

Pathways to General Education



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pathways.prov.vt.edu

Pathways: Educating the Whole Student

The process of implementing the Pathways General Education program is in full swing as we prepare for its Summer II/Fall 2018 launch. As you will read, we held another productive Summer Institute (page 2), the assessment process is in its pilot phase (page 3), over 250 courses and five minors have been approved to date (page 5), our new website has launched (page 7), and Pathways Minors are already of national interest (page 7). Without the dedication of the members of the Pathways Ad Hoc Committee and the college curriculum coordinators (listed on page 5), none of this would be possible.

However, between completing the paperwork, navigating the governance process, and walking the program development tightrope, it is easy to lose sight of the existential questions: Why general education? Why Pathways? Why now?

Why general education? Students need the opportunity to marry their professional pursuits with the development of personal and civic capacities, both essential to understanding and contributing to the world around them. Students must critically analyze such topics as race, gender, and socioeconomic status across all fields and structures, topics with which our nation is grappling with renewed vigor.

Why Pathways? Instructors will adopt inclusive pedagogies and content to allow all students, regardless of their background or prior experience, to explore fields of interest. As evident in our Showcase and Spotlight sections (pages 3 and 4), students in our Pathways pilot courses are developing as people and citizens through innovative and memorable classroom experiences.

Why now? After reading the following stories, we hope you will say: 'Why now...why not?! Vive la Revolution!' (Read about Rob Stephen's History of Violence course on page 4 so this makes sense).

Stephen Biscotte

Coordinator for General Education

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3rd Annual Pathways Summer Institute Brings Nearly 100 Faculty Together

The 3rd Annual Pathways Summer Institute kicked off on Monday, June 12, with a Pathways Minor/Course Showcase and Matchmaking Reception. In this pseudo 'speed-dating' format, developers of Pathways Minors stood in front of posters outlining the description, structure, and potential needs of their minor in development. Developers of courses then circulated to see if they might find a home in a program. Matches were made and collaborations were sparked.

Over the next two days, attendees received overviews of the Pathways assessment process, examples of experiential learning and alternative pathways, and updates regarding course/minor approvals to date and the addition of the new 7th core concept. In addition, attendees chose from a variety of workshops tailored to their interests and needs, including active learning,

integration, Pathways Minor development, Pathways course assessment, integration of ethical reasoning and intercultural and global awareness, and incorporation of group projects. Private or guided work time was also available during each afternoon session.

Miss the event? Check out the Pathways Canvas site (canvas.vt.edu/courses/12791) to learn more about the Pathways Minors and Courses presented at the matchmaking event, resources available from the workshops, and informational presentations provided throughout the event. You can also access the Summer Institute image gallery at www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/professional-development/summer-institute-2017.html.

Be on the lookout for a Save-the-Date for the 4th Annual Pathways Summer Institute coming soon!



(Clockwise from top left) 1. Pathways Minor Matchmaking, 2. Sharing best practices, 3. Proposal writing workshop, 4. Getting down in the weeds of Pathways Minor development.

> Showcase

Students and Instructors Share Experiences in Pathways Showcase

When Min Kim, a freshman in University Studies, was asked why someone should take Seeking Sustainability, he said, “The reason I would tell you take this class is it lets you talk about more than sustainability; it lets you develop as a person.” Rachel Leonardo, an Architecture major, said about the class, “My favorite aspect of this class is that it’s a very open learning environment and everyone gets to put in their opinion.”

In the *Generalizing Education Podcast*, Dr. Tim Baird, the developer of this geography course that will serve as the foundation of the coming Pathways to Sustainability Minor, stated his view that, “Even in a large class, I think that there are things we can do to get to know each other a little bit, to develop some trust, to build some rapport, and to be a little bit vulnerable.”

On the Pathways Showcase page (www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/showcase.html) you will find not only student and instructor quotes like these, but also course video trailers, image galleries, informational flyers, and even podcasts with the

instructors. There are a dozen courses showcased so far, including Biology of Sex, Create! Ideation for Innovation, and Introduction to Computational Thinking.

As Dr. Dennis Kafura, developer of Introduction to Computational Thinking states,

“ I hope that [students] will find in this class a useful skill, some new ways of thinking and looking at the world, and do so in an engaged – dare I say enjoyable – way.”

It is our hope we can use this platform to showcase the many exciting and innovative Pathways courses and minors.

The Pathways Showcase pages, including some of the content (course trailers, pictures, podcasts, etc.), were developed as a collaboration between Najla Mouchrek (Undergraduate Academic Affairs), Jenna Haynes (CIDER), and students from Edward Fox’s senior computer science class (CS 4624): Erin Gaughan, Jordan White, Mischa Michael, Chris Rocconi, Chris Deisher, and Riley Kohl.



Seeking Sustainability class



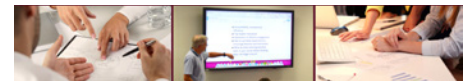
Create! Ideation for Innovation class

> Pathways 101

Pathways Assessment Module Added to Pathways 101

Pathways Assessment, the newest short video module added to our Pathways 101 series, uses a four-step framework to walk through the principles and practices of assessment in the Pathways General Education curriculum. This is followed by samples and expectations of Pathways instructors. On the Pathways 101 page (www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/about/pathways101.html), you will also find modules called Introduction to Pathways, A New Approach to General Education at VT, Pathways Concepts and Student Learning Outcomes and Pathways Options.

If you wish to pilot the assessment process this academic year, first check out the assessment page (www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/assessment.html) where you will find rubrics and samples. Then reach out to Bethany Bodo (bbodo@vt.edu) or Molly Hall (mrhall@vt.edu) in Assessment and Evaluation to contribute to the pilot data-collection process.



Pathways Assessment Workshops

After Winter Break, register for a Pathways Assessment Workshop through NLI, but for now save the following dates (location TBA):

- Wednesday, January 31, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, February 13, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- Thursday, March 1, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Friday, March 23, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 9, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

NLI website: <https://app.nli.tlos.vt.edu/>

> In the Spotlight

Bringing the History of Violence to Life

In the exciting new Pathways course History of Violence, students role-play historic events like Indian Independence from Britain and the French Revolution (pictured here). *Reacting to the Past* courses are built to challenge students to “adhere to the philosophical and intellectual beliefs of the historical figures they have been assigned to play, but they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas persuasively, in papers, speeches or other public presentations; and students must also

pursue a course of action they think will help them win the game.” Robert P. Stephens, Associate Professor in History, has utilized his Pathways Development Grant to receive training on this innovative curriculum. “Utilizing games to fully immerse students in their learning experience has been exhilarating,” Stephens said. “This group of students is the most engaged and motivated class I’ve ever worked with, and their writing and public speaking have improved dramatically.”



(Clockwise from top left) 1. King Louis XVI pleads to the National Assembly, 2. People of Paris start first of several riots, 3. Name cards identify delegates 4. Marshall Law is called by Lafayette, 5. A letter from King Louis to the Austrians and Prussians, 6. The Assembly votes

Conference on Teaching Large Classes

Virginia Tech, February 18, 2018



Register Today: www.teachinglargeclasses.org/conference

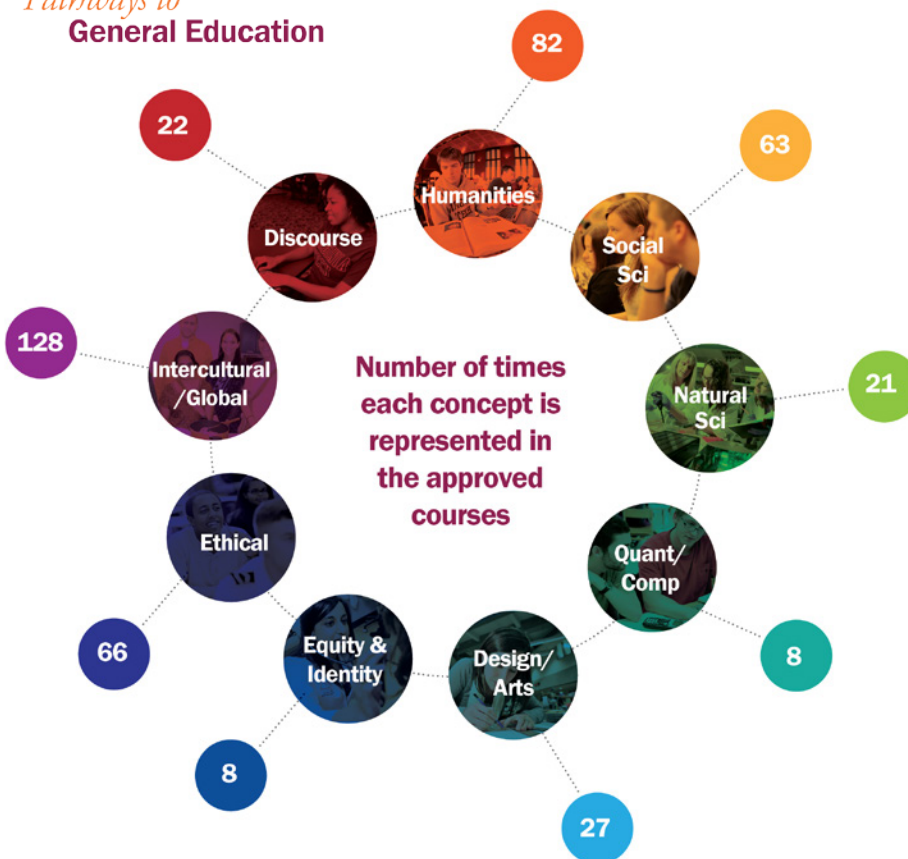
> Implementation

To Date, 250 Courses and 5 Minors Have Been Approved for Pathways

Members of the Pathways Ad Hoc Review Committee have been busy reviewing and approving 250 courses and 5 minors (www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/table.html) over the past two semesters in preparation for the Pathways rollout in Fall 2018. This committee consists of representatives from Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), University Curriculum Committee for General Education (UCCGE), University Libraries, University Studies, and each academic college, with support provided by the Registrar's Office and Office of General Education.

The latest Pathways Course Proposal Form (V1.7), Minor Proposal Form, and 7th Core Outcome Amendment Form can all be found on the Pathways website under Pathways Forms: www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/proposal-forms.html. The 7th Core Outcome Amendment Form is only to be used for courses which have already been approved for Pathways over the past year, but would like to add, or switch to, Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States as a Core Outcome.

Pathways to General Education



This diagram provides a snapshot of the concept representation in the approved courses so far.

> Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Pathways Ad Hoc Committee

The following members of the Pathways Ad Hoc Committee have spent the Fall semester tirelessly reviewing courses and minors:

- Mary Kasarda (Co-Chair)
- Art Keown (Co-Chair)
- Bob Rogers
- Mike Ellerbrock
- Diane Zahm
- Julia Feerrar
- Kerry Redican
- Kim Carlson
- Earl Kline
- Elaine Matuszek
- Ann-Marie Knoblauch
- Monica Ponder
- Sheila Carter-Tod
- Sean Corcoran
- Greg Justice

With support from:

- Gary Costello and the Registrar's Office staff
- Curriculum Coordinators from each College including:
 - Allison Craft
 - Cathy Barker
 - Tracy Sebring
 - Robin Panneton
 - Julia Acton
 - Rob Jacks
 - Anna Taylor

Without you, we could not make this happen. Thank you!

> Summit

VT Hosts Gen Ed Summit in Collaboration with 4-VA

On Friday, October 6, 2017, representatives from all 4-VA schools came together for the first General Education Summit, held at Virginia Tech. The summit was developed by team leaders from each school, including Meg Mulrooney (JMU), Rachel Most (UVA), Jeanie Kline (ODU), Deborah Noble-Triplett (VCU), Bethany Usher and Janette Muir (GMU), and hosted by Stephen Biscotte (VT). Members of the teams brought expertise related to all things general education, from faculty governance and professional development to enrollment management and budgeting.

The General Education Summit provided an opportunity for general education leaders at each 4-VA institution to share best practices, build relationships, and expand collaborative support for general education across the state. Meg Mulrooney, the associate vice provost for university programs and a professor of history at JMU, described the summit as “an important opportunity for us to focus on common solutions to common challenges in the commonwealth.”

Attendees reported that the summit challenged many of their assumptions about the practice of general education in the state of Virginia. Melissa Broeckelman-Post, a member of the Mason Core Committee at GMU said, “Our perception is that students transfer from community college to us [GMU], but not among us... Now we can say almost all of us have X course, and what can we do to make it possible to transfer among ourselves?” Judy Giering, the director of Learning Design and Technology at UVA said, “We



Stephen Biscotte (VT) facilitating the General Education Summit

saw the innovative practice of curricular integration as an opportunity to challenge faculty's perception of their teaching.” Other attendees commented that the summit was helpful because they want to know what colleagues around the state are doing but lack the time and resources to conduct that research. Through the summit, attendees heard personal stories regarding the transformation of general education across the state and reviewed information that may be difficult to find on the public-facing areas of our university websites.

The summit also provided attendees with the opportunity “to get some great ideas about how to implement general education that help students navigate the system more easily,” said Jeanie Kline, the academic initiatives executive at ODU. Lisa Mayes, the executive director of the Center for High Impact Practices at ODU added, “It gave us an opportunity to step away from our own institutional focus and hear from our colleagues. We discovered that there are more commonalities with our successes and our challenges.”

Leaders from each institution began the meeting by sharing the current status and structure of general education at each campus including ongoing transformation and future goals. An update was then provided by Paul Smith and Jodi Fisler from the State Commission for Higher Education in Virginia regarding House Bill 1662, Senate Bill 1234, and the latest assessment policy. Discussion around the implications for general education and how input from the summit might inform future implementation ensued. The remainder of the summit was dedicated to facilitating discussion around key topics such as enrollment management, supporting transfer students, and transfer equivalencies. Team leaders anticipate that one of the outcomes of the summit will be the development of a white paper that represents the shared goals, challenges and curricular innovation opportunities of general education across the commonwealth.

The general education team at VT summarized the summit by noting, “We’re grateful for all the effort the other institutions made to come together for this event. It feels like the start of something that needs to continue. It was enlightening to see the common issues among the campuses and to see the collaborative desire on everyone’s part to work as one cohesive unit across the commonwealth.”



Jill Sible (VT), Lisa Mayes (ODU), Kathy Clarke (JMU)



Daniela Cigularova (ODU), Stephanie Foster (GMU), Kurt Johnson (JMU), Paul Smith (SCHEV), Gary Costello (VT), Jeanie Kline (ODU)

Article by Christa Miller, Virginia Tech
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> Conference

Developers of Pathways Minors Share their Work at National General Education Conference

Kim Carlson (PCOB), Erik Ervin (CNRE), James Jewitt (CAUS), and Carolyn Shivers (CLAHS) joined Stephen Biscotte at the annual meeting of the Association of General and Liberal Studies in Memphis TN in September to present *Developing Thematic Minors to Help Gen Ed 'Count': A Panel Discussion*. Following an overview of the objectives and structure of each minor, the presenters shared insights into the successes and lessons learned in the development of their exciting new transdisciplinary Pathways minors in Organizational Leadership, Global Food Security and Health, Visual Arts and Society, and Disabilities Studies.



Erik Ervin, Carolyn Shivers, James Jewitt, and Kim Carlson presenting at the annual meeting of the Association of General and Liberal Studies

> Announcements



Pathways Development and Delivery Grant Announcement Coming in February.

www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/professional-development/grants.html



Access our new website: pathways.prov.vt.edu

A banner with a background of a starry night sky and the Milky Way galaxy. In the top right corner is the Virginia Tech logo (VT VIRGINIA TECH). The text on the banner includes:
Learning through EXPERIENCE
Student Experiential Learning Conference
April 13th, 2018
Spring Family Weekend
www.xl.vt.edu
Student application deadline: March 18, 2018

pathways.prov.vt.edu

Pathways to **General Education**

Pathways Newsletter

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