make a commitment to teaching media literacy and technological literacy to all students and plan the necessary implementation to doing so no later than two years from the beginning of the new curriculum. In the meantime, to study how best to incorporate these skills fully into the new curriculum, we will do the following:

- ❖ Identify where students encounter these skills already.
- ❖ Assess how well, if at all, students are currently meeting these learning outcomes in order to plan for faculty development.
- ❖ Determine what would be needed to broaden and refine those encounters to meet the learning outcomes specified below for these skills.
- ❖ Seek ways to incorporate instruction in these skills into the common experience attached to the Critical Thinking Seminar. One of the common experiences, for example, could explore the impact or influence of media messages that surround us everyday.

The following rules and outcomes apply to the teaching of skills:

Rules:

Students will be expected to fulfill the Skills Learning Outcomes in conjunction with their other required coursework in general education and the major. These Outcomes, therefore, double-dip with other parts of a Saint Mary’s education. The only skill that requires an additional credit hour is Writing Competence, for which students must complete a course that includes the 1-credit addition assigned to courses in the W program.

All Skills Outcomes are fulfilled through general education courses and the major.

◆ Cognitive Skills

Critical Thinking

- A Saint Mary's student employs various aspects of critical thinking—interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation—in her intellectual work.
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - in Critical Thinking Seminar
 - broadly across General Education courses
 - in the student's major

Interpretation of Complex Texts and Artifacts

- A Saint Mary's student infers relevant meanings from the content and formal features of complex texts and artifacts, and from their relationship to their cultural or historical context.
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - in Literature courses
 - in History courses
 - in Histories courses
 - in Religious Traditions courses
 - in Philosophical Worldview courses

Quantitative Reasoning

- A Saint Mary's student creates and interprets arguments supported by quantitative evidence.
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - in Mathematical Arts courses
 - in Science for the Citizen courses

Media Literacy

- *A Saint Mary's student decodes, analyzes, and evaluates media messages within the context of political, economic, and ideological systems.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *as a Pilot Skill **

◆ **Communicative Skills**

Writing Competence

- *A Saint Mary's student employs conventions of academic writing to formulate meaningful claims, construct effective arguments, and employ evidence appropriately. She communicates her ideas in writing with precision and style.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *in Critical Thinking Seminar*
 - *in the W and Advanced W*
 - *broadly across General Education courses*
 - *in the student's major*

Oral Competence

- *A Saint Mary's student orally communicates with clarity, organization, supporting information, credibility, and style.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *in Critical Thinking Seminar*
 - *in the student's major*

Technological Literacy

- *A Saint Mary's student uses technology effectively for communication, research, collaboration and problem-solving, while understanding the ethics and safety issues in electronic media and responsible use of technology.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *as a Pilot Skill **

◆ **Investigative Skills**

Evaluation of Data

- *A Saint Mary's student assesses the validity and reliability of data (qualitative or quantitative) and analyzes whether such data appropriately address a particular claim.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *in Science for the Citizen courses*

Problem Solving

- *A Saint Mary's student uses her knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate a strategy to reach a goal or solve an unscripted problem.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *in Professional Arts courses*
 - *in the student's major*

Information Literacy

- *A Saint Mary's student determines the extent of her information needs and obtains, evaluates and uses information effectively with an understanding of economic, legal, ethical, and social issues surrounding information use.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *in Critical Thinking Seminar*
 - *in the student's major*

◆ **Collaborative Skills**

Shared Inquiry Skills

- *A Saint Mary's student collaborates effectively, utilizing appropriate skills such as active listening, constructive feedback, supportiveness, conflict management, and assertiveness. She engages in respectful dialogue on issues of substance in a variety of settings.*
- ✓ **Fulfilled:**
 - *broadly across General Education courses*

Dialogue with Difference Skills

- *A Saint Mary's student articulates her growth through interacting with diverse people, places, and beliefs.*
- ✓ ***Fulfilled:***
 - *in Intercultural Competence courses*
 - *in Religious Traditions courses*
 - *in Global Learning courses*

2. Critical Thinking Seminar

For students, this course becomes an academic rite of passage, a gateway to college-level discourse and thinking. Students will ordinarily take the Critical Thinking Seminar and the W in alternate semesters of their first year, since we see these courses as complementary in the skills of critical thinking and written expression they each foster. Students taking tandems would consider the two halves of the tandem to fulfill both the Critical Thinking Seminar and the W course in the same semester. All other students would take one each semester.

Taken together, the Critical Thinking Seminar and the W course form a year-long first-year experience for incoming students. The first-year experience will be supplemented by a set of four common evening events (two in fall, two in spring) that could be lectures, movies, exhibits, or performances. We envision the need to plan a coherent program over the year, though we do not think that all common experiences would have to be about a common topic. Rather, the skill of critical thinking would itself become the point of contact between any event and any seminar from the variety of disciplines out of which we hope they come. We expect that at least one major event that already goes on at the College (such as the Christian Culture lecture in the fall and the Madeleva Lecture in the spring) will be part of this series. Also, we expect that at least one of the four common experiences be dedicated to the history or current work of the Sisters of the Holy Cross throughout the world.

For faculty, the Critical Thinking Seminar holds the promise of a smaller class in a seminar format with added opportunities to get to know students well, especially if the instructor in the Critical Thinking Seminar also serves as the student's advisor in the Cross Currents

program. While we recognize the complexity of merging these roles, we also readily affirm that merging's benefits for the first-year student's experience inside and outside of the classroom. In addition, the Peer Mentors in the Cross Currents program could be required to come to a certain number of classes during the semester, and perhaps take on the role of discussion leader either in class or after one of the evening common experience events. All of this is consistent with the promotion of leadership in our students.

Rules:

Students will be expected to take a Critical Thinking Seminar during their first year at Saint Mary's. This requirement does not add credit hours beyond those needed to satisfy the knowledge outcomes. Each Critical Thinking seminar will double-dip with an L01 requirement, satisfying the learning outcomes for an L01 course area as well as the learning outcomes for the Critical Thinking Seminar (see below).

The Critical Thinking Seminar outcomes are these:

- A Saint Mary's student evaluates and formulates claims about issues, ideas, artifacts, or events using critical thinking methods that are appropriate to the discipline of the seminar.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates basic information literacy skills as listed in the information literacy sub-outcomes.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates effective oral communication in presentational or interactive contexts.
- A Saint Mary's student develops and organizes written arguments.

3. The Basic W Course

Saint Mary's students work towards proficiency in writing throughout their college careers and across the curriculum. Their efforts to develop Communicative Skills in writing are, however, more focused at two stages along the way: (1) the Basic W, which is satisfied in a W course through successful completion of a portfolio demonstrating basic writing competence, (2) and the Advanced W, which is satisfied within the major course of study.

Rules:

Students normally take a Writing course during their first year at Saint Mary's. Each Writing course will double-dip with an LO1 requirement, satisfying its learning outcomes as well as the LO2 learning outcomes for the Basic W (see below). Basic W courses (and tandems) thus carry the usual number of credits for the LO1 requirement, as well as an additional credit for the LO2 Writing requirement.

The Basic W (LO2) outcomes are these:

- A Saint Mary's student expresses the central idea of her essay in a focused thesis.
- A Saint Mary's student organizes her material in a logical sequence of well-structured paragraphs.
- A Saint Mary's student supports her ideas with sufficient persuasive evidence.
- A Saint Mary's student expresses her ideas clearly and appropriately for the intended audience.
- A Saint Mary's student follows conventions of grammar, punctuation, syntax, and citation in the discipline in which she is writing.
- A Saint Mary's student reevaluates and revises her work in response to feedback.

4. Women's Voices

In its deliberations on general education at Saint Mary's, the Ad Hoc Committee identified four foundational aspects of a Saint Mary's identity that should be fostered by the general education program: its identity as a liberal arts college, as a Catholic institution, as a participant in the Holy Cross tradition, and as a women's college. These appear on the outer ring of the general education diagram, underlying and stabilizing the whole structure. While we fully expect these four foundational aspects to suffuse all learning outcomes that form the basis for the design, the liberal arts and Catholicity are addressed principally through Learning Outcome 1, whose sub-outcomes establish the breadth of knowledge that is a hallmark of liberal education and encourage study of philosophy, religion, and the Catholic tradition. Our Holy Cross heritage is addressed primarily through Learning Outcome 3, as will be explained below. Saint Mary's identity as a community concerned with the education of women is addressed most fully through the Women's Voices requirement under Learning Outcome 2, Cognitive & Communicative Skills. By developing such skills, women are most directly empowered to be active in the world, as the preamble to the second learning outcome makes clear, and so we have linked a direct focus on Women's Voices with the other LO2 outcomes.

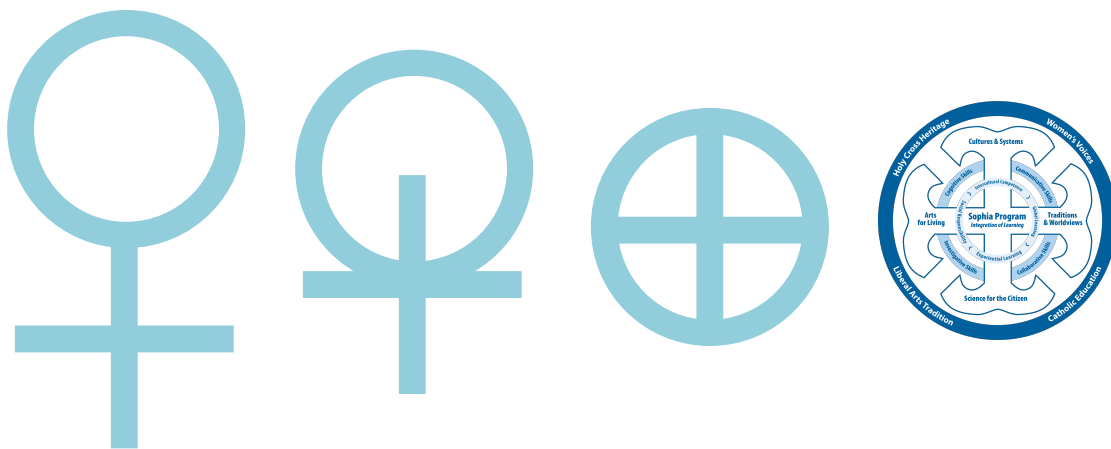
To help ensure that Saint Mary's students develop their voices as women together with an awareness of the larger issues that have influenced the status of women in human societies, students will address outcomes pertaining directly to this subject, according to following rules:

Rules:

Students are required to take one course certified as addressing the Women's Voices outcomes in three of the four arms of the cross. Each student must also take a fourth Women's Voices course, but there are no distribution restrictions on this course: it could be completed through another general education course, the major, or a minor. A student may also fulfill this fourth requirement through a non-credit-bearing experience that addresses these outcomes (see Figure 13). Women's Voices courses thus double-dip with LO1 requirements and major requirements. The Women's Voices outcomes do not add credit hours to the Sophia Program.

These rules allow women's voices to be diffused throughout the curriculum in ways that go beyond any one particular disciplinary perspective. The requirement to take courses in three of the four arms of the cross also allows choices for students, especially in those arms of the cross where there are more things from which to choose. We see in the Sophia diagram a meeting of our identities as a women's college and a Catholic college, as the ancient symbol for woman merges with the ancient symbol for Christianity. Saint Mary's lives in that convergence, and therefore the Sophia Program ought to reflect where we live.

FIGURE 11:



Women's Voices Outcomes are met in courses around the arms of the cross, non-credit-bearing experiences, and in a student's major or minor.

- A Saint Mary's student identifies and understands women's contributions to human knowledge and achievement and how those have been influenced by constructions of gender.
- A Saint Mary's student reflects analytically upon her own heritage and experience as a woman and articulates her reflections within a particular disciplinary context.
- A Saint Mary's student analyzes the forms and effects of gender prejudice, and evaluates strategies for response.

C. LO3: Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility

1. The Contribution of LO3

The third learning outcome, “Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility,” represents the newest major component to general education at Saint Mary’s. This learning outcome very self-consciously picks up on the charism of the Sisters of the Holy Cross and is therefore the place in the revised curriculum where the College’s identity as a Holy Cross institution is most apparent. Our Holy Cross heritage is a way of living out the Catholic identity of Saint Mary’s, which ultimately spans all of the higher-level outcomes by stressing ways of seeing, habits of thinking, and social commitments.

In the courses under the third learning outcome, students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to encounter diversity, to raise normative questions about justice, and to take their place as global citizens. This learning outcome also, for the first time at the College, requires a particular form of pedagogy that enables experiential learning. We note that Recommendation 13 of the Strategic Plan is entitled “Experiential Learning for Every Student” and recommends that “each student benefit from some form of experiential education” and that the implementation of this recommendation “should become part of the General Education discussion.” (See the next section for more on experiential education.)

The chart in Figure 12 at the top of the next page shows that two outcomes (A & B) are required for social responsibility, intercultural competence, and global learning. Having A & B outcomes for each of these represents a kind of *de facto* staging where, in most cases, students would encounter one before the other. **For Social Responsibility and Intercultural Competence**, Outcome A in each pair provides a theoretical perspective, which Outcome B builds upon through actual engagement with particular phenomena or practice. (There is, though, no strict separation between understanding and engagement, as the latter is never purely neutral and always presupposes some conceptual underpinning. Conversely, learning doesn’t happen until there is some cognitive processing or reflecting on that engagement.) **For Global Learning**, most students would likely study (abroad in) one foreign country before exploring the connections between countries.

FIGURE 12

Outcome	(A)	(B)
Social Responsibility	<i>Understanding</i>	<i>Reflective Engagement</i>
Intercultural Competence	<i>Understanding</i>	<i>Reflective Engagement</i>
Global Learning	<i>Intranational</i>	<i>International</i>

This organization of outcomes gives rise to the following rules for Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility (LO3):

Rules:

LO3 will not increase the credit hours needed to satisfy the general education requirements. Students will address LO3 outcomes through the courses needed to satisfy the LO1 knowledge requirements designated by the cross design. They may meet some, though not all, of the LO3 outcomes through courses in their majors/minors, or through approved non-credit-bearing experiences, such as study abroad. This means that students will double-dip their LO3 requirements through courses designated as counting for both LO1 and LO3 or for both the major/minor and LO3.

While there are no restrictions on students double-dipping between LO3 requirements and other GenEd requirements for LO1 or LO2, *there are restrictions on double-dipping within LO3 itself.* Many courses or experiences, especially those pertaining to Social Responsibility and Intercultural Competence, will double-count for both the A and the B outcome, but a student may not double dip and count a single course or

experience as meeting both. Rather, she must choose which of the two requirements in her program she wants the course or experience to meet. Double dipping *between rows*, however, is permitted, with the following limit: any given course or activity may be used by a student to meet requirements in two different L03 areas (indicated in the separate rows of the chart), if the course has been designated as meeting both of these outcomes.


As a summary mnemonic for all of the counting restrictions on L03, we offer the “Rules of 2,” which describe all of the rules for satisfaction of the L03 requirements in terms of 2:

Rules:

- ❖ At least 2 courses or activities used to achieve L03 outcomes must include experiential learning.
- ❖ At least 2 L03 outcomes must be met outside a student’s major.
- ❖ Up to 2 L03 outcomes can be met outside of a class.
- ❖ Up to 2 L03 outcomes from different rows on the chart above may be met by a single course or activity. This can be done multiple times in the interest of integration of learning.

We expect the Science for the Citizen requirements to satisfy one requirement under “Social Responsibility,” the student’s two-course foreign language requirement to satisfy one requirement under “Intercultural Competence,” and most study abroad opportunities to satisfy one requirement (most likely, “A”) under “Global Learning.” In addition, a third foreign language course will count towards Global Learning (A).

Intercultural Competence & Social Responsibility Outcomes are fulfilled through general education courses, non-credit-bearing experiences, and the major or minor.



Social Responsibility

- **A₁**. A Saint Mary's student evaluates social conditions. *For example...*
 - She recognizes how cultural, political, and economic structure and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create/enhance privilege and power for individuals or groups.
 - She recognizes the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health, well-being, and human dignity.

—or—

- **A₂**. A Saint Mary's student discerns human needs. *For example...*
 - She identifies human needs of individuals situated within the context of culture and environment.
 - She analyzes and evaluates the relationship of rights and responsibilities to human needs.
- **B**. A Saint Mary's student is able to respond as an agent of change. *For example...*
 - She can explain strategies for constructive action in pursuit of social, political, and economic justice.
 - Based on her knowledge of strategies for constructive actions, the student will be able to advocate for social, political, and economic justice either for herself or in solidarity with vulnerable or oppressed people.

Intercultural Competence

- **A**. A Saint Mary's student identifies and understands the aspects of culturally diverse environments in order to communicate more effectively across cultures; and she analyzes the forms

and effects of culturally diverse environments and evaluates strategies for response.

- **B.** A Saint Mary's student reflects before and after intercultural engagement in order to identify her own cultural norms and how these norms shape her interactions with others.

Global Learning

- **A** A Saint Mary's student articulates the interconnections between at least two of the following: the historical, political, geographic, cultural, and/or socioeconomic dimensions within a country or region outside the United States.
- **B.** A Saint Mary's student explains global interdependence or other complex issues that cross national boundaries.

2. Experiential Learning

Experiential learning plays an integral role in Learning Outcome 3. Recent research into how people learn amply validates the educational value and pedagogical significance of enhancing classroom instruction through direct encounter with the object of study. Saint Mary's realized this long ago, however: Mother M. Pauline O'Neill, the first president of Saint Mary's College, wrote in the 1911-1912 *College Bulletin* that a Saint Mary's education "strives for the highest development of mind and heart, and aims ... to bring [students] into personal relations with wider worlds, larger life...." And our Mission Statement reads, "A pioneer in the education of women, the College is an academic community where women develop their talents and prepare to make a difference in the world." Because we speak about making a difference in the world, experience outside the classroom (or experience in which the world outside the classroom is brought within its walls) must be regarded as intrinsic to the education for which we stand. Simply put, it's not an add-on; it's constitutive. Moreover, we prepare women best for roles of leadership and action through forms of direct engagement in the 'worlds' for which we are preparing them. And when our Mission Statement also says that "Saint Mary's promotes a life of intellectual vigor, ... and social responsibility," it implies a complementary relationship between learning deeply and living responsibly. That is not insignificant.

References to *engagement* in the Social Responsibility & Intercultural Competence outcomes listed above, then, begin to describe the place of experiential learning in LO3; though it is *not* the case that these categories exactly overlap, and it *is* the case that some “B” courses in Social Responsibility or Intercultural Competence may not fulfill all the experiential learning outcomes. *Let us say, then, that academic experiential education involves interaction with people or settings beyond the Saint Mary’s College community, which helps students “to bridge classroom study and life in the world [by transforming classroom-based knowledge] into knowledge-in-use. It rests on theories of experiential learning, a process whereby the learner interacts with the world and integrates new learning into old constructs.”* The following rules guide experiential education in the GenEd program:

Rules:

As stated in the “Rules of 2,” at least 2 courses or activities used to achieve LO3 outcomes must include experiential learning. Moreover, each “E” course should include at least 15 contact hours of interaction and experience along with the criteria listed below. It is also strongly recommended that at least one of the two experiential learning requirements in LO3 take place off campus.

Criteria for an “E” Designation

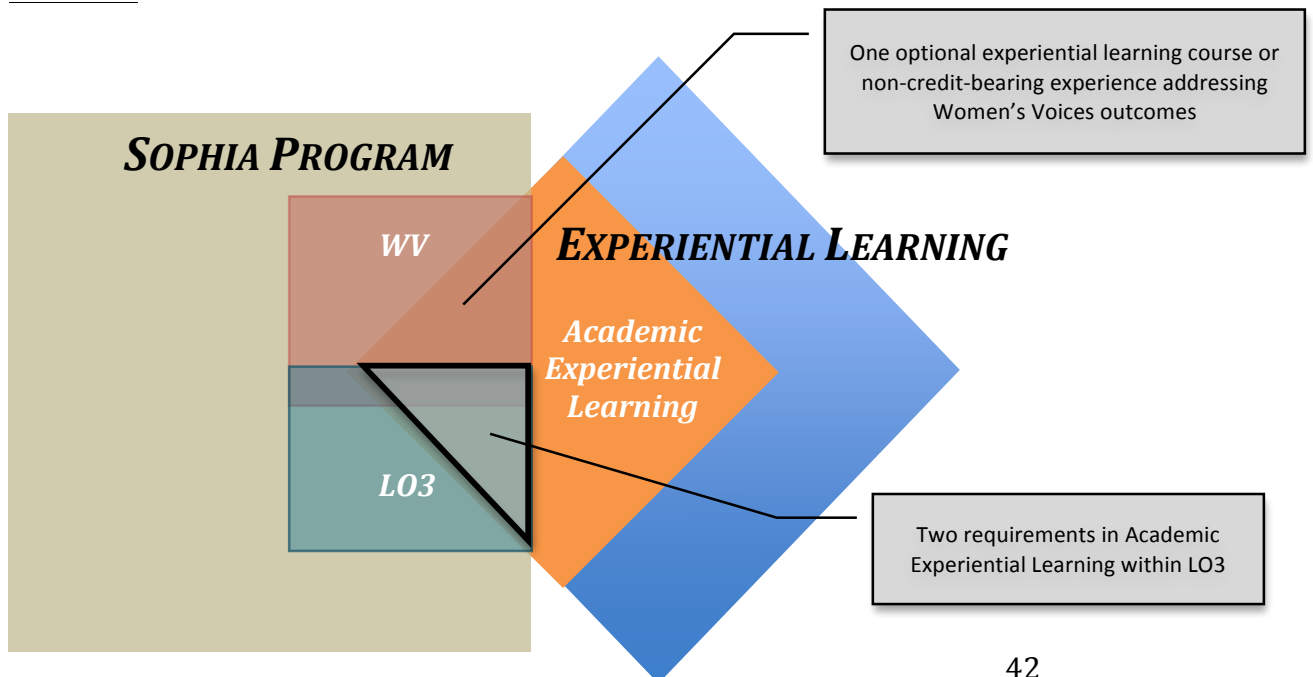
1. Interaction with people or settings beyond the Saint Mary's College community;
2. Direct, active, and unscripted experience of a phenomenon being learned or examined;
3. Formal and focused reflection on that experience through discussion or writing;
4. Interpretation of that experience using theory purporting to explain, account for, or describe it;
5. Opportunity to demonstrate deepened insight about either the original subject matter, a social context, or oneself as a result of this engagement;
6. A link to academic credit or fulfillment of a requirement within a particular program of study; and
7. Achievement of the learning outcomes set forth in the next section.

Experiential Learning Outcomes are met in courses around the arms of the cross, non-credit-bearing experiences, and in a student's major or minor.

- A Saint Mary's student applies particular theories or concepts (such as from readings, lectures, or discussions) to an analysis of her lived experiences in the settings provided by the course or program.
- A Saint Mary's student articulates the impact of her experiential learning on her understanding of her education, her decision-making or problem solving, or her place in the world.
- A Saint Mary's student demonstrates professional and ethical behavior appropriate to her experiential context.

The diagram below tries to depict how Academic Experiential Learning is one component of a larger category. While academic experiential learning within LO3 is the only kind *required* by the Sophia Program (see the outlined triangle depicting this requirement), many kinds of experiential learning opportunities can be encouraged on our campus; and many kinds of *academic* experiential learning opportunities may and should go on apart from general education or LO3 altogether—perhaps in a student's major or minor program.

FIGURE 13

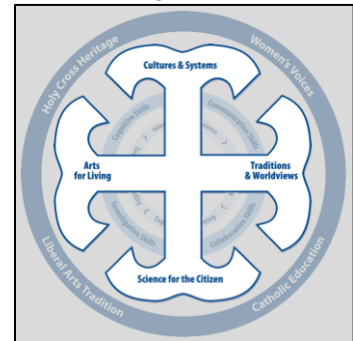


D. Summary of the General Education Curriculum

The foregoing curriculum may be summarized as follows:

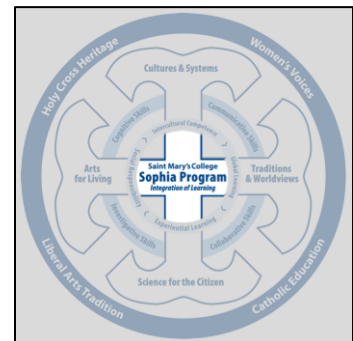
- ❖ The general education curriculum addresses the sub-outcomes derived for general education from the College-wide liberal learning outcomes. (See Figure 7, p. 13.)

Figure 14



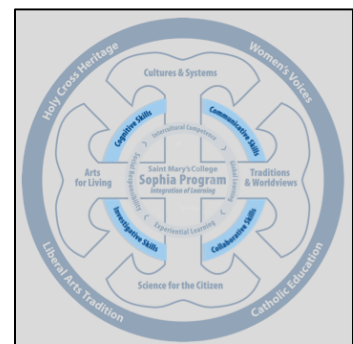
- ❖ The Knowledge Outcomes (LO1) are addressed through the fifteen courses organized by the arms of the cross.

Figure 15



- ❖ The Integration of Learning Outcomes (LO1) will be achieved in conjunction with the student's work on other outcomes through courses in general education, courses in the major, and non-credit-bearing experiences.

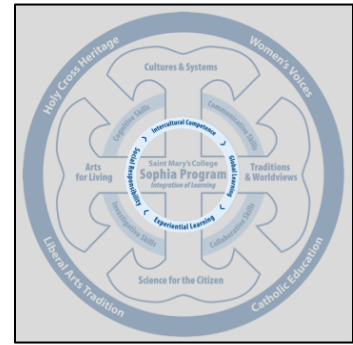
Figure 16



- ❖ The Skills Outcomes (LO2) are addressed partly through these courses and partly through the student's major(s). The two foundational skills courses—the Critical Thinking Seminar and the basic W—will also meet the outcomes for an LO1 area. Other skills are assigned to appropriate areas (e.g. quantitative reasoning to the Mathematical Arts and Science for the Citizen), and some skills also will receive continuing attention in all majors.

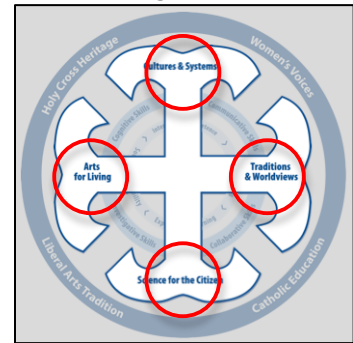
- ❖ The Social Responsibility Outcomes (LO3) will be met, like the skills, through the LO1 areas and the student's major(s). In addition, students may address these outcomes through non-credit-bearing activities (such as study abroad or experiential learning) and through minor programs. Most LO3 outcomes, unlike skills outcomes, are not assigned to particular course areas or to the major program as a whole, but will be addressed through individual courses designated as fulfilling the LO3 requirements.

Figure 17

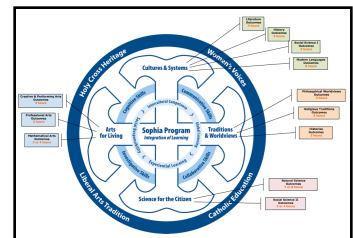


- ❖ The Women's Voices outcomes (which combine knowledge, skill, and social responsibility outcomes) will be met, like LO3 outcomes, through designated courses that appear in the arms of the cross or the student's major and minor programs. Again like the LO3 outcomes, the Women's Voices requirements may be met partly through non-credit-bearing experiences.

Figure 18



- ❖ In terms of credits, the size of the Sophia Program is essentially defined by the fifteen courses in the arms of the cross for the knowledge outcomes, which require 48-51 credits to complete (see Figure 10, p. 17, or in thumbnail size at right). All of the other outcomes can be met either through these courses, through courses in the student's major program, or through non-credit activities. The only exception is the basic W, which adds one credit to the course designated for the W, bringing the total required GenEd credits to **49-52**.



- ❖ The main rule governing the general education curriculum, then, is that *students must take a different course for every LO1 area in the arms of the cross*: there is no double-dipping between these courses. This rule guarantees the breadth of general education. There are no rules limiting double-dipping between LO1 course areas and the major or minor, however, and all of the other parts of the general education curriculum are designed to double-dip: namely, to be fulfilled in conjunction with some other curricular outcome (with limited exceptions within the LO3 requirements). The rules governing these parts of the general education curriculum are addressed in the sections of the document describing these parts of the curriculum in depth.

IV. General Education and the Major

A. Relationship

In the course of its work of general education reform, the Ad Hoc Committee heard it said that almost no one chooses a college because of its general education requirements. More important are majors and other programs that students see as offering particular benefits for life on the other side of their diploma. We do not and cannot realistically expect that students will now flock to Saint Mary's in increased numbers because of revisions to the Sophia Program. But we do expect that those charged with recruiting students (which, in important ways, is everyone at the College) will have more to say to prospective students to explain the reason for the program, its coherence in light of the learning outcomes which grow organically out of our Mission Statement, and how this requirement helps to contribute to a unique institutional signature that remains a compelling source of attraction for those who matriculate here.

We do not in any way withdraw from the longstanding notion that, as we say in Section III above, "General education and the student's major are vital, complementary parts of a student's preparation for an active and meaningful life." Breadth and depth remain worthy goals of any education. We do, however, see benefits accruing from the new program that would make breadth and depth less separated (at the least) or less antagonistic (at most). The move to learning outcomes can serve to unify the academic enterprise. The liberal learning outcomes that form the foundation of the revised general education curriculum were never meant to apply only to general education, but rather are meant to function as four-year liberal learning outcomes for the entire College. The sub-outcomes adapt these to general education requirements. But even here, it really matters less where students gain the knowledge, skills, or dispositions in these learning outcomes than *that* they gain them. In this way, the complementary relationship between general education and the major can mean more than a peaceful coexistence between two discrete parts of a student's education. Rather, it could mean that these 'parts' are neither discrete nor separate and that new avenues for integration present themselves.

B. Credit-Heavy Majors

The “general” in “General Education” pivots in two directions. On the one hand, as said above, it refers to non-specialized study which helps to foster the breadth of learning that complements the depth of the more focused learning achieved through the student’s major. On the other hand, “general” connotes the learning that all students have in common which, in the words of the Strategic Plan, “telegraphs to our students the elements that the College judges to be essential to a Saint Mary’s education.”

It is important to note that Saint Mary’s was previously in a minority in *not* requiring the same general education requirements for all students in all degrees. Of our twenty (previous) aspirant peer institutions, 70.0% require the same general education curriculum for all majors, and 71.4% of our fourteen resource peers do the same.

We start, then, with the presumption that all degrees offered at the College should meet the same learning outcomes of the Sophia Program. The fact is that the faculty discussed and endorsed unanimously the learning outcomes from which we have designed the new curriculum. That signified the importance attached to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions reflected by those outcomes. At the same time, we recognize various sorts of constraints that specific degrees have; and we cannot impose the impossible. One immovable benchmark, certainly, is the 128-hour graduation requirement. With that in mind, we have worked through the numbers as best we could. The only degree that simply cannot satisfy all general education outcomes and stay below 128 hours is the Bachelor of Music in Music Education. All others, with varying accommodations, should at least mathematically be able to do so with substitutions of major courses satisfying GenEd outcomes. We note as well that common outcomes will make things easier on the many students who switch majors during their college careers.

In light of this, we suggest the following criteria:

- ❖ No degree with its accompanying major and general education courses can together require more than a total of 128 hours.
- ❖ Those majors for whom a 50-hour general education requirement added to the course requirements in the major would take them above 128 hours may petition for an exemption from (that is, a *release from*) requirements.
- ❖ Those majors of 60 or more hours can petition for substitutions of GenEd requirements for major requirements if they can show consistency between the learning outcomes of the GenEd requirement and its proposed substitution. (Possible reasons why a major of this size might request such an accommodation would include making it more possible for its students to double major, minor, or study abroad.)

Structures will be put in place that will allow credit-heavy degrees to petition for accommodations regarding certain general education requirements. Requests for exemption from requirements would need to go to the Academic Affairs Council. Requests for substitutions of requirements would have to go to the General Education Curriculum Committee. It is important, however, to distinguish this kind of substitution applying to all members of a particular group from that of an individual student requesting a substitution of requirements for particular reasons. The latter has gone on and should continue to do so through the Office of Academic Affairs. Transfer students, for example, will continue to rely upon such substitutions in order to graduate in four years.

