Report of
The Task Force on the
Compelling Idea

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY
LEARNING EXPERIENCE

August 1999
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To:        Mark L. Perkins, Chancellor
From:      Howard Cohen, Provost
Subject:   The Report of the Task Force on the Compelling Idea

Late last spring, in response to an opportunity presented by UW System Administration, you posed the following question to the campus: Should we pursue institutional positioning for UW-Green Bay inside the context of Enrollment Management 21? Campus advice from most quarters was clear that we should move forward with work, understanding that a firm decision on whether to commit to this course will occur in early fall with the formal recommendation of governance bodies.

The Task Force, which you appointed and I chaired, worked intensively from late June to early August to craft a picture of how the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay might carry forward its innovative and distinctive traditions, refocus on the student learning experience, and provide a case for the resources necessary to make this happen.

The Task Force offers its report with enthusiasm and optimism for the future. We believe these 11 recommendations, taken as an integrated whole, have the potential to transform the ways students learn and the ways we work as a faculty and staff. With appropriate funding, UW-Green Bay could build upon the Green Bay Idea of an Educated Person and develop a focus on the learning experience that will position us extraordinarily well for a successful future. I also note that the Task Force focused on the undergraduate learning experience, understanding that the campus remains committed to graduate education, and realizing that the learning issues for graduate students will be somewhat different.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and creativity of the Task Force members, and to present this report on their behalf.

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Introduction

A changing environment; a window of opportunity—
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay was established as an innovative, interdisciplin ary and problem-focused institution of higher education. Much of what we pioneered — most especially, interdisciplinary study and thought — has come to be practiced in colleges and universities across the country. Encouraged by our successes, we remain committed to the Green Bay Idea and the mission of providing a unique learning experience.

Our circumstances have changed during the past 35 years, but the purpose and promise of the University persist. The transformations taking place in the world around us, and on our campus, demand we reassert our educational commitments, values and aspirations, but also develop original ways to realize them and secure resources necessary for our work.

UW System’s Enrollment Management 21 (EM 21) planning and the State’s 2001-2003 Biennial Budget process present opportunities for our University to position itself regionally and nationally, and to renew our mission. Thus, with the endorsements of the appropriate governance committees, the Chancellor commissioned a group of faculty, staff and students, led by the Provost, to delineate a “compelling idea,” an idea to inspire and shape whatever initiatives we might envision. The Chancellor charged this Task Force on the Compelling Idea with fashioning a project to renew and enhance the vibrant traditions, strengths, and programs of the University, as well as to creatively and critically address the evolving needs of communities we seek to serve.

As members of the Task Force, we undertook our deliberations with energy and verve, mindful that what we produced would need to capture the imaginations of our colleagues and might serve as a model for others, as did our institution’s earlier educational experiments and risk-taking. We commenced by reaffirming that the mission of the University should remain that of providing a unique learning experience. We then proceeded to articulate what we, as educators and students, hoped our University might accomplish. We stated our shared aspiration in this way:

At the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay we seek to prepare students to become smart, articulate, and engaged citizens and professional practitioners.

By “smart,” we mean graduates should possess the knowledge, skills and sensibilities to pursue rich, creative and productive lives. By “articulate,” we mean they should be able to effectively communicate their ideas, understandings, and opinions. And by “engaged,” we mean they should be ready to contribute to the development of civic, economic and cultural life. This proposition and its associated understandings served as touchstones throughout our deliberations.
Summary of the process—
The Task Force turned to the question of how our University might change the student learning experience to more fully realize the aspiration we had articulated. Our discussions focused on questions of student development, engaged learning and citizenship.

Agreement emerged that the most effective learning and student development requires preparation, mentoring, and opportunities to explore possibilities. We discussed different approaches to student academic planning and advising. We considered ways to give greater attention to preparing students to learn and to take personal responsibility for their learning. We envisioned a more comprehensive Introduction to College program, a first-year student seminar, a mentoring program involving faculty, staff and upper-level students, a knowledge- and competency-based general education curriculum and a portfolio program.

A consensus emerged that learning is enhanced when we apply what we know and when we explain or “teach” it to others. Our Task Force considered ways of making the UW-Green Bay learning experience more dynamic and experiential in character. In particular, we talked about how to better connect classroom and outside-the-classroom learning and how to enable students to learn by teaching others, to deepen their knowledge and to strengthen their skills of communication.

Finally, we concurred that to prepare students for lives as engaged citizens and professionals the learning experience should incorporate varied community involvement. We envision involvement that includes community research, community service or community-education projects and addresses campus, local, regional, national or global communities.

Framework for proceeding—
The Task Force felt it crucial to approach all three dimensions of the enhanced UW-Green Bay learning experience — the Student Development, Engaged Learning and Citizenship components — in developmental and mutually supportive terms. In other words, they are to be understood progressively and interactively. We are encouraged that many of the things we envision already take place in various UW-Green Bay programs. At the same time, we recognize that, if implemented, aspects of our “compelling idea” will necessitate original and pioneering efforts on the part of faculty, staff and students.

In making our recommendations, we draw confidence from our University’s tradition of experimentation and innovation, its accomplishments and its extraordinary faculty, staff and students. Lest you think this report the work of dreamers, the Task Force repeats its understanding that pursuit of such initiatives will require both the support of our colleagues for the recommendations being made and a major infusion of new funds and resources.
Enrollment Management 21

Enrollment Management 21 is the UW System planning process through which campus enrollment levels and supporting resources are projected for the first three biennia of the 21st Century (2001-2007). All campuses in the UW System are expected to have completed their EM 21 planning by November 1999 to enable the Board of Regents to adopt a final plan by Spring 2000.

In the Spring semester of 1999, the UW-Green Bay campus community advised the Chancellor to link the campus dialogue on institutional positioning to the UW System EM 21 process. The campus community further agreed that a Task Force would work over the summer to develop a case statement on how the University might position itself to achieve a preferred future. It was understood that the case statement would need to be sufficiently compelling to engage enthusiastic support and leverage necessary resources for:

- meeting critical human resource requirements,
- implementing technology information systems,
- building on the Campus Life for the 21st Century plan,
- achieving the goals of Plan 2008 and
- improving the student-faculty ratio to facilitate student learning.

This report is the response to that call.

Re-Focusing on the Learning Experience

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay was created in 1965 as a part of the University of Wisconsin with a distinctive academic curriculum and a focus on the learning experience. With the merger of the University of Wisconsin with the Wisconsin State University System in 1971, meeting the demands of access became a high priority for the campus.

To assure it could achieve its share of enrollment within the new UW System, the Green Bay campus chose to develop disciplinary programs that would appeal to potential students. Thus, Green Bay added to its existing focus on the learning experience a focus on access and a focus on program. Elements of all three of these foci co-exist at UW-Green Bay to this day. All are important and the University cannot entirely reject any of them, but having a distinct and marketable institutional position requires that one or another have predominance as we plan our future development. In the judgment of the Task Force, the most viable and appropriate institutional focus is the learning experience.

There can be many ways to realize a learning experience. However, it is the view of the Task Force that in the context of the UW-Green Bay mission, our guiding
principles and the Green Bay Idea of an Educated Person, an engaged learning experience will have four main features:

• **It will be developmental**
  - addressing each learner's personal, intellectual and social growth.

• **It will be integrated**
  - providing learning in multiple settings and from multiple perspectives, with our challenge that of helping students make the connections that weave the parts together.

• **It will be public**
  - preparing students through their learning for citizenship and professional practice.

• **It will be reflective**
  - encouraging students to make their own learning an object of study.

**The Task Force Proposal**

Whatever the future holds for UW-Green Bay graduates, we believe they will be well served by an education that engages them as learners and prepares them for continuous learning. Their learning must both serve them in their personal growth and development and serve the society in which they live and participate. Personal self-discovery and public contribution are not alternatives; they are integrated and must be pursued simultaneously.

The Task Force has developed a set of 11 integrated proposals aimed at creating an engaged learning experience at UW-Green Bay. The set is described sequentially, but the Task Force presents these recommendations as a whole package. Their impact on student learning will come from the continuous interplay of these activities and practices upon one another.

**What we will do**

- High-impact first contact
- Personalized learning structure
- Competency-based general education
- Active and integrated learning
- Putting learning to work
High-impact first contact

Our students must become engaged learners at the very beginning of their college experience. Many of them now enter college without a clear idea of what is expected of them or how the college experience will be different from high school. Yet research shows those students who come to understand expectations and differences early on tend to be more successful learners.

To assure UW-Green Bay students of this advantage, the Task Force proposes a more focused and intense initial experience for the broadest possible cohort of our new students.

Recommendation I
Redesign of the SOAR and Introduction to College experiences.
— Provide an intensive introduction to college life at UW-Green Bay
— Facilitate interaction with faculty, staff and upper-level students
— Maintain a strong focus on advising and its links to registration
— Expand the orientation to campus life, college skills and social activities
— Engage each student in a seminar focused on “learning how to learn”

Recommendation II
Create a ‘learning how to learn’ seminar for all new students.
— Provide a shared experience for students who are new to the University
— Schedule it to follow SOAR/Introduction to College
— Consider organizing the experience around thematic content
— Focus on engagement through learning, self-discovery and citizenship
— Structure the experience as the time to initiate the personal learning plan
— Structure the experience as the time to initiate the student portfolio

Recommendation III
Institute peer orientation and development groups to better structure students’ exploration of their interests and needs.
— Link new students with faculty, staff and more experienced students
— Provide guidance on expectations for learning
— Assist with portfolio development
Personalized learning structure
Students are more likely to succeed as learners if their learning is strongly motivated by their interests, if they possess the understanding of how they personally learn best, and if they acquire the skills and strategies of effective learning. The creation of a personal learning plan can help the student analyze and articulate personal learning needs and interests. Subsequently, it can serve as the road map for tracking progress.

The Task Force believes the synthesis of the learning experience can be expressed in a portfolio that the student creates during the course of her or his education at UW-Green Bay. The portfolio would have its origins in the student’s personal learning plan, include documentation of the core elements of the learning experience, and serve as a product for assessment. Completion of a satisfactory portfolio would be a graduation requirement. The portfolio is seen as an effective tool for enabling the student to integrate and reflect upon his or her learning experience.

Recommendation IV
Adopt the concept that every student will develop a written personal learning plan.
— To serve as each student’s personal guide to academic and co-curricular work
— To be developed in consultation with advisers
— To be the basis for planning major/minor programs, professional practice, citizenship and other competencies
— To integrate and sequence student learning
— To be the blueprint for the portfolio

Recommendation V
Establish the presentation of a successful portfolio as a graduation requirement for students.
— Introduced in the “learning how to learn” seminar
— Required for graduation; student defends to a committee
— Reviewed throughout student’s career
— Organized to integrate learning experience
— Reviewed for credit throughout the student’s career
Competency-based general education

General education requirements embody the knowledge base that is the foundation of learning. These requirements are designed to provide students with a breadth of knowledge and a set of skills that will permit them to pursue their future learning in depth. Uw-Green Bay currently organizes this learning goal as a set of courses distributed over a range of subjects. The Task Force believes the general education portion of the learning experience should become both more tailored and more explicitly attentive to learning skills. Furthermore, this move can be effectively supported by our current sophomore assessment, College BASE, and can benefit transfers by accepting proof of competence as a basis for admission and placement.

Recommendation VI

Transform the General Education Requirement from a course-based to a competency-based requirement.

— Establish knowledge areas as:
  • Science and Scientific Ways of Thinking
  • Math and Symbolic Languages
  • Diverse Communities
  • Global Understanding
  • Environment
  • Humanities
  • Social Science Analysis and Public Affairs
  • Study and Production of the Creative Arts

— Distribute existing courses within this pattern
— Recognize that requirement may be fulfilled in coursework or other ways
— Support flexibility; acknowledge personalized approaches to learning

Recommendation VII

Integrate a constellation of learning skills into the general education requirement.

— Establish skill areas:
  • Effective Communication
  • Problem Solving/Critical Thinking
  • Ethical Decision Making
  • Learning to Learn
  • Technology and Information Literacy

— Integrate skills into knowledge areas coursework
— Assess skill-development requirements for portfolio documentation
■ Active and integrated learning

When engaged learning is part of the student experience throughout the curriculum and in the co-curricular opportunities, the student benefits. Engaged learning requires the student to be more than a receiver of knowledge. The student must also be a gatherer of data, a critic of information, a critical thinker, a formulator and solver of problems, a producer of the objects of knowledge and art and, ultimately, one who can pass knowledge along to others. Students will acquire the knowledge and skills of educators as a way of learning to learn.

Recommendation VIII

Integrate the pedagogy of ‘learning by way of teaching’ into the curriculum and strengthen faculty development.

— Learning by way of teaching is a developmental concept; students must be prepared with knowledge and skills to do it effectively.

— Academic programs will need to review curricula to identify opportunities for engaged learning and learning by way of teaching.

— Campus faculty development efforts will need to focus on preparing all faculty in the techniques that will help them guide students to be more engaged learners.

Recommendation IX

Enhance structured, organized co-curricular learning experiences available for all students.

— Many students can be engaged in co-curricular learning experiences through residential life programs (theme housing, affinity groups, etc.)

— Student athletes and students who participate in student governance and student organizations are engaged through these opportunities.

— Extended Degree students can be engaged through their summer session or in their local communities.

— The University will expand current opportunities and develop additional opportunities for co-curricular learning so all students will be involved.
Putting Learning to Work

UW-Green Bay has a long tradition of commitment to the application of knowledge as part of the learning experience. Problem-focused education continues to be a core campus mission. The campus has a strong interest in student participation in internships. Professional programs in Social Work, Education and Nursing require a guided practical experience. Art, Music and Theatre students have juried shows, recitals and productions. Communication students produce *Voyageur* magazine. There is a tradition of including undergraduates in faculty research programs in Natural and Applied Sciences, Human Biology and Human Development. These and related activities can provide the foundation for a professional practice requirement and serve as avenues by which students may meet this requirement.

By building on existing practical experience and applied learning efforts, UW-Green Bay will benefit a greater number of students and demonstrate its commitment to the value of professional practice and performance.

The value of an education is measured in terms of the personal fulfillment of the learner and the public contributions of an educated person. To assure every student an opportunity to make a public contribution as part of his or her education, the University is urged to establish a citizenship requirement that may be met on the campus or in community, regional, national or global venues.

Recommendation X

*Expect every student to have professional practice experience as part of his or her learning.*

- Professional practice is the application of learning in a “workplace” environment.
- A “workplace” setting can be off campus (as in practice teaching) or on campus (as in ensemble concerts on campus).
- Professional practice experience should be structured and guided.
- Professional practice should be integrated into every major program.

Recommendation XI

*Expect every student to have a citizenship experience as part of her or his learning.*

- Experiences may have a campus, community, regional, national or global focus
- There are many options to satisfy the requirement; a catalog will be created
- Students may design their own citizenship experience
- The University might consider more formal link to organizations such as the Volunteer Center or EarthWatch as avenues for fulfillment
- Citizenship should be a part of each students’ learning plan
Next Steps

The Role of Governance

The Task Force has carried out its charge with the full realization that it was not to supercede the role of campus governance. Indeed, the group’s product is an “artist’s rendering” rather than a “blueprint” for the learning experience. It will be up to the appropriate campus governance bodics and committees to develop and institutionalize what we have described here.

The Need to Identify Organizational Changes Required by this Proposal

The Task Force will continue to work on uncovering the implications of its proposal for the way the University conducts its business. Some of the questions the campus will need to address include: How will the process of advising change with this proposal? Who will assess student portfolios? Who will maintain the catalog of approved citizenship activities? Who will authorize alternative proposals? How will faculty assignments to the “Learning How to Learn” seminars be credited as part of teaching load? How will students receive credit for their portfolios? Who will oversee competency certification for General Education?

It will take time and deliberation to answer many of these questions. The Task Force will take a first pass at identifying them and, where possible, suggesting mechanisms for addressing them. It is important to realize, however, that this work will be ongoing.

The Need to Identify Required Resources

It will be important to estimate the resources required to implement this proposal - even before all of the details have been developed. If we are to be successful, our plan must be part of the biennial budget submission within EM 21. Consequently, the Task Force will provide advice regarding the kinds of resources that it believes would be needed to accomplish this transformation of the learning experience. Its advice will be forwarded to the Office of Planning and Budget for a more detailed statement of the resource requirements of the plan. That statement will need to be developed by early November.
The Green Bay Idea

An educated person addresses problems and approaches life through multiple perspectives anchored in:

Commitment and engagement

Breadth and depth of knowledge

Skills and tools

Insight and understanding

The Green Bay Idea: Approaching Life Through Applied Knowledge

Survey a modern organization. Ask what characteristics are most valued today. You will hear team orientation, critical thinking and the ability to access and use the vast information of today's world.

Ask what makes these such desirable characteristics. You will learn they are essential to identifying and defining problems, and they enhance problem solving.

Search for the educational approach best suited for today's dynamic Knowledge Age. You will find it is broad-based learning: Learning that enhances your ability to think critically and solve problems; learning that prepares you to apply multiple perspectives to problems and life challenges.

At the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, these characteristics are developed through four touchstones that form the core of the academic plan. Green Bay students come to know these touchstones through coursework, undergraduate research and special learning experiences that demonstrate how they may be applied in life's work, or life itself.

We call this approach the Green Bay Idea of an Educated Person.

UW-Green Bay is committed to helping students learn how to draw on perspectives that are anchored in the four touchstones of our academic approach:

- Breadth and depth of knowledge — The educated person asks “What do I know that applied to this challenge?”
- Insight and understanding — The educated person asks “What is the context of this challenge? What does it mean?”
- Skills and tools — The educated person asks “What abilities and techniques will I use?”
- Commitment and engagement — The educated person asks “What am I going to do?”

—Excerpt from the brochure
“An Idea for the Knowledge Age”
Elaboration of the Recommendations

Recommendation I

Redesign the SOAR/Introduction to College experience.

The Task Force believes it is essential to establish a strong foundation for the learning experience as part of the student's initial activities on campus. Currently, SOAR introduces students to the classroom expectations and academic components of their college lives and the separately-scheduled Introduction to College program deals with out-of-the-classroom life. We recommend the redesign and combination of these two fundamental programs to more appropriately prepare students for a life on campus that continually connects their active learning experience with their personal development.

The new, more integrated program would run approximately three days and would involve a full range of large and small group presentations and activities. Those programs/activities would be based on, but not limited to, The Green Bay Idee, interdisciplinary education, introduction to library and computer use, study and time management skills, learning the campus environment, issues of drug awareness, sexual harassment and crime. We see an important role in the process for student mentors who will serve as guides to their new colleagues. Overall, the program should provide students with opportunities to learn about campus job prospects and student loan information, to purchase textbooks, and so forth. The new program should also include typical social events such as movie, dance or talent show evenings.

We recommend that after the introductory large-group presentations the program structure change to small groups of no more than 15 directed by experienced students, teachers and staff. This will insure every incoming student a more personal initial campus encounter and establish camaraderie. Depending on academic interests within a group, there can be smaller (or even one-on-one) advising sessions to more fully prepare each student for her or his first semester. Associations started in the small groups can continue with students enrolled together in the "learning how to learn" seminar during the first semester. The intention is to afford all students the opportunity to associate with a familiar group of students, advisers and mentors during their first year. To accommodate different needs of older and more advanced new students, required enrollment in the seminar could be limited, for example, to new students with 24 or fewer earned credits.
Recommendation II

Create a ‘learning how to learn’ seminar for new students.

Engaged learners are committed to expanding their breadth and depth of knowledge by taking responsibility for their own educations and to assuming an interactive role with others. The Task Force believes that to become a truly engaged and effective learner, a student must be able to recognize his or her strengths and weaknesses as a learner and to build upon them. With this in mind, we envision a “learning how to learn” seminar which would be required of new students in their first semester at UW-Green Bay.

The seminar will be established as an intensive course for credit. It will be a continuation of the new SOAR/Introduction to College program, with the professor assigned to a specific group of students remaining with that group throughout. The role of the faculty member would include teaching the seminar and serving as the group’s initial adviser. The seminar could be organized by established SOAR/Introduction to College groups, allowing students to continue to share experiences early in their college careers and helping foster relationships.

The “learning how to learn” seminar is intended to focus on each student as an individual learner and allow the student to work with an adviser to develop a personal learning plan. We recommend the plan focus on these three core components of a learning experience:

— Engagement through Learning,

— Engagement through Exploration and

— Engagement through Citizenship.

The goal of the learning plan is to afford each student self-directed guidance, an opportunity to address the general education competencies, and help in creating a personalized plan for citizenship.

The seminar will also introduce the portfolio requirement and enable students to get started in developing their own. Students will have a chance to work with their advisers to build their portfolio’s framework, as well as to begin adding content with the learning plan serving as the first part. Through their peer mentors, students will be able to consult those who have already worked on a portfolio. In time, examples of completed portfolios will be available as examples.

The University might choose to organize the “learning how to learn” seminars around a common annual theme.

Collectively, these elements will contribute to the foundation on which students build their college careers and guide them along their academic paths.
Recommendation III

Create peer orientation and development groups.

Peer orientation and development groups can serve as a way in which students continue meeting in smaller groups beyond their first semester. The groups may be based around academic programs. It is expected they will be enriched by the interaction of learners at all levels of study and personal development. In particular, younger students can be aided and encouraged by interactions with advanced and non-traditional students, reflecting the mix of learners at UW-Green Bay.

As envisioned, the groups will be formed after the completion of the "learning how to learn" seminar. Once students are identified as members of a particular peer group they continue with that group throughout their college careers, unless their program choices prompt changes. Peer group membership, like membership in the Alumni Association, will be conferred on every student, but the student will choose her or his own level of involvement. The Task Force sees these groups as offering guidance on expectations for learning and insight into typical program requirements and expectations that may not be self-evident. Groups can also provide important mentoring assistance in the continued development of the required portfolios.

The Task Force recognizes that it may take some time to establish fully integrated and dynamic peer groups. Initially, the University might seek involvement of currently successful upper-level students to help create a model for an active learning environment and good citizenship. When the initial class of peer group members achieves upper-level status, the group model should be fully operational. By then, there will be several examples of portfolios in development that can be shared among the students under guidance and advice of senior-level mentors, faculty and staff.

Because of the less formal nature of these groups they can also afford newer students a source for personal advice as they wend their individual ways through campus life. The inclusion of upper-level students is essential since it serves to further integrate the components of the engaged learning experience. Upper-level students who continue to work as peer group mentors will improve the learning experience for lower-level students while also potentially fulfilling an important part of their own citizenship requirement. Perhaps of more importance, they will be serving as role models for newer students who in time may seek to support and advise the next generation of new students, thus fostering the development of a responsible student citizenry.
Recommendation IV

*Adopt the concept that every student will develop a written personal learning plan.*

In keeping with the aspirations of preparing students to become smart, articulate, and engaged citizens and professional practitioners, the Task Force believes it necessary for all students develop a detailed learning plan to guide their academic and co-curricular work. This plan, framed around the Green Bay Idea of an Educated Person, can be instrumental in our students’ college careers as they grow individually and become engaged learners both in the classroom and the community.

Because the personal learning plan is critical early on in each student’s development, it should be incorporated into the proposed “learning how to learn” seminar. Here, the plan can be introduced and articulated by students in consultation with their seminar faculty advisers. Development of a personal learning plan will help students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and build upon them. It will also afford students the opportunity to explore their individual potential as they identify their own academic interests and career aspirations. This opportunity for self-exploration will lend itself to greater personalized insight and understanding.

We see two purposes for the personal learning plan. First, it as an opportunity for students to consult their advisers one-on-one and outline a detailed and integrative plan that will creatively and uniquely combine course work and out-of-class experiences. This critical combination will enhance students’ educations and help equip them with the necessary skills to be successful in today’s world. Detailed thought and articulation at this stage will provide students with sequential outlines that incorporate the general education requirement competencies, courses in their chosen major and minor programs, professional practice opportunities, and citizenship experiences. These carefully constructed plans will place emphasis on developmental and integrative learning.

Second, the personal learning plan can serve as the foundation for each student’s portfolio. The learning plan will be crucial to the success of the portfolio because it will serve as the “blueprint” from which the rest of the portfolio is created. Students will use their learning plans as guides for gaining experiences, and these experiences will then contribute to the portfolio and build upon the learning plan from which they came.
Recommendation V

Establish the presentation of a successful portfolio as a graduation requirement for students.

To demonstrate knowledge that has been learned and skills that have been achieved, each student will compile and present a portfolio.

All new students will be introduced to the portfolio requirement in the “learning how to learn” seminars during their first semester at UW-Green Bay. Because we strongly believe that portfolios will serve as instrumental tools in the development and success of our students, they will be one of the major components of the new student seminar (along with the creation of the personal learning plans). Faculty advisers who lead these seminars will help students begin laying the groundwork for their portfolios in this first semester by explaining various approaches to portfolio development. Students will have access to samples of previously completed portfolios. One-on-one mentoring will be essential for new students as they get started with this project.

Portfolios will be conceived in a developmental fashion, such that the integration of learning experiences to occur throughout the students’ college careers will be effectively displayed. We envision portfolios as containing the following components: personal learning plan, documentation of general education, assessment of the major and minor program, professional practice experience, citizenship engagement, and a resume. Students will be encouraged to submit a variety of items which will be considered evidence of their participation and fulfillment of the required areas. Items such as research or other written papers (including relevant correspondence), photographs, audio or visual records of performances, slide collections, published articles, research results, or computer programs are just examples of the many ways in which students may choose to present their accomplishments. Students will also be expected to include reflection and commentary on their work.

Students will be required to complete and successfully defend their portfolios prior to graduation. The Task Force envisions portfolio reviews taking place four times throughout the students’ educational careers (on the latter three occasions they would receive credit, upon approval of the portfolio review committee). The timeline would be as follows: upon completion of the new student seminar; after earning 53 credits; after earning 83 credits; and prior to graduation. Students would defend their portfolios before a committee of three people: a faculty member in the major, a fellow student, and a staff, community, or second faculty member. Students could choose the desired method for presentation, which might include, but is not limited to: PowerPoint, web site, videotape, or hard copy. Upon successful defense of the portfolios, students would receive a notation on their transcripts.
Recommendation VI

Transform the General Education Requirement from a course-based to a competency-based requirement.

The current general education requirement is expressed in terms of course credits distributed across four "breadth of study" areas, an other-cultures requirement, an ethnic studies requirement, mathematics competency and a writing requirement. The Task Force proposes that these requirements become competency-based. That is, working from the existing distribution categories and student learning outcomes, the requirement will be redefined in terms of competencies in the following knowledge areas: Science and Scientific Ways of Thinking; Mathematics and Symbolic Languages; Diverse Communities; Global Understanding; Environment; Humanities; Social Science Analysis and Public Affairs; and Study and Production in Creative Arts.

Existing general education courses, appropriately distributed, would continue to be the primary means by which students meet the requirements, but students would also be permitted to meet any particular requirement through demonstration of competency. This might be accomplished through challenge examinations, independent study or documentation of prior learning.

The advantages of conceptualizing general education as a competency requirement are that the intellectual purpose of general education can be more closely tied to its specific learning outcomes and that this system will permit students to focus more effectively on their own learning needs. For example, there will be more options within the general education program for students who are good at independent learning. Highly motivated and highly talented students will be able to cover this ground at a faster pace. Students who are already competent in some area will not need to rework old ground.

A competency-based general education requirement has the potential to help every student focus his or her learning plan more sharply on personal learning needs and interests.
Recommendation VII

Integrate a constellation of learning skills into the general education requirement.

The general education program is the ideal place in the curriculum to specifically address the skill sets that are the foundation for learning how to learn and for professional practice. The Task Force identified these as:

- Effective Communication
- Problem Solving/Critical Thinking
- Ethical Decision Making
- Learning to Learn
- Technology and Information Literacy

Rather than presume that students acquire these skills somewhere in their coursework (as most surely do), the Task Force proposes that we assure that each of these skill areas is encountered by all students in the course of their studies.

Courses certified by the appropriate curriculum committee (academic program and General Education Council), as specifically addressing and assessing one of these skills, may be used by students to meet the requirement. As with the knowledge competencies, alternative forms of demonstrating skill competency will be permitted. To fully develop this requirement, existing courses may need to be adapted and some new courses may be developed.

Within the general education program, we will specifically assess student skill development, either within the context of courses or through a special assessment process. Competency in learning skills will also be documented in each student's portfolio.
Recommendation VII

Integrate the pedagogy of "learning by way of teaching" into the curriculum and strengthen faculty development.

As professional practitioners and engaged, active citizens, UW-Green Bay graduates should be capable of working effectively and ethically through the appreciation and application of a variety of perspectives and through the acquisition of essential analytical, critical and communicative skills. To that end — and based on the principle that "one never learns anything so well as when they must teach it to others" — a "teaching as learning" pedagogical approach can serve as a meaningful and unique process for allowing our students to more fully engage in their individual and collective learning experiences. Indeed, this kind of engaged learning experience could characterize the curriculum throughout all four (or more) years of a student's university career. In essence, we must seek fresh ways to enable students to master various types of knowledge and to improve their communication skills.

There are, perhaps, curricular aspects of programs that will not logistically allow for such an approach, nevertheless, we should make every effort to think and act imaginatively. Reduction in large general education class size and the creation of discussion sections in these would be most desirable to allow broader inclusion of "teaching as learning" approaches at the introductory level.

At the upper level, existing examples of how we might put into practice "teaching as learning" abound. Students working as teaching assistants, lab instructors, and tutors are examples of ways in which students demonstrate "teaching as learning." Other ways in which students develop parts of the knowledge base and communicative skills typically associated with the practice of teaching include classroom presententions, case-study approaches, discussion groups, and project groups. Major and minor academic programs can develop specific activities to fulfill these learning expectations, as well. Extensive faculty development seminars and workshops will be necessary to prepare the professorate for the practice of teaching as learning.

Sample list of possible "teaching as learning" applications

- The "teaching as learning" concept and a variety of learning and teaching styles should be introduced in the proposed new student seminar.

- Advanced student mentors might offer portfolio demonstrations and lead discussions that assist in the development of individualized learning programs in the new student seminar or peer groups.

- In classes of 40 or fewer students, it might be possible to require short student presentations that will teach students to effectively organize and focus on oral and visual communication skills.
• The use of discussion groups or labs related to lecture classes will afford opportunities for advanced students to serve as teaching assistants and mentors. Discussion groups will also afford the less experienced students an opportunity to discuss, organize, and present material.

• Practica, and other performance-oriented courses, afford students at all skill and experience levels the opportunity to more actively participate. All programs should consider initiating or expanding such offerings.

• Case Study presentations afford students opportunities for the analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application of theories and concepts so integral in a “teaching as learning” environment.

• “Critique sessions” of student work should be incorporated where possible to better prepare students for “real world” experiences and as a means of further developing their own critical and analytical skills. Students should be involved in both sides of the critiquing process.

• Where possible we should involve students in projects that involve off-campus evaluation/critique of work.

• Undergraduate teaching fellowships or teaching should be established to offer advanced students the opportunity to directly apply “teaching as learning” techniques.

• We might structure projects that allow students at various skill and experience levels to work as a team led by more advanced students under the supervision of faculty leaders.

• We should encourage active student participation in various campus, local, regional, national or global organizations. This will help students realize the citizenship requirement and serve to better prepares students for civic participation beyond graduation.

• We should encourage local community education activities and/or presentations, in favor of integrating all aspects of the engaged learning experience.

• The proposed portfolio presentation and defense can serve to advance the ideals of “teaching as learning” and prepare students for civic participation and professional practice.

• Academic programs might consider expanding or creating seminar opportunities at the advanced level.

• Faculty might formulate independent and group-based study opportunities culminating in a presentation with response and critique by selected members of the related program.

• Where possible faculty might consider involving students in the preparation and presentation of scholarly work beyond traditional classroom settings.
Recommendation IX

Enhance structured, organized co-curricular learning experiences for all students.

Students are currently involved at many levels in a wide variety of co-curricular activities. These co-curricular experiences have the potential to engage students in learning. Such learning opportunities can encourage experimentation, application, involvement and reflection. By structuring these experiences for and with students we will support the learning community and students will share in building this community.

One important way students may integrate their learning is through residential living. Currently, Residencel Life programs provide theme housing (i.e. diversity/global awareness, wellness, music appreciation, theater appreciation, and environmental issues) where students share interests, activities, and learning experiences in a group living situation. Students are afforded opportunities to design their own groups in affinity housing options. Students with a common purpose live together, commit to diversity, and provide community service. Academic intervention programs, like the early warning intervention program for freshman and Tools for 2000 (six-week seminar), address academic skills and support academic success. To better integrate these activities into the learning plan, Living-Learning arrangements will expand faculty involvement in this most influential aspect of student transition to the University environment. Students participating in building and enforcing their own community standards — whether as Resident Assistants, Peer Judicial Review Board members or Peer Educators — learn leadership, ethics and citizenship.

To enhance the student learning experience and to provide additional occasions when students, staff and faculty — as well as members of the wider Green Bay community — can come together to learn and exchange ideas beyond required class hours, we recommend an expansion in the number of visiting speakers and artists. Such occasions can serve to incite and inspire fresh thinking. We encourage even greater cooperation among the Office of Student Life, the Faculty and the Office of Academic Affairs. Models for such efforts and programs already exist at UW-Green Bay. For example, the Office of Student Life, Office of the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Center for History and Social Change cooperate on producing at least one major “multicultural” event each year in the Center’s Historical Perspectives Lecture Series, a program which annually brings several renowned scholars to campus for lectures and meetings with students and faculty. An expanded program of guest lectures and performances might be organized around the envisioned new student seminars (especially, if we develop annual themes for those seminars).

Student participation on University committees and departmental advisory committees and in student government are also learning experiences. They provide an opportunity to influence the learning environment, work on teams, improve
communication skills, problem solve and examine issues from a different perspective. Student participation in University-sponsored activities, (e.g. athletics, student organizations, honor societies) teach time-management, team-skills and communication skills. Student organizations are student-initiated, involve leadership, service, projects and budgeting. Organizations are career-, interest- or exploration-related and generally allow students to develop through peer influence, adviser guidance and group goal setting. Students have the opportunity to get involved as participants, coordinators, organizers and leaders of many of the programs offered. They can apply business, marketing, communication and graphics skills while getting involved as student leaders on campus.

Extended Degree and Nursing students may have co-curricular options that include involvement in their local communities.

Ultimately, the distinction between curricular and co-curricular learning can be broken down by practices such as: faculty fellows in residence, student-faculty interest groups, student-faculty dinners, encouraging class study groups, in-residence advising and instruction within the residence halls.

**Recommendation X**

*Expect every student to have professional practice experience as part of her or his personal learning.*

As we prepare students to become professional practitioners, it is absolutely essential that some form of professional practice experience be incorporated into every student's personal learning plan. It is important to note that this component of the learning plan will most likely "not" be specifically identified until the student has reached an advanced level of study. By definition, "professional practice" is the application of learning in a workplace environment. A workplace environment may exist in both on-campus and off-campus venues. This is most easily understood in the guise of internship experiences or formal "practica" courses; however, we also imagine that significant presentations for local agencies, public school systems or other civic organizations might also be options.

We emphasize the integration of engagement in learning and citizenship. When on campus, the professional practice experience must include some form of public presentation in workshop or conference situations, performances, campus internships or professional product development. It is also essential that each professional practice experience be carefully supervised and guided.

To this end, it will be necessary for every major program to develop an array of possible professional practice opportunities. Although it will be each program's responsibility to insure that every student is afforded such an opportunity, students should be encouraged to seek out particular opportunities attuned to their individual learning plans.
Recommendation XI

Expect every student to have a citizenship experience as part of his or her learning plan.

To prepare our students for lives and careers as engaged citizens, we need to cultivate such inclinations, experiences and activities through the UW-Green Bay learning experience. Comprehending citizenship broadly, we imagine a universe of vehicles through service — but also through research and teaching — activities. These might address campus, local, regional, national or global communities. Moreover, we feel strongly that the citizenship requirement should be defined so as to encourage students to engage the world in ways that intimately and clearly express their respective personal learning plans and interests. In other words, we do not believe “one model fits all.” We want our students to see such activities not simply in terms of fulfilling a requirement, but as opportunities for exploration, learning, growth and contribution.

Whenever possible, we think it best for students to design their own citizenship experiences. Many UW-Green Bay students already have established significant records of citizenship activities, achieved through a variety of community service and independent study projects. We believe all our students are capable of doing so with the proper guidance and encouragement.

In the area of service, some relationships already exist and might be further developed — the United Way, Volunteer Center and Habitat for Humanity for example. Others — EarthWatch for example — might be pursued. Other organizational leadership opportunities exist on campus. Given the increase in such activity through this new and meaningful requirement, we recommend establishing a campus catalog of options for students to consider as they develop their individualized learning plans. Academic programs may well be interested in developing other options for students that may more closely integrate with their curricula.

It is envisioned that these citizenship opportunities will be documented in each student’s portfolio. A variety of options can be discussed and explored in the “learning how to learn” seminar during a student’s first semester. It may be possible to identify certain activities at that time; however, through continued consultation with peer groups and program advisers, students may bring a more cohesive focus to these activities. Important work lies ahead in establishing general guidelines or standards for acceptable citizenship practice and in the identification of a campus office responsible for coordinating these efforts.

Preparation for engaged citizenship requires knowledge of the public realm. Thus, we believe our general education program and curriculum should critically incorporate and address questions of American citizenship and civil society.