DRAFT FOR SENATE DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Charge to GE Committee from ECOS
Develop a pilot program for the new UM Core envisioned by the UPC. The pilot would be offered to a target group of incoming freshmen for Fall 2019 as an alternative to our existing General Education program

What should the pilot look like?
• Clearer in design and fewer credits than our current GE
• Should have an interdisciplinary component
• Should work well with the MUS Transfer Core
• Incorporate "UM Ways" and "Communities of Excellence" developed by UPC
• Should help with recruitment, retention, and advising

UM CORE PILOT
A Liberal Arts Education for the 21st Century

UM Core offers clear pathways to success in life and career. Coursework in the UM Ways— Communicating, Creating, Living, and Knowing—provides essential skills for a changing world.

Core Competencies
Speaking
Writing
Ethical Reasoning
Quantitative Reasoning

Core Perspectives
Cultural and International Diversity
Creativity and the Arts
Information Literacy
Critical Thinking and Analysis

Speaking (3)	Writing (3)	Ethical Reasoning (3)	Quantitative Reasoning (3)
Speaking and Culture	Writing and the Arts [...] Advanced Writing is moved to the major]	Ethical Reasoning and Society	Quantitative Reasoning and the Natural World
Languages (3-5) [req. of all majors; no high credit major exception]	Expressive Arts (3)	Social Sciences (3)	Physical Science (3) [Natural Science would be separated into two groups: Physical Science and Bio/Life sciences]
Cultural and International Diversity (3) [a second semester of language could fulfill this category]	Literary and Artistic Studies (3)	Historical Studies (3)	Biological/Life Science (3)
9 credits	**9 credits**	**9 credits**	**9 credits**

Most students will be able to complete the Core in 30 credits
The total credits in the columns above is 36, but interdisciplinary "Cross-Core" courses (formerly known as double-dippers) allow students to complete the Core in fewer credits by fulfilling the learning outcomes of two groups. Additionally, all students fulfill some Core

courses in their major, and some earn credit through AP exams, dual enrollment, and placement tests. Consequently, the Core shouldn't be difficult to complete.

There are four Groups in the UM Core:
1. Speaking and Culture
2. Writing and the Arts
3. Ethical Reasoning and Society
4. Quantitative Reasoning and the Natural World

Group names are based on the <u>competency</u> that students acquire and on the content of the <u>perspectives</u> that they examine. These four groups are thematically connected to the UPC's original Montana Ways:

1. Speaking and Culture: *Ways of Communicating*
2. Writing and the Arts: *Ways of Creating*
3. Ethical Reasoning and Society: *Ways of Living*
4. Quantitative Reasoning and the Natural World: *Ways of Knowing*

Core Content
Interdisciplinary "Cross-Core" courses (formerly known as double-dippers)
Cross-core courses fulfill the learning outcomes of two areas and allow students to complete the Core in fewer than 36 credits (e.g. taking two Cross-Core courses would bring the total down to 30). Because these courses fulfill two groups, they will receive extra scrutiny in approval and review to assure that they fulfill learning outcomes for both groups.

"Big Ideas" Courses
• Interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary problems and issues
• Emphasis on analysis and critical thinking
• Goal: What do students need to know about the way a discipline (or set of disciplines) understands the world and approaches contemporary problems to be better informed citizens after graduation?
•Could be newly-designed courses or build upon existing GE or GLI courses
    Sample Course Titles
    Science in Society
    Arts and Social Change
    Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics
    Living Well, Living Responsibly

UM CORE SUPPORT: Freshman Core and UM Pathways
Focus on Student Engagement, Retention, Advising

Freshman Core
• Optional

• Pilot targets incoming freshmen who haven't declared a major
• Eventually open to all incoming freshman

<u>Fall Semester</u>
• Freshman Seminar: a one-credit increment linked to an existing GE course
• Taught by the instructor of the linked course (financial incentive necessary)
> *Course Content*: Campus support and resources; information literacy; and students design a 4-year path to graduation

<u>Spring Semester</u>
Students enroll in a "Big Ideas" course that satisfies one or two Core areas

UM Pathways
Pathways are advising tracks that offer students options within the Core to meet their specific needs and interests. These might be developed by programs, the GE committee, GLI, etc.
• Optional (and students wouldn't locked into a pathway once they've started)
• Organized by themes focused on interdisciplinary interests or Communities of Excellence
• Pathways must offer students choices of courses within each of the perspectives whenever possible; they aren't intended to steer students into a single route through the Core.
• Might benefit students who pursue popular double majors, major/minor pairings, and certificates by showing efficient options for completing the Core.
• Might engage collaboration within the Communities of Excellence identified by UPC: Artistic Expression & Communication, Business & Entrepreneurship, Environment & Sustainability; Health & Human Development; Justice, Policy & Public Service; Science & Technology

FUTURE OF UM CORE
• Students should see UM Core as an essential part of their education
• Students should understand how Core courses complement coursework in their major

Recommended Actions
• Begin review of all GE courses Fall 2019
• Request to colleges and programs:
> -Take a close look at your GE offerings
> -Which courses best fulfill student need or the Big Ideas model?
• Incentives from Administration are essential
> -Develop a system which removes or mediates competition for student credit hours
> -Provide financial incentives to develop new courses based on the Big Ideas model
• Spreading the Responsibility for UM Core: GE can't provide all the answers
> Specialized skills like advanced writing and independent research opportunities should be part of the Core, but might best be fulfilled within the major