OVERVIEW:

As part of our continued effort to re-envision the Kent Core, we hosted a Community Forum series that began on Wednesday, April 3, 2024. The Forum included nineteen virtual sessions lasting 90-minutes each, and concluded on Friday, April 19, 2024. The Provost sent an email in March 2024 informing the Kent State community of these sessions. We estimate over 300 participants in total and were able to collect a significant amount of feedback.

During the sessions, the three general education frameworks created by the Model Sprint Team were presented in detail to participants. At the conclusion of each model, participants were asked to pause during the session to provide feedback in an online survey. In addition to the model frameworks, we asked participants to provide feedback on a few critical questions that will aid in formation of the final general education model. These questions included things such as the diversity, equity and inclusion requirements, student capstone experiences, experiential learning, etc. There was a robust response to these questions.

This report will provide the results of a qualitative content analysis for each of the three model frameworks as well as the critical questions. While participants had a variety of reactions to the content, this report will spotlight the top three themes (the first being the most frequent followed by the second and third most frequent) as well as a random selection of comments that support each theme.

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

**Leading a Life of Impact:** In this model students explore complex problems facing society today, engage in analyzing the problem, and posing solutions to it. These courses will fit within an OT 36 bucket (e.g. natural sciences, humanities, etc.) but will be taught using an interdisciplinary lens. Each course will explicitly require students to reflect on how they engage with the problem using skills, knowledge, and dispositions that are woven throughout the curriculum.

**QI: What is your general impression of this model?**
- Most commonly responses indicated that this model did not feel like it was much of a change from our existing Core.
- Conversely, there were several respondents indicated that they really liked the changes it presents to the Core.
- Many respondents did not dislike the model but had concerns about how it will impact students – specially CCP students.
Q2: **What are some elements of the model that you like the most?**

- Several respondents indicated their appreciation for the way this model connects to “real world” problem-solving, stating that this is an element needed by students.
- Many respondents indicated their delight in the capstone element of this framework.
- There were several responses that indicated a high level of satisfaction with the way this model elevates the DEI requirement.

Q3: **What are some elements of the model that you would suggest changing?**

- Most respondents indicated their concern with the possibility of changing the second writing requirement and expressed their feelings about the need to keep it the way that it is now.
- In contrast to those who were in support of elevating the DEI requirement, many respondents indicated that this is an element of the model that they would propose to eliminate.
- Some respondents indicated that they would like to hear more information about this strategy so that they can make more informed suggestions about its elements.

**CLICK Pathways:** This framework was inspired by the four themes developed by the Distinctiveness Subcommittee. These themes include a) culture of care, access, and community, b) local to international partnerships leading to cross-cultural learning, c) innovative thinking to improve the world, and d) civic responsibility building from the past toward a future vision. Inspired by these themes, students would choose a “pathway” of connected courses from different disciplines that explored and proposed solutions for real world problems. Students would meet the requirements of the Ohio Transfer module as they select themes that interested them and their future endeavors.

Q1: **What is your general impression of this model?**

- Most were concerned over how confusing the model and for that reason concern was expressed about whether the students would be able to understand the model.
- In addition to the respondents who liked the model but found it to be confusing, there were a comparable number who liked it as is.
- Many participants expressed their interest in the amount of student choice that this model offers.

Q2: **What are some elements of the model that you like the most?**

- Several responses indicated a draw to the interdisciplinary feel of this model.
- Along the same line as the interest in the interdisciplinary approach, respondents indicated they were interested in the “cluster” approach.
- Many called attention to the way that this model highlights and embraces the distinctiveness of Kent State, specifically the Culture of Care aspect.
Q3: What are some elements of the model that you would suggest changing?

- Like those who initially said the model was too confusing, this theme continued with the addition of people indicating that to accurately make suggestions on changes, they would like more information on the model.
- Many expressed concerns about tampering with the current 6-hour writing requirement. There is a general feeling that changing, more specifically reducing, this requirement will be an injustice to the student learning experience.
- Many expressed concerns about the proposal to elevate DEI to a stand-alone requirement. There was a common interest to modify the approach to have DEI interwoven into the course content instead.

Pyramid Plus: Students follow a structured approach which builds from career and life skills into solving complex problems through interdisciplinary courses and themes. This model was inspired by feedback from employers that highlighted the importance of students developing “real world” skills. This framework provides opportunities for micro-credentials and a portfolio experience that allows students to document their educational growth at Kent State.

QI: What is your general impression of this model?

- Many participants indicated that their first impression of the model was that they “like” it or “love” it. The one difference in the data is that there were also several who referred to this model as their “favorite”.
- Many participants indicated they liked the focus on life and career skills in this model stating that this is a great addition to the Core.
- Unlike the other models, this one had several negative first impressions. It was described as the least liked model, restrictive, burdensome for students, and the least meaningful of all the models presented.

Q2: What are some elements of the model that you like the most?

- There was a general feel of appreciation for the offering of micro credentials and badges for students to earn along the natural path of their education.
- There was a general feeling of appreciation for a skills-based learning approach.
- Participants felt that the way this model has a foundation and builds additional levels of learning was appealing and would be appealing to students.

Q3: What are some elements of the model that you would suggest changing?

- Like other concerns about elevating the DEI requirement, participants expressed the same level of concern for this model.
- Again, there was a thematic feeling of confusion and the need for additional information on the model before participants felt comfortable making any suggested changes.
ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Community Forum series that began on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, and concluded on Friday, April 19, 2024, with a total of 19 virtual sessions lasting 90-minutes each.

The Provost sent an email in March 2024 informing the Kent State community of these sessions. We estimate over 300 participants in total and were able to collect a significant amount of feedback.

Each session highlighted the 3 general education frameworks created by the Model Sprint Team in Fall 2023.

At the conclusion of each model, participants were asked to pause during the session to provide feedback in an online survey.

In addition to the model frameworks, we asked participants to provide feedback on a few critical questions about the DEI requirement, student capstone experiences, experiential learning, etc.