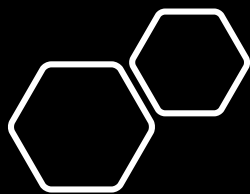


Creating a Common Curriculum at CU Boulder

Proposal from the Common Curriculum Planning Committee

**CU Boulder Faculty Governance Groups
October 2022**



Common Curriculum: What brings us here?



Academic Futures - October 2018

*“Formulate and then move to implement a plan for **a campus-wide common learning experience and/or curriculum**”*

Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Review - January 2020

*“**CU Boulder does not have a ... philosophy or framework ... to ground and guide general education for all undergraduate students [as is required for accreditation].**”*

Chancellor DiStefano’s Directive to the University - May 2020

*Create a **“campus-wide common learning experience and a common set of intended learning outcomes”** for undergraduates*

Listening Tour and Call for White Papers – Spring 2021

- 81 sessions with academic departments, student support offices, & student groups + open forums
- 1270 students, faculty & staff participated
- 14 white papers received
- What did we ask?
 - **What university values should the common curriculum represent and support?**
 - **What should a graduate of CU Boulder know and be able to do?**

The Common Curriculum Planning Committee Formed September 2021

Scope of Work: Using the input from the Listening Tour and white papers as a springboard, **create a framework for a curriculum whose learning objectives represent common themes and a set of relationships that instantiate the values we hold at CU Boulder.**

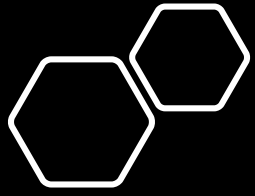
Goals:

1. Identify the overall objective of the Common Curriculum: i.e., **the purpose and distinctive nature of a CU Boulder education**
2. Identify **further learning objectives** that define:
 - * **Habits of mind** that support learning, inquiry, and engagement
 - * **Essential skills**
3. Design **learning outcomes for each learning objective**

Common Curriculum Planning Committee

Work calendar

- * September 2021–March 2022: Review of campus input, other university models, input from stakeholders (students, staff, employers)
- * April 11, 2022: Committee publishes full draft of Common Curriculum learning objectives and learning outcomes
- * April 2022: Open forums to discuss draft; further input by email
- * October 6, 2022: CCPC submits revised proposal to Provost



The shape of the Common Curriculum



A Common Curriculum is Not a Core Curriculum

Core curriculum

A prescribed curriculum organized as a fixed set of required courses/competencies, a set of “distribution requirements,” or a combination of the two.

Common Curriculum

A set of integrative values, learning outcomes, and common touchpoints that are reached in the diverse landscape of courses throughout the undergraduate career.

The CCPC Common Curriculum Proposal:
An Overall Purpose + Habits of Mind + Essential Skills

What is the purpose and distinctive nature of a CU Boulder education?

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: SELF, SOCIETY, WORLD

At CU Boulder, students will gain an understanding of the interdependence of individual, societal and environmental wellbeing and of the necessity for stewardship and solutions to advance balanced and equitable futures for all. Throughout their CU Boulder education, students will cultivate skills and habits of mind that enable them to thrive as individuals and contribute to a thriving world.

What are the habits of mind through which our students will be prepared for sustainable futures?

Habit of Mind: Discovery

Preparing to be a lifelong thinker and problem-solver

Each Habit of
Mind Is a
Learning
Objective, and
Each Has Three
Assessable
Learning
Outcomes

What are the habits of mind through which our students will be prepared for sustainable futures?

Habit of Mind: Discovery

Preparing to be a lifelong thinker and problem-solver

Habit of Mind: Reflection

Preparing to engage in self-understanding, sustain personal well-being, and make ethical choices

Each Habit of Mind Is a Learning Objective, and Each Has Three Assessable Learning Outcomes

What are the habits of mind through which our students will be prepared for sustainable futures?

Habit of Mind: Discovery

Preparing to be a lifelong thinker and problem-solver

Habit of Mind: Reflection

Preparing to engage in self-understanding, sustain personal well-being, and make ethical choices

Habit of Mind: Engagement

Preparing to advance a diverse democracy

Each Habit of Mind Is a Learning Objective, and Each Has Three Assessable Learning Outcomes

What are the skills essential for our students to shape sustainable futures?

Information Literacy:

**Understanding how information is
produced and valued**

Each Skill Is a
Learning
Objective, and
Each Has Three
Assessable
Learning
Outcomes

What are the skills essential for our students to shape sustainable futures?

Information Literacy:

Understanding how information is produced and valued

Critical Thinking:

Conceptualizing an original belief about or solution to an issue through reasoned questioning, evaluation, and judgment derived from rigorous analysis, interpretation, inference, observation, discussion, and/or experience

Each Skill Is a Learning Objective, and Each Has Three Assessable Learning Outcomes

What are the skills essential for our students to shape sustainable futures?

Information Literacy:

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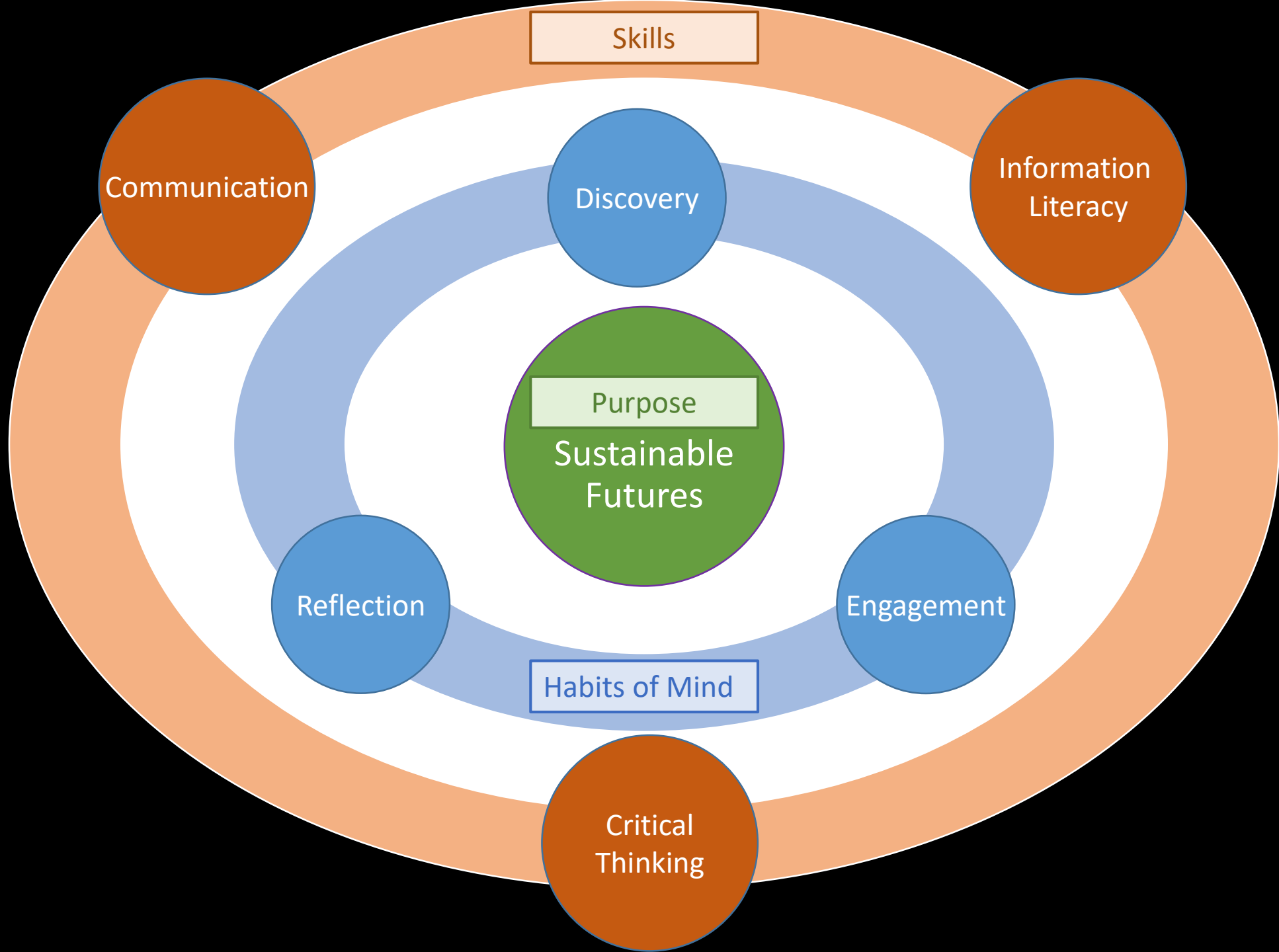
Critical Thinking:

Conceptualizing an original belief about or solution to an issue through reasoned questioning, evaluation, and judgment derived from rigorous analysis, interpretation, inference, observation, discussion, and/or experience

Each Skill Is a Learning Objective, and Each Has Three Assessable Learning Outcomes

Communication:

Effective expression, argumentation, and communication of ideas and sentiments to audiences



Skills

Communication

Information
Literacy

Discovery

Purpose
Sustainable
Futures

Reflection

Engagement

Habits of Mind

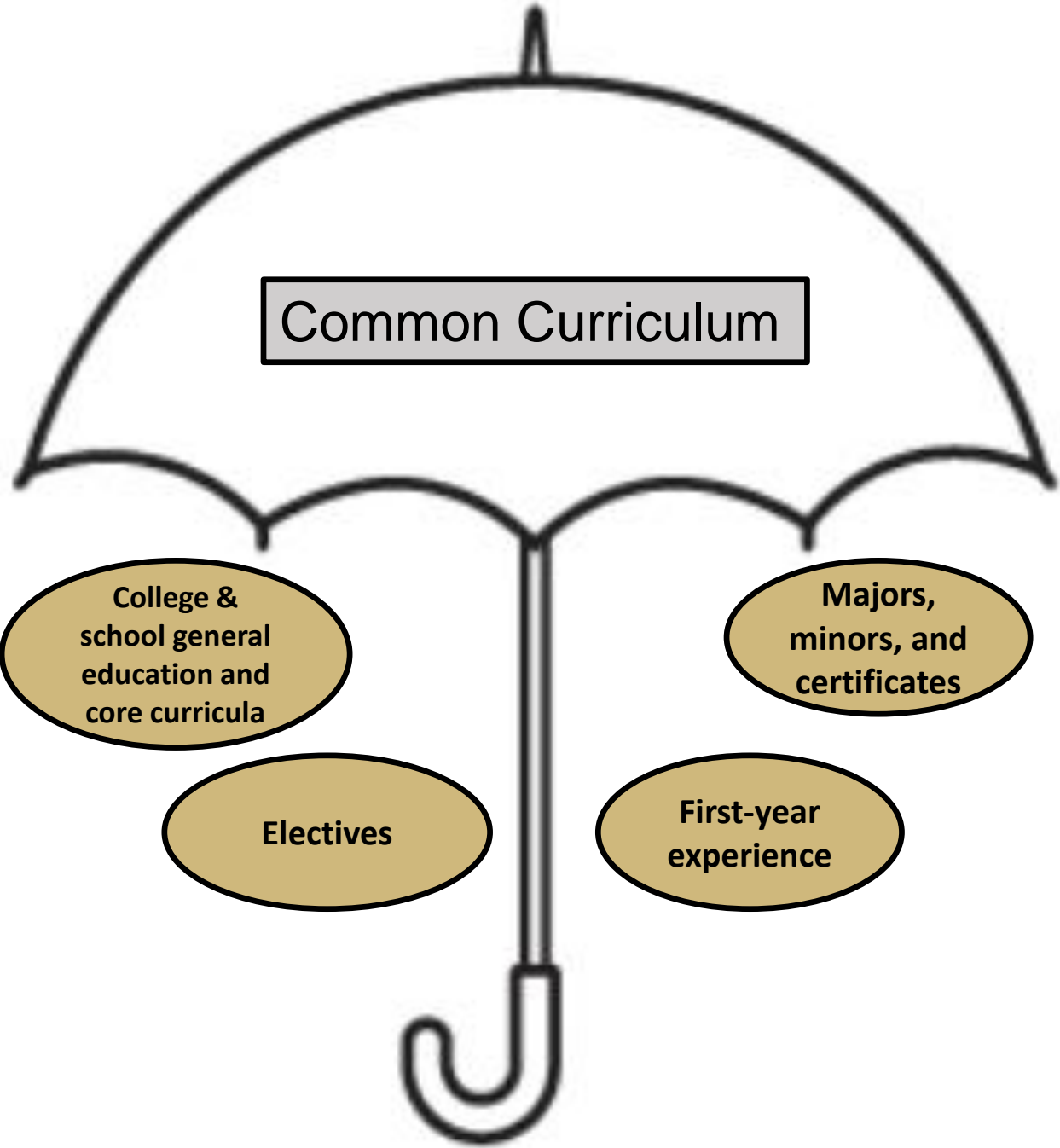
Critical
Thinking

How will the Common Curriculum be structured?

The common curriculum's learning objectives will be realized through the curricular pathways and *existing learning objectives and outcomes* of all the schools, colleges, and undergraduate degree programs at CU Boulder, including both general education (or core) requirements and the curricula of specific majors, minors, and certificates.

In addition, the common curriculum will incorporate the *First Year Experience and its co-curricular activities*, which focus on introducing students to academic life in higher education and reinforcing skills of study, citizenship, and self-care.

Thus, the common curriculum's objectives will span all levels of the undergraduate experience and be offered through both curricular and co-curricular activities.



Common Curriculum

College & school general education and core curricula

Majors, minors, and certificates

Electives

First-year experience

An outdoor theater with stone seating and a stage, with a brick building in the background and scaffolding around the stage area. The text "Next steps" is overlaid in the center.

Next steps

Fall 2022: Approval process for the proposed learning objectives and outcomes

- * August 2022: BFA Executive Committee approves voting process by BFA and by all college + school + Environmental Design faculty governance committees (excepting Law)
- * October-November 2022: Faculty governance group presentations and voting
- * End of fall 2022: Formation of implementation group
- * Spring 2023: Implementation group begins to map Common Curriculum learning outcomes onto existing degree programs
- * Accompanying implementation: Creation of an assessment plan

Faculty governance presentation schedule

- October 6: University Libraries
- October 6: Boulder Faculty Assembly
- October 10: Music
- October 10: College of Engineering & Applied Science
- October 12: Leeds School of Business
- October 18: Arts & Sciences
- October 19: Environmental Design
- October 19: School of Education
- October 24: College of Media, Communication & Information

Read the full proposal and ask questions

Read the full proposal at:

www.colorado.edu/academicfutures/common-curriculum

Send questions to: commoncurriculum@colorado.edu

Appendix:

Common Curriculum Planning Committee Charge & Membership

Provost's charge to the Common Curriculum Planning Committee, September 23, 2021:

“I charge you . . . [with] the identification and design development of a common curriculum through which our undergraduate students will achieve shared learning goals that address integrative values and common touchpoints throughout the undergraduate career. I seek your guidance in proposing campus-wide learning goals that reflect both a deliberate statement about who we are as a university and that complement and enhance all of our educational programs.”

For the full charge, see www.colorado.edu/academicfutures/common-curriculum

Membership structure:

- * Ten faculty, representing all the schools and colleges with undergraduate degrees (including all three divisions of A&S), the University Libraries, and BFA
- * Three staff members, representing Student Affairs, Undergrad Education, and Arts & Sciences General Education administration
- * One undergraduate student
- * One graduate student

Common Curriculum Planning Committee Membership

Co-chairs

Katherine Eggert, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning & Assessment; Professor of English

Daryl Maeda, Dean and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education; Professor of Ethnic Studies

Staff committee members

Shelly Bacon, Undergraduate Education

Patrick Tally, College of Arts and Sciences

Joe Thomas, Student Affairs

Student committee members

Evangelyne Eliason, fourth-year undergraduate student majoring in psychology

Jemil Abdu Kassahun, second-year Colorado Law student

Committee support staff

Andre Grothe, Office of Academic Planning & Assessment

Erika Swain, Office of Data Analytics

Robin Swift, Office of Information Technology

Faculty committee members

Russell Cropanzano, Leeds School of Business

Barbara Demmig-Adams, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Vicki Grove, Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures and officer of the Boulder Faculty Assembly

Roudy Hildreth, School of Education

Caroline Sinkinson, Libraries

Nicolò Spera, Music

Colin West, Physics

Cindy White, Communication

Wendy Young, Chemical and Biological Engineering

Thomas Zeiler, International Affairs