***Integrative High Impact Practice***

**Definition**

High Impact Practices are active academic experiences that engage students in deep and reflective learning. These practices -- such as collaborative learning, community-based experiences, and research projects -- have been shown to improve student retention, engagement, and success. An Integrative High Impact Practice is one that requires the student to make a substantive investment in applying learning across disciplines and/or experiences (modified from AAC&U High-Impact Educational Practices; <https://www.aacu.org/node/4084>).

**Rationale and Intent**

The Integrating and Applying LA&S Learning requirement is intended to add depth to the general education curriculum. In the Critical and Creative Thinking Across the Disciplines (CCTAD) requirements, students are introduced to various ways of thinking about or expressing themselves. Integrative Learning courses ask students to take the knowledge from one or more of the CCTAD courses and transfer that knowledge into a new setting, either integrating across fields of study or from theory to practice. Fitchburg State University recognizes that “Fostering students’ abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education” (AAC&U Integrative Learning VALUE rubric). These experiences can occur when learners address real-world problems requiring multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, and benefiting from multiple perspectives. Many of the “High Impact Educational Practices” that have been shown to improve student engagement and success involve these same types of integrative experiences. All Fitchburg State University students are encouraged to complete at least one of these types of courses as part of their Integrating and Applying LA&S Learning requirement.

**Goal**

Fitchburg State University students will integrate and apply knowledge from different disciplines and experiences to solve problems.

One of the Integrative Learning courses must also be designated as Integrative High Impact Practice (IHIP). At Fitchburg State University a course will be considered an Integrative High Impact Practice Course if it meets the following requirements:

1. The course description or syllabus, course goals, instructional materials, and assignments articulate a substantial, integrative individual or group activity (at least 15 hours) which is explicitly linked to course learning goals.
2. The course design includes one or more of the following elements required of all students in order to support integrative learning.
   * + Experiential learning/Internship in a setting that provides insight into another culture and community beyond the student’s own personal experiences and/or direct experience in a work setting with the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field.
     + A Study Abroad experience in another country that provides the student with first-hand experience engaging with language, culture, and history beyond what they have experienced in their own native country.
     + A Civic Engagement activity designed to provide reciprocal benefits for both the students and a broader community or communities beyond the classroom (that broader community could be the campus community or a community beyond the campus).
     + Team Teaching/ Learning Community of two or more faculty members with differing disciplinary expertise and/or two or more linked courses that provide opportunities for students taking courses in two or more different disciplines to meet together either during or outside of class time to address a shared question, problem or topic.
     + A Student-faculty research project in which students individually or collaboratively help shape the research question, refine the research techniques, collect novel information, data or observations, and produce a research paper, poster, and/or presentation.
     + A Student-faculty creative project in which students individually or collaboratively develop one or more substantive, independent creative products such as a technological design, performance, portfolio, or exhibit.
     + Writing Intensive research projects that include multiple graded writing assignments including feedback with revisions, along with additional informal writing assignments and library research sessions through which students locate, evaluate, summarize and apply resources related to their written work.
3. A reflection component in which the student is required to report on, present, or explain the significance of the integrative learning experience and locate it within the broader context of their personal and academic experiences.

**Potential Course Objectives**

The objectives below are recommended as models for general education course syllabi. The list is not meant to be complete. Faculty should feel free to adopt these as course objectives, or they may develop their own.

* Integrate knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines to address a problem.
* Develop and conduct a scientific research project to answer a question or solve a problem and communicate results of the project via research paper, poster, and/or presentation.
* Develop and undertake a creative research project that culminates in a creative product such as technological design, performance, portfolio, or exhibit.
* Engage directly with the language, culture, and/or history of a country other than one’s own through a study abroad program.
* Work collaboratively in a community setting to address common problems.