WAGNER COLLEGE

ILC Faculty Guide

2021
The Wagner Plan
On October 27, 1997, the Wagner College faculty adopted The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts. One of the goals for the new educational program is to create a culture of achievement among undergraduates. The language below has been taken from the current (2021) edition of the college Bulletin.

Wagner, a small residential college, is strongly committed to undergraduate education, an education that emphasizes the classical and contemporary liberal arts curriculum; an education, moreover, that integrates a variety of disciplines with a challenging core of foundation courses. A liberal education prepares students for life as well as for careers. It opens minds by introducing students to the sweep of human imagination as well as to the shortcomings of human behavior. Liberal education provides students with the tools for evaluating moral problems as well as analytic skills necessary for critical interpretation and for effective problem solving. In every historical epoch, liberal education is about freeing the human imagination to understand the past while visualizing a future beyond the present limit of possibility.

In this broad view, liberal education is both pragmatic and idealistic. To reach its mission, liberal education requires a particular approach of its students that includes both the acquisition of knowledge and the habit of critical thinking. This approach necessarily involves students and faculty in continual engagement with the world around them, asking them to integrate, through critical assessment, ideas and experience as a means to establish new knowledge. In the larger sense, liberal education has always been pragmatic—testing the value of ideas against the tapestry of human experience.

Wagner’s liberal arts curriculum prepares students for careers in the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and the arts as well as in business, education, law, and the health professions. It promotes inquiry, critical thinking and analytical skills, heightens cultural awareness, emphasizes writing and computer skills, and fosters individual expression and intellectual independence. It serves as a bridge to the student’s major, broadens the student’s perspective, and brings students and faculty into dialogue with the larger intellectual and professional communities inside and outside the College.

The practical liberal arts program, or Wagner Plan, ensures that Wagner College is meeting its goals of offering a liberal education as set forth by the College Mission Statement. The Wagner Plan integrates the longstanding commitment to liberal arts, experiential learning and interdisciplinary education with the geographical location and enduring bond with New York City. Fueled by a distinguished faculty dedicated to scholarly pursuits as well as to excellence in teaching, the Wagner Plan, provides methodologies and pathways for intellectual inquiry. This is accomplished through the Key Skills and Knowledge curriculum, the Learning Communities program, and the completion of majors and minors, all three finding interconnections across the Plan.

The Wagner Plan’s novel approach emphasizes both traditionally structured modes of learning and experiential learning (“field-based” learning or “learning by doing”). Students participate in at least three learning communities, of which two include field work, research, and/or an internship in an organization, usually in New York City or the surrounding area. The first-year learning community includes a field-based experience that is thematically linked to two introductory, liberal arts courses and a reflective tutorial. The senior learning community, which is in the student’s major, consists of a capstone course in
the discipline, a substantial internship or research experience, and a major paper or presentation in the senior reflective tutorial. The intermediate learning community, which consists of two courses that are thematically linked or a single course that is co-taught by faculty members from two different disciplines, serves as an important bridge between the first-year and senior learning communities. The three learning communities individually and collectively challenge students to relate academic learning to the wider world, to social issues, and to their own individual experiences.

INTERMEDIATE LEARNING COMMUNITIES
A learning community may be defined as a set of thematically linked courses provide students with an opportunity to explore common material from differing points of view, encouraging them to see the social and intellectual linkages between diverse perspectives. The shared content reinforces discussions in both disciplines while simultaneously facilitating critical thinking. In the Intermediate Learning Community (ILC), students are required to synthesize knowledge from both disciplines into a final, integrated project. In learning to appreciate interrelationships between diverse disciplines, students are better able to see the complexities underlying social and intellectual life. In addition, the intellectual and cultural environment created by studying with a peer cohort encourages a greater degree of active participation in the learning process.

Most students will find it beneficial to take the ILC early in their college career to fulfill General Education requirements. Other students will be advised to take an ILC required by their major. An alternative way of fulfilling the ILC requirement is to complete a semester or summer session abroad in a Wagner College pre-approved international program in which the student earns a grade of C or higher in each of at least two concurrent courses.

In all cases, students should plan ahead with their advisor to assure that this requirement is fulfilled by the end of the sophomore year.

INTERMEDIATE LEARNING COMMUNITY MISSION
The mission of the ILC is to provide a common cohort of students with a heightened interdisciplinary learning experience including intellectual engagement and the development of critical thinking and enhanced communication skills.

GOVERNANCE
The ILC Coordinator is elected by the ILC faculty for a three-year term, rotating in the same years as the Department Chairs. The ILC coordinator should have taught in the ILC program, preferably within the past two years.

The ILC faculty will meet at least twice per semester and communicate frequently through email and other means, including electronic voting on issues as they arise outside of the normally scheduled meeting times. The ILC committee includes all faculty members currently teaching an ILC and those expecting to teach an ILC the following semester. Department Chairs will insure that at least one member of their department attends. Other faculty members are welcome to participate and vote if they choose to attend a regularly scheduled meeting. The ILC faculty will also include the Provost (or the Provost’s representative), the Dean of Integrated Learning (or the Dean’s representative), the ILC Coordinator, and the Registrar.
INTERMEDIATE LEARNING COMMUNITY GOALS AND STRUCTURES
The goals are to expose students to, and involve them in, an interdisciplinary experience through:

- Sophisticated writing
- Challenging research
- An integrated final project that facilitates critical thinking and is critiqued by faculty members at several stages
- In addition, it is highly recommended that the ILC include an oral presentation.

Students are encouraged to fulfill their ILC requirement soon after they have successfully completed the First Year Program. Optimally, they will have completed their ILC requirement by the end of their sophomore year.

GOALS FOR STUDENT RESEARCH AND WRITING
In addition to assigned course content, students should incorporate other appropriate sources and materials in the writing process.

Students should demonstrate critical and analytical sophistication in writing and assessing arguments and sources.

Students should become reliable readers and editors of their own and others’ work. Readings should challenge students and should become more demanding as the semester progresses.

Students should gain experience in both formal and informal writing. Reflective practices should facilitate critical thinking and integrate the varied sources of knowledge which comprise a liberal arts education.

STRUCTURE
Normally, ILC courses are taught at the 200 level, and with no more than one prerequisite per discipline.

THREE COURSE MODELS
1. The two-unit ILC connects two distinct courses from different disciplines.
2. The one-unit, team-taught ILC is a cross-listed course that integrates materials from instructors representing two different disciplines. All students will follow the same syllabus in a team-taught ILC, completing work related to both disciplines, regardless of the discipline for which students enroll. (ILCs dedicated to a specific major may require more than the typical number of pre-requisites.)
3. Major internship program, such as the Washington, D.C., internship or the Albany internship.

STUDY ABROAD FULFILLMENT OF THE ILC
An alternative way of fulfilling the ILC requirement is to complete a semester or summer session abroad in a Wagner College pre-approved international program in which the student earns a grade of C or higher in each of at least two concurrent courses. To be eligible for the Study Abroad option, students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Additionally, students must make known their intention to use this option by beginning the study abroad application process with the Center for Intercultural Advancement in their sophomore year.

INDEPENDENT STUDY ILC
Students whose transcript demonstrates strong standing (normally a GPA of 3.6 or higher) may submit an application for an independent study ILC to the Dean of Integrated Learning no later
than the second day of the Drop/Add period. The completed application will include:

1. A 500-word proposal drafted by the student outlining the integration of two courses and an intended sophisticated final project **in addition to** required coursework in both classes.
2. Written approval from both faculty members, agreeing to critique the project at multiple stages prior to completion.
3. End of semester Pass or Fail communication from the faculty to both student and Dean of Integrated Learning.

Faculty members will receive **no compensation** for their role in an Independent Study ILC.

**KEY SKILLS IN ILC**

**STUDY ABROAD**
Units from study abroad function as transfer credits. If there is a direct equivalent, students will be granted the Key Skills linked to that course. Courses transferred as an elective within a discipline will be eligible for relevant Key Skills, based on evidence from a course description or syllabus that the student submits to the Registrar.

**TWO-COURSE ILC**
Students earn Key Skills associated with each course.

**TEAM-TAUGHT ILC**
Because Key Skills are attached to course numbers (not sections), students can only earn the Key Skills associated with the course for which they are registered in a TT- ILC. Thus, students registered for different courses in the ILC may earn different Key Skills.

When a pre-existing course is taught in an ILC but the faculty feel that students must earn the same three Key Skills, the both courses will receive a temporary number 296. Key Skills will be assigned as outlined below.

When course number 296 must be used, a substitution/waiver form may be filed, when needed, to clarify that 296 is equivalent to another course.
Course number 291 will be used for new courses that are developed for an ILC, and Key Skills may be assigned.

**NEW KEY SKILLS**
Not previously approved by the Academic Policy Committee may be approved by the ILC Coordinator for the first two times a team-taught ILC is offered. Every semester the ILC Coordinator will communicate any new Key Skills to the Academic Policy Committee prior to registration.

New Key Skills must be approved by the Academic Policy Committee before the third offering of a team-taught ILC.

**POLICIES FOR ENROLLMENT IN ILCS**

**ENROLLMENT CAPS AND MINIMUM ENROLLMENT**
Two-unit ILCs, enrollment caps and minimum enrollments follow general course requirements.
To provide sufficient opportunity for intensive oral communication (OO) including feedback and revision, all ILCs with an intensive oral communication designation or which include a performance-based course, have an enrollment cap of 20. This includes two-unit ILCs and one-unit (team-taught) ILCs.

Because of limited access to necessary equipment, all ILCs with a course in film production have an enrollment cap of 15. This includes two-unit ILCs and one-unit (team-taught) ILCs.

For all other one-unit (team-taught) ILCs, the course will be capped at a combined enrollment of 30.

Any other adjustments to course caps are to be set by Chairs in consultation with the Provost.

If a team-taught ILC does not meet a minimum combined enrollment of 12 by the close of the last day of the Advisement & Registration period listed on the academic calendar, the Provost will make a decision regarding whether to cancel the ILC based upon recommendation of the Dean of Integrated Learning and the ILC Coordinator. If it is determined that a team-taught ILC should be canceled due to low enrollment, the Coordinator will work with full-time faculty members and respective Department Chairs to determine appropriate alternatives.

Courses in the Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) program must be specially evaluated to determine whether they fulfill the ILC requirement as a team-taught ILC or by pairing an EYH course with another course.

STUDENT REQUESTS TO TAKE ONLY ONE UNIT OF A TWO-UNIT ILC
For two-unit ILCs, a student who wishes to register for only one of the courses must obtain permission in writing from both instructors. Students will not earn ILC credit if they enroll in only one of the courses. The registrar will contact the ILC full time faculty instructor/s of the ILC (or department chair if both instructors are part time instructors) and the ILC coordinator to notify them of students who have enrolled in only one of the two courses. If permission is received, a new section of the course with a TU designation will be created to ensure that students do not receive ILC credit for the single registration. TU section moodle pages will be merged with the main ILC moodle page.

NUMBER OF ILCs
The goal of the ILC Coordinator and Dean of Integrated Learning will be to seat 400 students in ILCs per year. This translates to 20 on-campus ILCs. Preferably, one or more Honors ILCs will be offered each year. The decision regarding which course(s) may be offered as an Honors ILC will be made by agreement of the ILC Coordinator with the Director of the Honors Program.

A team-taught ILC for transfer students will be offered once a year or as needed. This ILC for transfer students will include 30 hours of experiential learning, and be geared toward introducing transfer students to the Wagner Plan.

PART TIME FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN ILCs
All instructional staff (full-time, clinical and part-time faculty, and teaching fellows) as well as
qualified full-time administrators are welcome to teach in the ILC program.

As compensation for the requirements of the program—including communication with the teaching partner and leading students through the requirements of sophisticated writing, challenging research, and the integrated project—part-time faculty will receive an additional $500 stipend in addition to normal compensation for a course. This stipend is only available to instructional staff who are not full-time employees of Wagner College.

Each term, up to five sections of ILC courses may be taught by part-time faculty members.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING BETWEEN ILCS (IF NECESSARY)
If too many ILCs have been proposed for a term, choices about which ILCs to run will be based on preference for ILCs:
- composed of courses with fewer prerequisites
- with high anticipated enrollments
- with the broadest distribution of disciplines
- that are newly developed
- that are scheduled for times when classroom space is more available
- that are supported by grants

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF AN ILC TWO-COURSE ILC
If a student earns a passing grade in only one course in a two-unit ILC or only one course in a Wagner College pre-approved international program, the student may appeal to the Dean of Integrated Learning before the end of the following semester. Based on an evaluation of evidence of interdisciplinary learning presented by the student and in consultation with the professors, the Dean will evaluate whether the student has fulfilled the ILC requirement. If it is determined the student has not fulfilled the ILC component of the class (e.g. the integrated project), the registrar will convert the course section number for the failed course, from an -L to a -TU, indicating for the degree audit that the student does not have credit for the ILC. The student must then complete the requirement through one of the normal procedures.

ILC WAIVER
Transfer students: Students entering Wagner with junior status (17 units or more) will have the ILC requirement waived. All others will be encouraged to take the ILC as soon as possible.

CANCELLATION OF AN ILC
Should an ILC be canceled, graduating seniors who registered for the ILC may request a waiver of the ILC requirement. Students must still complete 36 units to graduate and fulfill all other General Education and major requirements. Faculty members should alert the ILC Coordinator as soon as the ILC is canceled. The Coordinator will inform the Registrar.

RN to BS students and second-degree nursing students are not required to take an ILC.

TRACKING ILC COMPLETION IN A DEGREE AUDIT
For degree audit purposes, completion of an ILC is recorded in one of the following ways:
1. A passing grade in a course with a section number that contains the letter L.
2. ILC-equivalent study abroad or successful completion of an independent study ILC will be indicated in a notation on the transcript by a passing grade in ILC-REQ (0-unit).

SAMPLE ILCS

TWO-UNIT ILCS
The Mind in Crisis — PH 205 and PS 212
Traditionally philosophers and now psychologists have raised certain basic questions about our conscious life that have perplexed them throughout their history. These questions—What is the relation between mind and our physical organism? Can consciousness be explained materialistically? What is the role of the unconscious?—are pursued by us via classical and modern thinkers. Our ILC also explores questions about the workings of mind in our everyday life and in psychopathology.

Public Speaking for Business — FI 201 and SPC 103
In addition to addressing the apprehension of public speaking, this ILC is an ideal addition for the business student. Utilizing principles of finance concepts, participants will learn how to effectively present financial information about their company to various stakeholders groups. Students learn skills that allow them to speak informatively, persuasively, and in groups. Through these techniques, students cultivate a personal style that results in more powerful presentations, which is a skill that is important to one’s academic and professional advancement.

SAMPLE ONE-UNIT TEAM-TAUGHT ILCS
From Table to Laboratory: Exploring Food Choice — HI 239 or PS 239
The course will be organized around three principal themes: sweetness, hunger, and our microbiomes. Why were people so driven to obtain sugar and to use it to satisfy such a high percentage of their caloric needs? Psychological and historical research reveals much about this. Furthermore, we now see sugar regarded almost as a toxin! Was the fasting of a medieval saint the psychological equivalent of “anorexia nervosa,” a disease first described by late Victorian doctors? And how does medieval fasting and Victorian anorexia compare to our contemporary understanding of eating disorders? We are alarmed by stories of food contamination but is our fear well founded? In our zeal for “clean” food and bodies have we overlooked the need to “feed” the microbes that live inside us? We will explore why there’s so much anxiety about eating.

Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and Disability Studies — GOV 317 or SO 291
This team-taught ILC focuses broadly on civil liberties and human rights in the United States as well as, more narrowly, the contemporary disability rights movement and its achievements. The United States prides itself as being a free country. But to what extent is freedom routinely denied to individual citizens in the US? Who suffers most egregiously from these denials? In this course we will examine these denials of rights and liberties to various marginal groups including but not limited to people living with disabilities. In doing so, we will use an interdisciplinary lens that combines the interrelated fields of constitutional law, politics, sociology, and disability studies. Throughout the course, we will explore the tensions that exist between broadly affirmed values in the U.S., such as liberty and equality. An experiential component will be built into the course in which Wagner students will work closely with a person with an intellectual disability with the goal of increasing access or equity for people with disabilities at the community, local, state, or national
levels.

SAMPLE INTERNSHIP ILC
Washington Internship — GOV 395 & GOV 396
This learning community exposes students to the workings of the governmental and political processes in Washington, DC. Through internship assignments, classroom instruction, and directed readings and research, students will develop a greater appreciation of the policy-making process. The courses are offered in Washington, D.C. (each course is a 2-unit course), and registration is by permission of the instructor.

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