

Winter 2018 Report on General Education at DU

An Interim Report from the General Education Review and Inquiry Committee

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Executive Summary

After a six-month review of history, theory, research, and implementation models for general education programs in American colleges and universities, and after analyzing the Common Curriculum at the University of Denver, the General Education Review and Inquiry Committee (GERI) has reached some initial conclusions. To arrive at them, we studied DU documents, surveyed the faculty, held open faculty listening forums, conducted a targeted student survey, and led student focus groups. In respect to widely-accepted theoretical and structural frameworks for general education, the Common Curriculum has a primary function of serving the individual student good, with a related secondary function of serving the civic good. The CC models a combination of distribution and competencies, the latter including knowledge of and experience with epistemological traditions in the academy (“Ways of Knowing”) and development of identified skills. With this context in mind, our work has generated seven working conclusions, which are elaborated in the full report:

- A. Whatever the substantive merits of the current DU Common Curriculum, neither students nor faculty understand its logic and purpose to an extent that is desirable.
- B. A general education program that clearly manifests integration and purpose is desirable.
- C. The learning outcomes in the Common Curriculum do not currently foster coherence and purpose, even though they are well-intentioned.
- D. There is a disparity between the DU Undergraduate Learning Outcome for community engagement and the representation of community engagement in the Common Curriculum.
- E. Diversity and inclusivity are manifested in the Common Curriculum learning outcomes and requirements much less than they are in the Undergraduate Learning Outcome for Engagement with Human Diversity.
- F. Any general education program at DU must leverage the strengths of the university and embody its mission and vision.
- G. Whatever revisions are made as a result of the review process, the program clearly will need to be accompanied by a significant communications effort, plus significant ongoing faculty development and learning.

These initial conclusions have opened a number of additional questions for inquiry, and our committee will invite all DU faculty to participate in a number of further conversations before we propose draft revisions of the Common Curriculum in June, which will be the focus of discussion and revision in fall 2018.

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Current National Contexts for General Education

Educators have debated university degree requirements for centuries—and with particular vigor since the 19th century rise of the majors/research model of the American university. (As Appendix F summarizes, DU has revised general education twice since 2000.) Various philosophies, goals, and models of general education have been theorized and implemented, resulting in a vast scholarly literature. These, along with analyses of institutional environments and missions, have informed regular reviews and revisions of general education programs on nearly every American campus. One complete, yet concise overview of this literature, is Cynthia A. Wells’s *Realizing General Education* (AEHE and John Wiley & Sons, 2016).

Wells characterizes general education programs as enacting options along two dimensions: **Functions** and **Models**. Functions are, generally, philosophies or purposes for the general education program. These can perhaps best be understood as answers to the question “Who (or what) does the program primarily intend to benefit?” There are three main foci.

General education might be understood primarily as an **Individual Student** Good. Its purpose can be valued as developing intellectual capacities (such as bodies of knowledge), skills (such as quantitative reasoning, writing, communications), and philosophies of life, meaning, or ethics, all directed to the ends of developing “holistic” or “well-balanced” individuals and/or the ends of enhancing their employment skills.

General education might be understood primarily as a **Community/Societal** Good. Its goals can be articulated as producing an educated citizenry who are dedicated to certain civic and social values and who are knowledgeable about how to enact them. It has the goal to foster democratic ideals, domestically and globally.

General education can also be understood primarily as an **Institutional** Good. Its central purpose can be identified as forwarding the school’s mission and values, establishing and reinforcing institutional identity. It may do so by fostering course integration or connections between curricular and co-curricular experiences. Another institutional purpose can be to provide teaching opportunities to meet faculty interests and staffing resources.

Obviously, these three functions can braid together—and often do. The more all three are valued equally, however, the more potentially difficult is the challenge of developing and delivering a particular model.

Wells identifies four main **models**. The **Core** model requires all students to take the same prescribed set of courses—not selections from a menu but, rather, the same specific courses or at least a very narrow set of choices. The Core model prizes consistency, cohesion, and centrality. It may have the advantages of simplicity, although that may come at the cost of significant challenges in deciding the make up of the limited core of courses, attracting sufficient faculty interest and expertise, staffing the core courses, and student choice.

The **Distribution** model requires students to fulfill requirements by choosing from a menu of offerings in each of several defined categories. (A venerable division is to require courses in social sciences, arts and humanities, natural sciences, communications, languages, and so on.) The Distribution model prizes breadth across a variety of disciplines. It may have advantages of choice to accommodate both student preferences and faculty interests and, as a result, a political expediency, although these can come at the cost of consistency and coherence.

The **Competency** model requires students to develop particular skills and abilities rather than accumulate a particular set of courses. Those skills could include such things as written or oral communication, quantitative reasoning, additional language acquisition, critical thinking, digital literacies, and so on. Or they might include facility with different epistemological traditions: methods of inquiry and research. The Competency model prizes the development of skills. While this model may feature courses that focus on specified skills, courses may also count toward the requirement by exhibiting certain features (a specified amount of writing, primary research, etc.). It may have the advantages of flexibility, as skills can be designed into a range of courses, although this can come at the cost of breadth, cohesiveness, and perhaps logistical tidiness, especially as particular competencies are layered across numerous courses.

Finally, the **Thematic** model requires students to complete a strand of courses commonly denominated by a particular topic, issue, or theme (“sustainability,” for example, or “poverty” or “climate change”). A university may offer a single thematic strand for each cohort of students or may allow students to select from a select menu of thematic strands, and there may or may not be a distribution imperative (“choose one humanities, one social science, and one natural science course on the theme of war,” for example). The Thematic model prizes depth and integration. It may have additional advantages of building common experiences and identities across campus, although these can come at the cost of achieving faculty agreement on themes and the concern by some faculty about “disciplinary integrity” as those faculty may find particular themes less amenable than others in relation to what is central to their own fields.

For obvious reasons, few general education programs manifest purely just one of these models (with those that do mainly enacting Distribution). Instead, programs exist as a conglomerate—and sometimes a compound—of each. There maybe a few core requirements, a further layer of distribution requirements, and perhaps some overarching learning outcomes or competencies. Thematic elements are less frequent in general education programs, but not absent. Furthermore, any given program embodies one or more Functions, explicitly or implicitly, intentionally or incidentally.

The functions and organization of general education programs vary according to institutional type, mission, purpose, culture, and identity, yet all share one commonality - defined learning outcomes. In recent years, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), has championed a liberal education model termed the LEAP Initiative and is organized around [four “essential” learning outcomes](#): Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World, Intellectual and Practical Skills, Personal and Social Responsibility, and Integrative and Applied Learning.

The LEAP Initiative also focuses on high impact practices (HIPs). High impact practices have been widely studied and have been found to benefit student learning from a diversity of backgrounds, especially historically marginalized student populations. There are eleven identified high impact practices: First-Year Experiences; Common Intellectual Experiences; Learning Communities; Writing-Intensive Courses; Collaborative Assignments and Projects; Undergraduate Research; Diversity/Global Learning; ePortfolios; Service Learning, Community-Based Learning; Internships; Capstone Courses and Projects.

To determine how to assess general education, the LEAP initiative used contributions from experts at over 100 institutions to develop [VALUE rubrics](#) to analyze several specific

outcomes. The most robust mechanism for doing so uses digital portfolios that students create throughout their undergraduate careers. Initiatives like LEAP allow individual schools to ground their general education programs in national research and practice while encouraging institutional autonomy, flexibility, and the uniqueness of each campus culture.

[A survey of 400 employers](#), conducted by Hart Research Associates for AAC&U, indicated that companies hiring college graduates strongly valued general education and the skills/abilities it fostered. Here are four of the study's seven major findings:

1. Employers overwhelmingly endorse broad learning as the best preparation for long-term career success. They believe that broad learning should be an expected part of college for all students, regardless of their chosen major or field of study.
2. When hiring recent college graduates, employers say they place the greatest priority on a demonstrated proficiency in skills and knowledge that cut across majors. Written and oral communication skills, teamwork skills, ethical decision-making, critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-world settings are the most highly valued among the 17 skills and knowledge areas tested.
3. Employers broadly endorse an emphasis on applied learning in college today. They believe that engaging students in applied learning projects would improve learning and better prepare them for career success.
4. Employers say that, when evaluating a job candidate, it would be helpful for them to have access to an electronic portfolio summarizing and demonstrating the individual's accomplishments in key skill and knowledge areas, in addition to a résumé and college transcript.

Finally, as part of our work, we reviewed general education programs as they currently exist at the universities DU uses as its comparison and peer group, along with a few select additional schools. For a summary of that exploration, please see Appendix A.

Description of the Common Curriculum at DU

In terms of the philosophies and structures that now define American general education programs (see Section 1), the existing Common Curriculum at DU combines two functions and three models. Primarily, it emphasizes the individual good function of developing critical knowledge and skills. Secondly, it emphasizes the social good function of preparing students for leadership and citizenship in a global society.

In terms of models, the current Common Curriculum at DU mainly combines Distribution and Competency. The distribution element is most noticeable in requirements that students take 1 course in mathematics, formal reasoning or computational science, 3 sequenced courses in one core area of science, 2 courses in the arts and humanities, and 2 courses in the social sciences. However, this distribution is set within the categories of "Ways of Knowing," revealing the curriculum's main focus on Competencies. There is an intentional design to develop student awareness of epistemology, different knowledge-making traditions in the academy. The Common Curriculum foregrounds two broad epistemologies, Analytic Inquiry and Scientific Inquiry. The second required writing course, WRIT 1133: Writing and Research, introduces students to how these epistemologies result in different academic writing traditions, research traditions, and disciplinary practices. The ASEM course is designed to have students explore topics or issues through multiple perspectives. A somewhat different aspect of the competency model is present in

the writing requirement, the language requirement, and the mathematics/computational requirement.

First Year Seminar

1 course (4 credits)

First-Year Seminars are designed to provide students with an initial academic experience that will be rigorous and engaging, focusing on academic skills that include critical reading and thinking; writing and discussion; quantitative reasoning; argument and debate. Each of 80-85 First-Year Seminars offered each fall quarter has a unique topic.

Writing and Rhetoric

2 courses (8 credits)

Beginning in the winter quarter of their first year, students take two sequenced writing courses, WRIT 1122 and WRIT 1133. Students learn rhetorical principles, the analysis and use of source materials, and techniques for generating, revising and editing texts for specific situations, all as foundation for writing in subsequent Common Curriculum courses, in the major, and in civic life. Students also learn to produce researched writing in various “ways of knowing” traditions, including textual/interpretive (the analysis of texts or artifacts such as images or events); qualitative (analyses based on observations or interviews); and quantitative (analysis of data).

Language

1–3 courses (4–12 credits)

In language courses, students acquire linguistic skills in a language other than English. DU is an internationalizing university that encourages multi-skill language learning. Students also study a different expression of culture through language.

Analytical Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World

1 course (4 credits)

This area is designed to provide all students, regardless of major, basic knowledge of how to understand and use principles of mathematics and computational sciences as a formal means of inquiry in the natural and physical world.

Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture

2 course minimum (8 credits)

Human cultures are specific to time and place, and the practices and values of different societies can vary widely. Students take two courses in different subjects studied from the perspectives of the arts and humanities, learning how to analyze the products of human societies and cultures, including works of art, music, literature, philosophy and history.

Scientific Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World

3 sequential courses (12 credits)

Courses provide a three-quarter experience, with accompanying laboratories, that builds knowledge and application of scientific approaches in one core area, with an emphasis on significant social implications and on fostering reasoning skills and reflective judgment. Students apply scientific methods, analyze and interpret data, and justify conclusions where evidence may be conflicting. Students explore the strengths and weaknesses of scientific knowledge and reflect

on the connections between the natural sciences, technologies and other ways of knowing and constructing human experiences.

Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture

2 course minimum (8 credits)

Students learn principles of human functioning and conduct in social and cultural contexts and come to understand how these are studied using scientific methods. Students take two courses in different subjects addressed from the perspectives of the social sciences; they are thus exposed to varying approaches and levels of analysis (e.g., physiological, evolutionary, mental, social and cultural processes).

Advanced Seminar

1 course (4 credits)

Successful individuals also must be able to navigate a complex political, social, cultural and economic environment that challenges more traditionally limited concepts of higher education and competencies. ASEM's approach a significant issue or topic from multiple perspectives in a course designed for non-majors. Students demonstrate their ability to integrate different perspectives and synthesize diverse ideas through intensive writing on that topic.

Conclusions: Analysis of the Common Curriculum

In addition to studying the goals, structures, and assessments of the existing Common Curriculum, in place since 2009, we invited DU faculty to share their ideas and insights through two means. First, we asked 714 faculty in fall 2017 to complete a survey. Some 180 faculty answered the call, including by writing extensive comments. We provided a snapshot of some findings in January 2018. You can see more extended results in Appendix B. We also held three open forums to which we invited all faculty; GERI members listened and took notes. Second, we asked a targeted group of students, primarily those enrolled in ASEM courses but also those enrolled in courses taught by GERI members, along with others, to complete a survey. This was an opportunity sample. Some 450 students completed the survey, with many also providing written comments. These results are available for review in Appendix C. Additionally, we conducted focus groups in three ASEM courses, choosing to hear from students who were nearing completion of the Common Curriculum. From our analysis and from the faculty and student sources, we generated eight findings that will inform our further work:

A. Whatever might be the substantive merits of the current Common Curriculum, neither students nor faculty understand its logic and purpose to the extent that is desirable.

Only 33% of surveyed faculty agree that “most undergraduate students understand and value the theory and outcomes of the current Common Curriculum as a whole.” And only 39% agree that their faculty colleagues do.

In part, the issue is one of terminology. For example, Ways of Knowing terminologies such as “Analytical Inquiry” and “Scientific Inquiry,” especially as reduced to AI and SI, have little meaning to faculty and students. Terminology aside, however, it is also clear that, for students, the issue has to do with grasping the deeper purpose of the Common Curriculum structure

and its relationship to other elements of undergraduate education, especially the major. While students report that they perceive the value of individual Common Curriculum courses, and many can articulate broad values of general education (“to make us well rounded” is a common refrain in the student survey), students generally perceive the Common Curriculum as a series of elements to check off. As one student writes, reflecting a sentiment held by many, “I would recommend decreasing the amount of common core classes, as they seem to just take away from the classes that I need to or want to take that apply to my major.” On the whole, students perceive the Common Curriculum program to be less an opportunity than an obligation.

An associated result is a perceived lack of coherence. While, theoretically, the Common Curriculum has coherence embedded in a set of skills and epistemologies, as a practical matter, students (and many faculty) perceive it less as an integrated experience spread over several courses than as a largely disconnected congeries of experiences that may or may not overlap. The FSEM and ASEM courses structurally make sense as bookends to the curriculum; however, the curriculum as a whole stands in need of a more purposeful sense of coherence, both in its structure and in the ways that we talk about it.

B. A general education program that clearly manifests integration and purpose is desirable.

As we have noted, faculty and, especially, students perceive the existing Common Curriculum as fragmented and not necessarily tied to the larger DU mission and vision. We believe the university community would be better served by more clarity of purpose and connection. Still, we recognize that students and, especially, faculty might see this goal as having a cost. There is a tension between coherence/integration and the relative freedom for faculty, in teaching courses they can develop for a vast menu, and for students in making choices from that catalog to fit own interests.

C. The [learning outcomes in the Common Curriculum](#) don’t foster coherence and purpose, even though they are well-intentioned.

In the interest of assessment, faculty teams reasonably created learning outcomes for each of the eight course areas. There are 18 outcomes as a result. While this may facilitate discrete assessments, it practically (and inadvertently) invites a view of the curriculum as a set of boxes, widely dispersed and possibly disconnected. Even well-intentioned actions like mapping the Core Curriculum into the seven [DU Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes](#), to which they’re subordinate, may contribute to this effect. It would be beneficial to develop some fewer learning outcomes and state them in a way that invite the community to see connections among practices and experiences in the curriculum.

D. There is a disparity between the DU Undergraduate Learning Outcome for community engagement (“Students consider their relationships with their own and others’ physical and social communities as they engage collaboratively with those communities”) and the representation of community engagement in the Common Curriculum.

Whether (let alone how) this should be reconciled is a matter for deliberation. Currently, while six of the eight Common Curriculum areas “might” focus on engagement, none are marked as “always addressing” it. Now, one position could be that community engagement happens best and most fully in the major, minor, or co-curriculum. Another possibility is that the current mapping doesn’t reflect the actual practice. Still, given the centrality of “public good” in DU’s vision, along with the emphases of Impact 2025, we should seriously consider manifesting community engagement in the general education program. We note, further, the broadly open definition of “community” in this outcome. While DU reasonably imagines communities external to our campus, there are also many “internal” DU communities. We note, last, that “engagement” can take many forms, from direct “service” to intentional or applied research.

- E. Diversity and inclusivity are manifested in the Common Curriculum learning outcomes and requirements much less than they are in the Undergraduate Learning Outcome for Engagement with Human Diversity.** (“Students critically reflect on their own social and cultural identities and make connections and constructively engage with people from groups that are characterized by social and cultural dimensions other than their own.”)

While five of the eight Common Curriculum areas “might” focus on human diversity, only one them (Languages and Cultures) is identified as “always addressing it.” As with community engagement, one might contend that inclusivity and diversity are most focally treated in a major, minor, or co-curriculum. Likewise, it may be the current mapping doesn’t reflect the actual practice. Still, given DU’s mission, vision, and strategic direction, engagement with human diversity should be a more intentional part of our general education program.

- F. Any general education program at DU must leverage the strengths of the university and embody its mission.**

The committee has noted many times that there are a few basic models for general education that manifest in dozens of variations across higher education. While we can learn from those models (and we should), ultimately we need to build a program that fits DU’s distinctive faculty, mission, and vision. While this needn’t mean devising a program that is absolutely unique, it should be clear from anyone looking from the outside that, given what they know of DU’s identity and aspirations, they’d respond, “Of course, I can see why DU would develop that general education program.”

- G. Whatever revisions are made as a result of the review process, then, it is clear that program will need to be accompanied by a significant communications effort, plus significant, ongoing professional development learning.**

Student knowledge about the rationale and goals of general education at DU cannot be confined to Discoveries Week or occasional informational or marketing messages. Instead, this needs to be embedded in advising, in the ways we help students choose majors, and in the curriculum and our pedagogies, i.e., in how faculty connect their courses across the program. We also need to invest in ongoing, faculty-led professional development and learning for designing and teaching general education courses.

Questions for Further Exploration

Surveys, listening sessions, committee discussions, and other information gathering activities on have generated several insights about the present state of the CC and its desired future. The Committee has generated further questions to consider, research, or raise for further discussion. No position is implied in raising any of these questions. The list isn't exhaustive.

- A. Given the frameworks of general education as an individual good, a social good, and an institutional good, what should be the emphasis or combination here at DU?** In other words, what is the overarching purpose of a DU general education?
- B. How do students see their own lives reflected in the curriculum?** Are their experiences and identities visible? To what extent is this true for different groups of students?
- C. What learning outcomes of general education at DU do we want to articulate and deliver?** That is, which of the broader undergraduate learning outcomes are most essential to general education and which are more the responsibility of the major, etc.?
- D. What is the place of the Common Curriculum relative to the other common experiences suggested by Impact 2025?** DU Impact 2025 outlines elements of a common undergraduate experience beyond the Common Curriculum itself — a “Common Co-Curriculum,” perhaps (e.g., Grand Challenges), or a “Common Extra-Curriculum” (e.g., a required workshop on “navigating DU, navigating life). Which of these overlap, or should overlap, with the goals of the Common Curriculum? That is, in what ways should the *identity* of the Common Curriculum be defined in relationship to these other elements of the broader undergraduate common experience?
- E. Is the current distribution of requirements among disciplinary areas the most effective one for the mission and goals of the Common Curriculum?** For example, there is a three-course science sequence, a one-year language sequence, a two-course writing sequence and, of course, the rest of the distribution in the Ways of Knowing category.
- F. Should we change the credit-hour footprint of general education?** Currently, it is 13-15 courses (depending on language placement). Given AP, IB, transfer, etc., the student average is no doubt somewhat lower. (Note: we've heard no faculty concerns that the current number of courses is unreasonable.)
- G. What would be the best way to create more coherence among courses in the Common Curriculum?** For example: (A) Would foregrounding themes be a desirable way to do this? What would be the approach? (B) Would requiring specific features/elements of general education courses be a way of creating coherence? (For example, writing, statistical reasoning, presentation skills, knowledge/understanding of diversity, creative expression, coding, etc.)
- H. Who is responsible for achieving coherence?** The students? The faculty? Advisors? Beyond creating and articulating a set of requirements that are conducive to integration, what tools are important to foster it? (Portfolios, for example, or regular one or two-credit seminar?)

- I. With many students bringing AP, IB, and transfer credit to the Common Curriculum, we know that significant numbers of students don't complete general education as planned at DU. What implications does this have for the integrity of the CC, especially if coherent integration is deemed important?** How many students are exempted from how many CC requirements, and in what distribution? How much does this matter to us? Requiring that all students take all CC at DU would certainly present logistical "legal" challenges (regarding articulation agreements DU has made, for example); it may also present recruiting and admissions challenges; and beyond these are particular considerations, including economic, to transfer students and others.
- J. Are any shortcomings perceived in the current Common Curriculum more a function of curriculum (that is, the particular set of requirements and the courses that meet them) or of pedagogy (that is, how individual courses are designed and taught)?** That is, insofar as people see opportunities for improvement, to what extent are those improvements best made through changing *what* we require and to what extent *how* we deliver what we require?
- K. What does Impact 2025 imply for the pedagogical culture of Common Curriculum teachers?** Some of the aspirations for teaching and learning sketched out in Impact 2025 clearly bear upon not only *what* we teach in general education and *who* teaches it, but *how* it is taught— particularly those aspirations that are collaborative or interdisciplinary in nature. To what extent does revising general education involve rethinking the pedagogical culture of general education teachers? How can we embody that culture, together with one another, beyond our individual classrooms — through professional development opportunities or other faculty programming?

Next Steps

The committee needs the wisdom of faculty colleagues across campus to help address several of the “further questions” listed above, along with others. Beginning in the spring quarter, we plan to host a number of additional discussion opportunities organized around specific questions or key issues. These will be a combination of open forums and meetings arranged with specific groups (divisions or departments; faculty with expertise on particular areas or goals; etc). After we have explored and analyzed those issues, we will draft a statement of goals and desirable characteristics of general education at DU. From that, we will draft specific recommendations. We’ll seek responses and suggestions at each step. Generally, we will follow the timeline we laid out in December, though that’s looking ever more ambitious. As always, we invite faculty to contact members of the committee with questions, suggestions, or ideas.

Appendix A: General Education Comparison Report
University of Denver GERI Committee
March 1, 2018

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The report that follows encapsulates general education requirements at 16 colleges and universities. The first twelve are institutions that DU is currently or has recently used for institutional comparisons, as, for example, in the annual budget report. The last 4 were selected because they reveal interesting variations on other practices. In each case, we've included (1) an overview note pointing out some features; (2) language about the institution's philosophy or goals for general education, when provided; and (3) a listing of requirements. In each case, there's a link to salient materials on institutional web pages.

Colorado College



Notes. The program reveals primarily an “individual good” philosophy, focused on developing student’s interests and skills. There’s a combination of a Distribution Model (first 4 bullet points below) and a Competency Model (second 4 bullet points). Colorado College is rare among all the colleges at which we looked because it provides no explicit philosophy of general education as a whole.

Requirements:

- The West in Time (2 units);
- Global Cultures (1 unit);
- Social Inequality (1 unit);
- Scientific Investigation of the Natural World (2 units, including at least one lab or field course);
- Quantitative Reasoning (1 unit).
- Two blocks (or equivalent) of college-level language.
- FYE — A two-block course required of all first-year students addressing issues likely to stimulate debate and including critical reading, effective writing, and a research project.
- All students will demonstrate writing proficiency in the form of a successfully evaluated first-year portfolio or subsequent coursework in classes emphasizing writing.



Notes: The curriculum primarily follows an “individual good” philosophy, though with the “Heritage, Mission, Vision, and Values” component, there is also an “institutional good” function, as the school seeks to establish a particular culture. The program follows a model that combines Distribution and Competency, with one competency (writing) formally extended as a feature of two classes beyond the required one.

TCU says: “The University . . . regards as essential the advancement and communication of general knowledge which enables students to understand the past, to comprehend the natural and social order, to search for the good and the beautiful, and to integrate knowledge into significant wholes. The many faculty who have participated in the development of our new core have attempted to serve the best interests of TCU students by designing a curriculum that:

- embodies the liberal arts ethos of Texas Christian University;
- facilitates a focus on educational outcomes and assessment;
- shows sensitivity to the special needs of students in different colleges and degree programs by providing a core that is lean in the required number of hours (to accommodate those in professional programs) yet capable of being expanded by individual Colleges to meet their needs; and
- provides fresh intellectual challenges and opportunities for faculty as well as for students.

Requirements

Human Experience and Endeavors (27 hours)

Humanities – 9 hours

Social Sciences – 9 hours

Natural Sciences – 6 hours

Fine Arts – 3 hours

Essential Competencies (12 hours plus 6 hours Writing Emphasis)

Mathematical Reasoning - 3 hours

Written Communication 1 - 3 hours

Written Communication 2 - 3 hours

Oral Communication - 3 hours

Writing Emphasis - 6 hours

Writing Emphasis courses may overlay with courses in the Human Experiences and Endeavors Curriculum, the Heritage, Mission, Vision, and Values Curriculum, or with other requirements.

Heritage, Mission, Vision, and Values (18 hours)

Religious Traditions - 3 hours

Historical Traditions – 3 hours

Literary Traditions - 3 hours

Cultural Awareness - 3 hours

Global Awareness - 3 hours

Citizenship and Social Values - 3 hours

Notes: A complex curriculum. Note, for example, the “ways of knowing” requirement, defined as “interdisciplinary courses that explore how natural sciences, social scientists, humanists, artists, engineers, and professionals in business and education address important issues. . . organized around a major topic or big question.” Note the responsibility and wellness requirements. Note the proficiencies and experiences that are “features” that can adhere to individual courses or can be achieved in the co-curriculum, through approved non-credit activities.

Philosophy: SMU says: “The UC’s main coursework components are Foundations, Breadth, and Depth. In addition, there are seven Proficiencies and Experiences that can be satisfied through course-based or non-course-based experiences. The UC emphasizes Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), which identify what students think about, learn and experience. Most students will complete these outcomes through credit-hour accumulation, but some students may choose non-course or non-credit activities. The UC can be met through work in a student’s major(s) or minor(s), elective courses or approved activities.”

Requirements:

Foundations (8-25 credits)

- Discernment and Discourse
- Personal Responsibility & Wellness I
- Personal Responsibility & Wellness II
- Quantitative Foundation
- Second Language
- Ways of Knowing

Breadth (12-22 credits)

- Creativity and Aesthetics
- Historical Contexts
- Individuals, Institutions and Cultures
- Language and Literature
- Philosophical and Religious Inquiry and Ethics
- Science and Engineering
- Technology and Mathematics

Depth (6-10 credits)

- History, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Natural and Applied Sciences

Proficiencies and Experiences - *Denotes REQUIRED Proficiencies and Experiences

- Human Diversity*
- Information Literacy*
- Oral Communication*
- Writing*
- Community Engagement
- Global Engagement
- Quantitative Reasoning

Notes: This is very much a Competency-based curriculum model, built around five “Ways of Knowing,” the DU framework somewhat on steroids. With “approaches to knowing,” the curriculum features epistemology and method as opposed to content. There are first-year and capstone seminars. Function is pretty explicitly to develop the individual student.

Philosophy:

The faculty of the University of Puget Sound has designed the core curriculum to give undergraduates an integrated and demanding introduction to the life of the mind and to established methods of intellectual inquiry. The Puget Sound undergraduate's core experience begins with two first-year seminars that guide the student through an in-depth exploration of a focused area of interest and that sharpen the student's skills in constructing persuasive arguments. In the first three years of their Puget Sound college career, students also study five "Approaches to Knowing" - Fine Arts, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Science, and Social Science. These core areas develop the student's understanding of different disciplinary perspectives on society, culture, and the physical world, and explore both the strengths of those disciplinary approaches and their limitations. Connections, an upper-level integrative course, challenges the traditional boundaries of disciplines and examines the benefits and limits of interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge.

Further, in accordance with the stated educational goals of the University of Puget Sound, core curriculum requirements have been established: (a) to improve each student's grasp of the intellectual tools necessary for the understanding and communication of ideas; (b) to enable each student to understand herself or himself as a thinking person capable of making ethical and aesthetic choices; (c) to help each student comprehend the diversity of intellectual approaches to understanding human society and the physical world; and (d) to increase each student's awareness of his or her place in those broader contexts. Students choose from a set of courses in eight core areas, developing over four years an understanding of the liberal arts as the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Requirements:

The First Year: Argument and Inquiry

Seminar in Scholarly Inquiry I: 1 unit

Seminar in Scholarly Inquiry II: 1 unit

Years 1 through 3: Five Approaches to Knowing

Artistic: 1 unit

Humanistic: 1 unit

Mathematical: 1 unit

Natural Scientific: 1 unit

Social Scientific: 1 unit

Junior or Senior Year: Interdisciplinary Experience

Connections: 1 unit

Note: At least in terms of philosophy, the function of the program is to develop critical thinking skills. There is a strong social good goal, particularly as manifested in the Global Perspectives category. Program was new in 2015.

Philosophy:

USC says: “In major and minor coursework, students focus on an area of intellectual inquiry in depth, its principles, methods, questions and applications. The General Education Program complements that depth by preparing students to be generally well educated adults, informed citizens of the twenty-first century, who understand its challenges and participate in the debates of their time.

Learning objectives have been articulated for each of the individual requirements, contributing to the cumulative objective of the General Education program as a whole: in these courses, students learn to think critically about the texts they read and the analyses they encounter, to evaluate competing ideas and consider what is being assumed and what might alternatively be argued.

To do this effectively, the General Education Program provides context for the learning that takes place in more specialized programs across the campus. No single program of study can provide all the context necessary, but students should learn enough about the criteria for what is held to be true so that they can articulate sensible doubts at key moments in an argument.

As the world becomes more interconnected, so does the need for critical thought in all its guises: as self- reflection, moral discernment, appreciation of diversity, aesthetic sensibility, civility, reconciliation and empathy across all spheres of life. The USC General Education Program has been designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the challenges of a globalized world and the demands of a satisfying personal life.”

Requirements:

Freshman Requirement

All freshmen entering USC in Fall 2015 or later must enroll in a **General Education Seminar (GESM)** in their first year of enrollment. This course will satisfy one of the GE Core Literacy requirements.

Core Literacies (8 courses)

- GE-A The Arts (1 course)
- GE-B Humanistic Inquiry (2 courses)
- GE-C Social Analysis (2 courses)
- GE-D Life Sciences (1 course)
- GE-E Physical Sciences (1 course) GE-
- F Quantitative Reasoning (1 course)

Global Perspectives (2 courses)

The two requirements in Global Perspectives prepare students to act as socially responsible members of the global community, respectful of the values and traditions of diverse cultures, aware of the structures of power that affect people differently by race, class, gender, and other socially constructed categories, sensitive to the interplay between worldwide problems and specific, local challenges.

- GE-G Citizenship in a Diverse World (1 course)
- GE-H Traditions and Historical Foundations (1 course)

Courses approved for the GE-G and GE-H categories are expected to require that students do a substantial amount of weekly reading (circa 100 pages), and a significant component of writing (a minimum of 15 pages of essay form work) in the course of the semester.



Note: There is explicit attention to general education serving an institutional function, tying the program closely to the university's Jesuit identity. The first year (Foundations) emphasizes Competencies. Explorations (which are intended across all for years) have a distribution aspect, and there are three 2- or 3-course sequences. Two elements of Integrations (experiential learning and advanced writing) are completed as features of other courses, while Pathways is "a cluster of four courses with a shared theme." The University has approximately 20 "approved pathways" (examples are "beauty," "the digital age," "gender, sexuality and the body," "Islamic studies," "justice and the arts" and so on). Students have to declare a pathway by sophomore year and write a reflective essay for each Pathway course.

Philosophy:

Santa Clara says: "A university expresses its most basic values in its Core Curriculum, that is, in those courses required of all of its students. Santa Clara University's Core Curriculum explicitly integrates three traditions of higher education. As a Catholic university, Santa Clara is rooted in pursuing an understanding of God through the free exercise of reason. As a Jesuit university, Santa Clara provides a humanistic education that promotes an ethical engagement with the world. As a comprehensive North American university committed to liberal education, Santa Clara fosters academic excellence and responsible, creative citizenship. The interrelationship of these three traditions encourages informed and ethical decisions characteristic of citizens and leaders who are motivated by competence, conscience, and compassion.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals

The Core Curriculum affirms the following central learning goals—Knowledge, Habits of Mind and Heart, and Engagement with the World—which often overlap and reinforce one another."

Requirements:

Foundations	Explorations	Integrations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Thinking & Writing 1 • Critical Thinking & Writing 2 • Cultures & Ideas 1 • Cultures & Ideas 2 • Second Language • Mathematics • Religion, Theology, & Culture 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics • Civic Engagement • Diversity: U.S. Perspectives • Arts • Natural Science • Social Science • Religion, Theology, & Culture 2 • Cultures & Ideas 3 • Science, Technology & Society • Religion, Theology, & Culture 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiential Learning for Social Justice • Advanced Writing • Pathways* (a cluster of courses with a shared theme) <p><i>*Engineering majors and transfer students who matriculate with 44 or more units of transfer credit complete at least three Pathway courses, 12 units; all other students complete at least four courses, 16 units.</i></p>

George Washington University



Note: This is largely a Competency-driven curriculum, focusing on ways of thinking/reasoning in four broad areas (rather than content knowledge in those areas), headed by a writing requirement. This is a minimal curriculum: only 6 courses, plus two writing-intensive courses. There is, for example, no language requirement.

Philosophy:

GWU says, “The general education curriculum engages students in active intellectual inquiry across the liberal arts. Students achieve a set of learning outcomes that meaningfully enhance their analytical skills, develop communication competencies, and familiarize them with modes of inquiry. Coursework for the university general education curriculum includes 19 credits in approved courses in writing, natural or physical science, mathematics or statistics, social science, and the humanities, plus two writing in the disciplines courses.”

Requirements:

Written Communication

- One course in university writing
- Two writing in the disciplines (WID) courses.

Critical or Creative Analysis in the Humanities

- One course in the humanities

Quantitative Reasoning

- One course in either mathematics or statistics

Scientific Reasoning

- One natural or physical science course with laboratory experience

Critical, Creative, or Quantitative Analysis in the Social Sciences

- Two courses in the social sciences

Boston University

Revamp in progress. Plan behind login wall.

<http://www.bu.edu/gened/practical-guide-for-faculty/whats-new/>

Currently depends on major/college. A lot of variation:

<http://www.bu.edu/gened/files/2016/03/Undergraduate-Curricula-Quilts.pdf>



Note: Curriculum has an “institutional good” orientation, as it foregrounds the school’s Catholic identity. This is related to a visible “social good” element, along with “personal good” manifested through competencies focusing primarily and skills and ways of knowing.

Philosophy:

San Diego says: “The USD Core Curriculum fosters the pursuit of knowledge through active student and faculty participation in a broad and richly diverse academic experience. The Core develops indispensable competencies, explores traditions of thought and belief, and probes the horizons of the liberal arts and the diversity of human experience. The Core promotes critical appreciation of beauty, goodness and truth in the context of engagement with the Catholic intellectual tradition and diverse faith communities. The Core instills habits of thought and action which will serve all students in their academic majors and throughout their lives as reflective citizens of the world.”

Requirements:

Integrative Learning

First year students participate in the 2-semester Living Learning Community (LLC) program

Transfer students participate in the 1-semester Transfer Learning Community (TLC) program

Competencies

Written Communication – FYW 150 or composition exam

Mathematical Reasoning and Problem Solving – 1 course or mathematics exam

Second Language – 3 courses or placement exam

Oral Communication – major/minor course with oral attribute

Quantitative Reasoning – major/minor course with quantitative reasoning attribute

Critical Thinking and Information Literacy – Historical Inquiry course with CTIL attribute

Foundations

Goal: Become individuals who, through the search for truth and goodness, uphold the dignity and aspirations of all people; and who critically and creatively explore the “big questions” about God, personal identity and social identity.

Theological and Religious Inquiry – 2 courses

Philosophical Inquiry – 1 course

Ethical Inquiry – 1 course

Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice – 2 courses

Explorations

Goal: Critically and creatively explore the breadth of the liberal arts, focusing on social identity, scientific literacy, and personal expression through varied modes of inquiry.

Scientific and Technological Inquiry – 1 course

Historical Inquiry – 1 course

Social and Behavioral Inquiry – 1 course

Literary Inquiry – 1 course

Artistic Inquiry – 3 courses



Note. This is a three-phase program, with a skills/competencies requirement, a fairly traditional three-part, a multi-course distribution requirement (with a sequence in each), and a separate thematic focus on issues.

Philosophy:

Syracuse says: “We believe that a liberal arts education will help students reach their full potential by providing an education that is based on the principles of critical thinking, effective communication, and the analysis and understanding of data. Your experiences with the Liberal Arts Core will prepare you to assume your leadership role in society, just as today’s leaders derive strength from their liberal arts education.

During your journey through the Liberal Arts Core, you will study subjects that are familiar as well as those that are totally new to you. Collectively, the courses you select will enable you to appreciate the diversity and richness of the peoples, cultures, and natural processes in the world around you. It is the exposure to many different subjects that enables students in our College to make a difference. Daily, our students are accomplishing incredible things and leading change; all their actions are rooted in their Arts & Sciences education.”

Requirements:

Liberal Skills

Writing Studio (2 courses)

Writing Intensive Course (from approved list) (1 course)

Language Skills (1-3 courses) **or** Quantitative Skills (2 courses)

Divisional Perspectives

Note: At least 2 courses in each area must be a sequence

Humanities (4 courses)

Natural Sciences and Mathematics (4 courses)

Social Sciences (4 courses)

Critical Reflections on Ethical and Social Issues (2 courses)

University of Miami



Note. A “traditional” distribution model is enhanced by an integrative element: students must complete not merely courses in three areas but, rather, a cognate: three courses with a shared theme or topic determined by the faculty.

Philosophy:

Miami says: “The University of Miami's General Education Requirements ensure that graduates have acquired essential intellectual skills and have engaged in a range of academic disciplines. The General Education Requirements provide students with the opportunity to study methods and achievements in all areas of human inquiry and creative endeavor and to cultivate abilities essential for the acquisition of knowledge. The General Education Requirements allow students to create an integrative map for their academic careers, providing a context for more focused studies.

As an institution of higher learning in an increasingly diverse and global community, our goals are to produce graduates who have been exposed to a broad spectrum of educational opportunities and to prepare them for successful participation in the world. The University's General Education Requirements consist of coursework taken before, within, and in addition to students' specialized study in their areas of concentration. The aims of the General Education Requirements are designed to ensure that graduates of the University will have acquired essential intellectual skills and exposure to a range of intellectual perspectives and academic disciplines. Whereas the requirements of majors specified by schools and colleges within the University emphasize depth of learning, the General Education Requirements stress breadth of knowledge and the cultivation of intellectual abilities essential for the acquisition of knowledge.”

Requirements:

Areas of Proficiency

English Composition (2 courses)

Quantitative Skills (at least one course at level MTH 108 or higher)

Areas of Knowledge

Complete a cognate from each of the three areas of the university curriculum. A cognate is a group of at least three courses for at least nine credit hours with a shared theme or topic determined by the faculty.

Arts & Humanities (3 courses)

People & Society (3 courses)

Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) (3 courses)

Note. This curriculum is brand new and will launch in 2018. It took three years to develop, and faculty are proposing brand new courses to meet the new categories. FSEM and capstone. Focuses on ways of inquiry and complex problems.

Philosophy:

American says, “American University believes curiosity goes hand in hand with the knowledge and expertise that characterize difference-makers. From your first semester to your last, you will cultivate a set of intellectual habits that strengthen your academic success. By bringing together the inquiry-based values of the Core with the work you do in your major, you will become bright and engaged participants in the great conversations that define the future.”

Requirements:

- American University Experience I (1.5 credits)
- American University Experience II (1.5 credits)
- Complex Problems (3 credits)
- Written Communication and Information Literacy I (3-6 credits)
- Written Communication and Information Literacy II (3 credits)
- Quantitative Literacy I (3 credits)
- Quantitative Literacy II (3 credits)
- One course in each of the five (5) Habits of Mind Areas
 - Creative-Aesthetic Inquiry (3 credits)
 - Cultural Inquiry (3 credits)
 - Ethical Reasoning (3 credits)
 - Natural-Scientific Inquiry (4 credits)
 - Socio-Historical Inquiry (3 credits)
- Diverse Experiences (3 credits)
- Capstone (3 credits)



Note: Each year is organized around a guiding question closely tied to the nature of the university and Gonzaga's specific identity. Paralleling DU's FSEM and ASEM are a first-year seminar and a core integration seminar. That last has a very specific focus and purpose.

Philosophy:

Gonzaga says, "The University Core, re-envisioned in 2016, animates our Catholic, Jesuit and humanistic heritage and mission. As a four-year, cohesive program completed by all Gonzaga students, the core grounds, extends, and enriches each student's major area of study.

The core is anchored by this question: As students of a Catholic, Jesuit, and Humanistic University, how do we educate ourselves to become women and men for a more just and humane global community? This question is progressively addressed by yearly themes and questions that create cohesiveness in students' core experience. Our re-envisioned core is enhanced by the additions of a First-year Seminar, designed to help students make the transition to university intellectual life, and the Core Integration Seminar, designed to help students pull together the threads of their core experience alongside their major."

Requirements:

Year One: Understanding and Creating: How do we pursue knowledge and cultivate understanding?

- First-Year Seminar
- Writing
- Reasoning
- Communication and Speech
- Scientific Inquiry
- Mathematics

Year Two: Being and Becoming: Who are we and what does it mean to be human?

- Philosophy of Human Nature
- Christianity and Catholic Traditions

Year Three: Caring and Doing: What principles characterize a well lived life?

- Ethics
- World/Comparative Religion

Year Four: Imagining the Possible: What is our role in the world?

Students will address this question through the culminating core course, the Core Integration Seminar.

Broadening Courses and Course Designations

Broadening courses intersect with the core themes and extend students' appreciation for the humanities, arts, and social/behavioral sciences. These courses can be taken at any time throughout the four years. Courses designated as writing enriched, global studies, and social justice taken throughout the core and in the major reinforce essential knowledge and competencies.

Note. There's a strong emphasis on general education as serving the institutional identity and mission. Experiential and place-based learning are featured in both first and junior years, there's a capstone requirement, and social justice (befitting DePaul's Vincentian mission) is explicitly featured in sophomore year.

Philosophy:

DePaul says, "The Liberal Studies Program is the common curriculum taken by all students in the seven undergraduate colleges of DePaul University. Overall, the program is designed to develop students' writing abilities, computational and technological proficiencies, and critical and creative thinking skills. Some liberal studies courses introduce the institution's unique Catholic, Vincentian, and urban mission and identity, and may include opportunities for community service. While the liberal studies curriculum itself is quite varied, the program as a whole shares these four learning goals: 1) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World, 2) Intellectual and Creative Skills, 3) Personal Responsibility and Social Transformation, and 4) Integrative Learning. Unlike a student's chosen major, which offers depth of knowledge in a single focused field, a liberal studies education provides breadth of scholarship across many different areas of study. At DePaul, faculty from virtually every department, interdisciplinary program, and college help to teach the over 1400 different courses from which students can choose to meet their liberal studies requirements. This wide spectrum of participation on the part of students and faculty alike contributes to a strong sense of intellectual community at DePaul, and a shared commitment to its mission and values."

Requirements:

Freshman

- **Chicago Quarter:** Get acquainted with Chicago and its neighborhoods, cultures and issues.
- **Focal Point Seminar:** Investigate a significant person, place, event or idea.
- **Quantitative Reasoning and Technological Literacy:** Become a confident and critical user of quantitative information.
- **First-Year Writing:** Get up to speed with the methods and forms of college writing.

Sophomore Year

- **Seminar on Multiculturalism in the U.S.:** Gain a critical perspective on the historical roots of inequality and the lasting effects of oppression.

Junior Year

- **Experiential Learning:** Learn by doing through an internship, research*, study abroad or service learning.
*College of Science and Health students may satisfy their Experiential Learning requirement by completing research courses.

Senior Year

- **Senior Capstone:** Create a final project of your own design.

Note. There's a heavy emphasis on competencies, particularly in ways of knowing and methods of inquiry (as opposed to bodies of knowledge), within the conceptual framework of developing individual abilities and foregrounding the different aspects of the university.

Philosophy:

The General Education requirements are an integral part of your undergraduate education at Stanford. Their purpose is to introduce you to the intellectual life of the university, to foreground important questions and illustrate how they may be approached from multiple perspectives. They will help you to develop a broad set of essential intellectual and social competencies that will be of enduring value no matter what field you eventually pursue. You will have tremendous flexibility to select topics that appeal to you while building critical skills, exploring your interests, forming relationships with faculty and peers, and forging connections between educational experiences in many spheres. Together with your major, the requirements will serve as the nucleus around which you will build your four years here and perhaps pursue graduate study or professional work.

Requirements:

- Students are required to take one Thinking Matters course during their first year.
- Students are required to complete one year of college-level study in a foreign language.

Two courses each in:

- Aesthetic and Interpretive Inquiry
- Scientific Method and Analysis
- Social Inquiry

One course each in:

- Applied Quantitative Reasoning
- Creative Expression
- Engaging Diversity
- Ethical Reasoning
- Formal Reasoning

Writing and Rhetoric Requirement

- PWR 1 is taken during the first year
- PWR 2 is taken during sophomore year
- WIM (Writing in the Major) is taken once student has declared a major

Note. A heavily integrative, new model, with intentional explicit common courses across all four years, with a study abroad/experiential requirement (300) and a capstone.

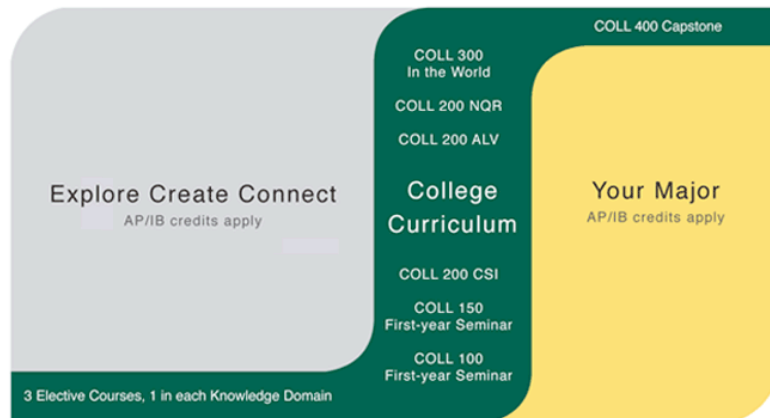
Philosophy:

William and Mary says: “All W&M undergraduate students share the College Curriculum experience, a set of specially designed courses that connect and integrate knowledge across the academic disciplines.

Your first-year experience includes two types of courses that lay the groundwork for a coherent liberal arts education: **COLL 150**, with deep readings and group discussions of texts, data, or methods of inquiry; and **COLL 100**, exploring the concepts, beliefs, and creative visions, theories, and discoveries that have shaped our understanding of the world. These COLL courses are offered across the academic disciplines and are a great way to explore an area of knowledge that's new or interesting to you.

Your second year takes a close look at the various academic disciplines and how they approach knowledge through different paradigms and methodologies. **COLL 200** courses structure this investigation explicitly. By the end of your second year, you should have a good sense of the field of knowledge you want to pursue in-depth through your major. You're also ready to begin connecting theory to practice and to place your work in a global or cross-cultural context through a **COLL 300** experience.

Your major, your electives, and your College Curriculum experience all come together in your senior year. In the **COLL 400** course you choose, you'll create original research and share your work with others. Soon, as a knowledgeable, independent thinker, you'll be ready to decide your next steps after College as you begin to engage the world around you.



Requirements:

COLL 100
COLL 150
COLL 200
COLL 300
COLL 400

One elective in each of three knowledge domains

Arts, Letters & Values;
Cultures, Societies & the Individual;
the Natural World and Quantitative Reasoning)

2 credits creative and performing arts

Foreign language proficiency at 202 level

Mathematics proficiency

Note. Has both a Distribution requirement in the “diversified core” and a thematic requirement. In addition to first-year writing, there are four writing-intensive courses.

Philosophy:

The University of Minnesota and its faculty are committed to providing an education that invites you to investigate the world from new perspectives, learn new ways of thinking, and grow as an active citizen and lifelong learner. The University’s liberal education requirements for all students are designed to be integrated throughout your four-year undergraduate experience. These courses provide you an opportunity to explore fields outside your major and complement your major curriculum with a multidisciplinary perspective.

Requirements:

Diversified Core

Arts/Humanities – 3 credits

Biological Sciences – 4 credits; must include lab/field experience

Historical Perspectives – 3 credits

Literature – 3 credits

Mathematical Thinking – 3 credits

Physical Sciences – 4 credits; must include lab/field experience

Social Sciences – 3 credits

Designated Themes: students must satisfy four of the five

Civic Life and Ethics – 3 credits

Diversity and Social Justice in the United States – 3 credits

The Environment – 3 credits

Global Perspectives – 3 credits

Technology and Society – 3 credits

Writing Intensive requirement

First-Year Writing

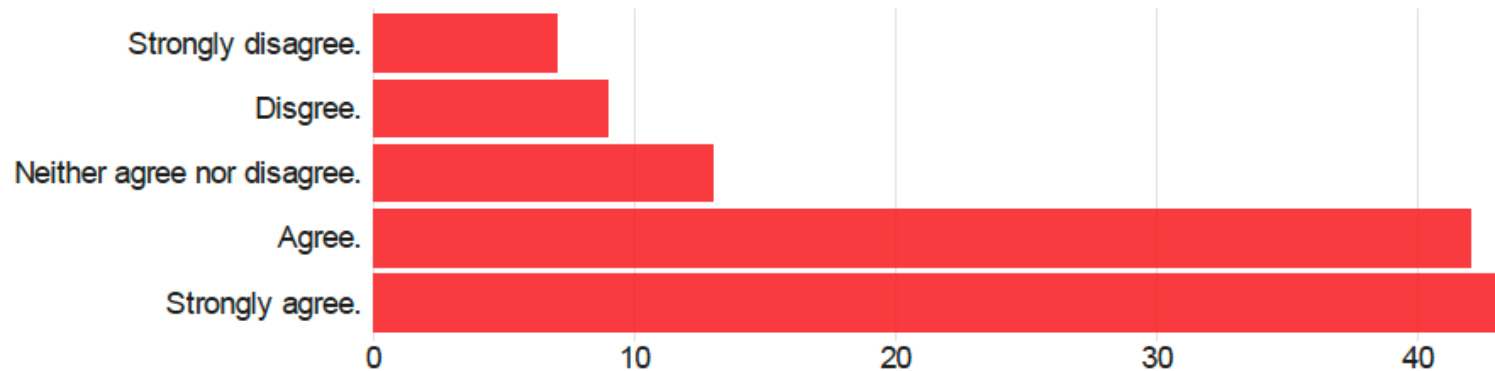
4 Writing Intensive courses (2 upper division, one within major)

Appendix B

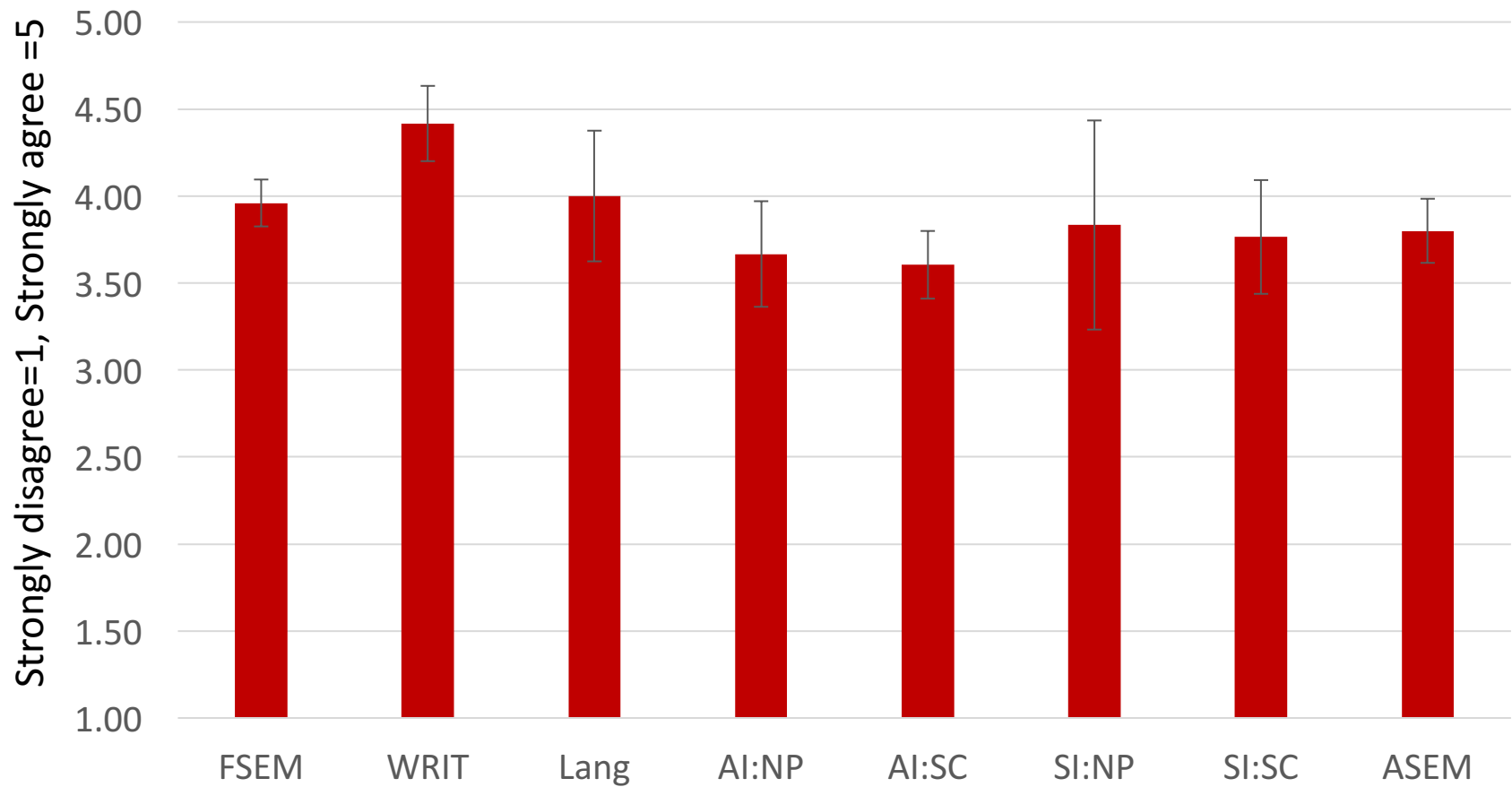
Faculty Survey

On November 3, 2017, we invited all faculty to complete a survey about aspects of the current Common Curriculum at DU. After the initial invitation and a reminder on November 7th, 181 of 714 faculty replied. The survey was comprised of 19 questions, including four open-ended questions. The open-ended questions averaged 79 responses. The full list of questions is included at the end of this presentation. Only faculty who indicated that they taught in CC or advised students were asked to respond to corresponding questions. When at least one statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between groups was observed, groups were plotted separately, and these group-specific plots follow the overall response plots. On the group-specific plots, error bars indicate standard error of the mean. Almost always, non-overlapping error bars indicate statistically significant differences between means.

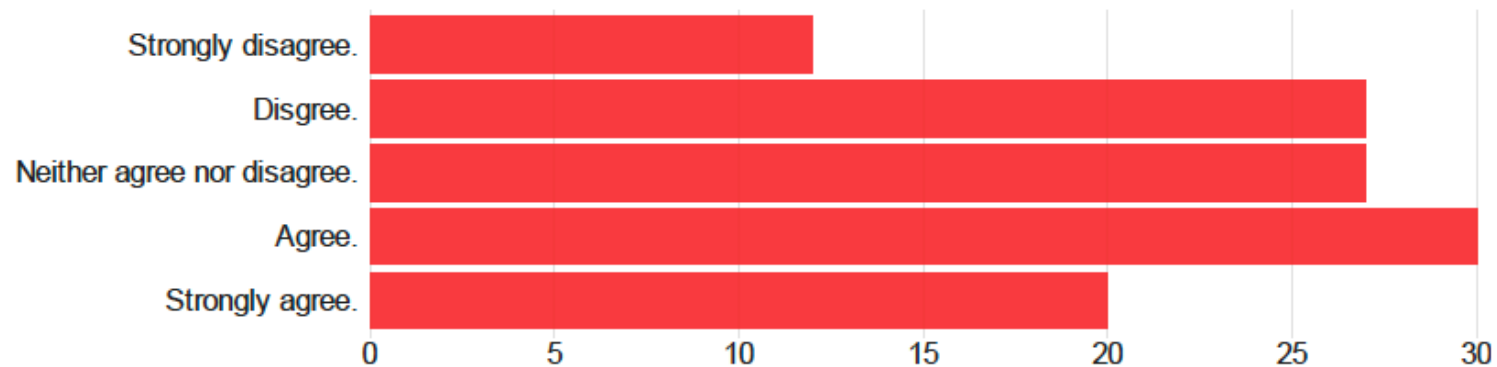
When I design and teach CC courses I keep in mind the student learning outcomes for my CC area



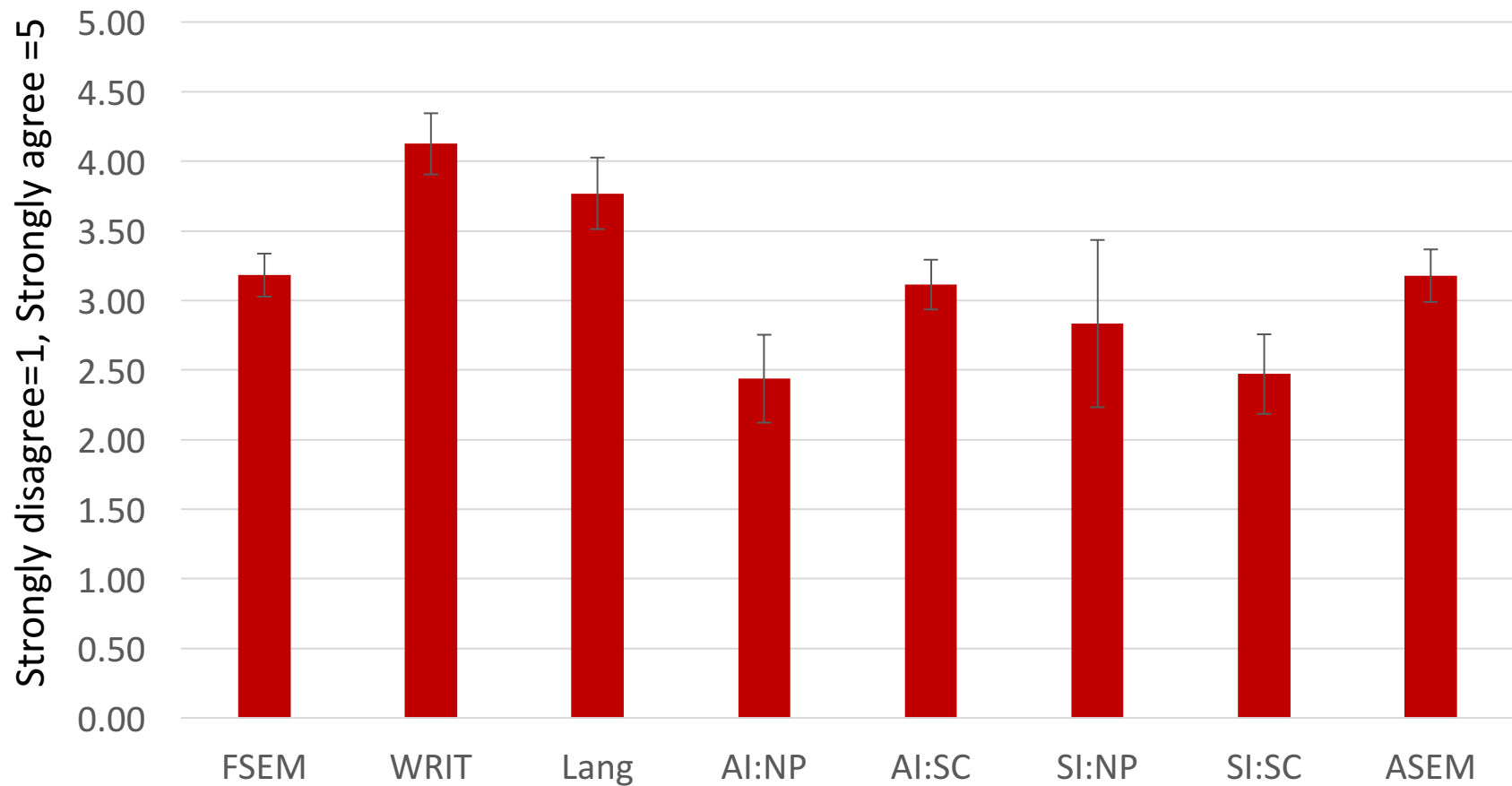
When I design and teach Common Curriculum (CC) courses, I keep in mind the student learning outcomes for my CC area: Response by type of CC course taught



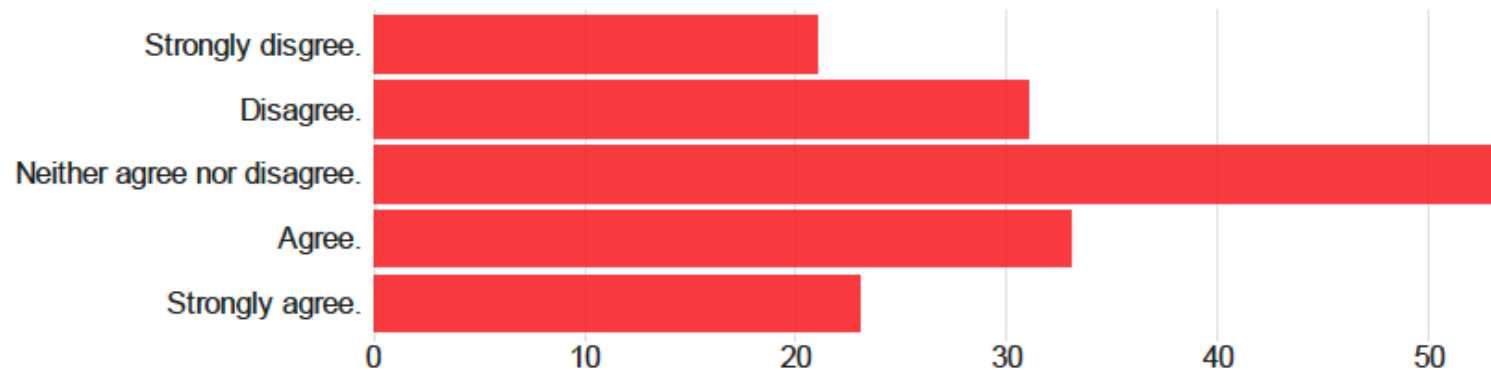
When I design and teach CC courses I make connections/relationships between my courses and others in the CC



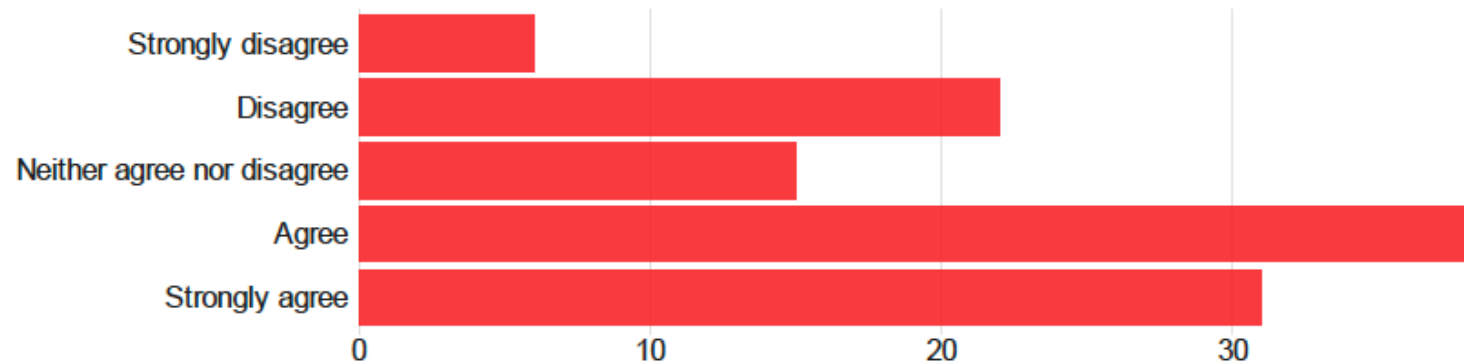
When I design and teach Common Curriculum courses, I make connections/relationships between my courses and others in the Common Curriculum: Response by type of CC course taught.



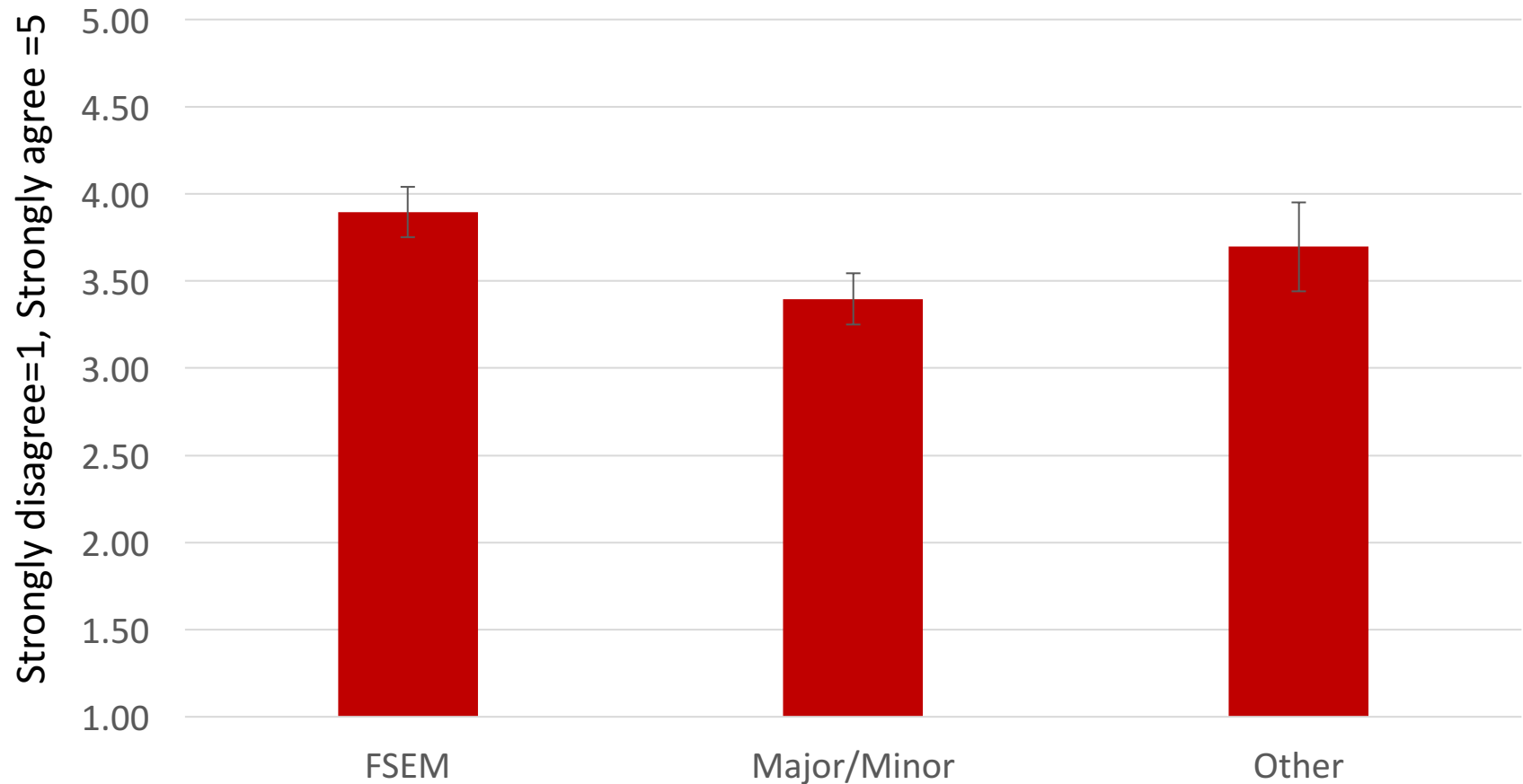
It is my perception that colleagues in my department or program make deliberate connections between the CC and courses/requirements in the major



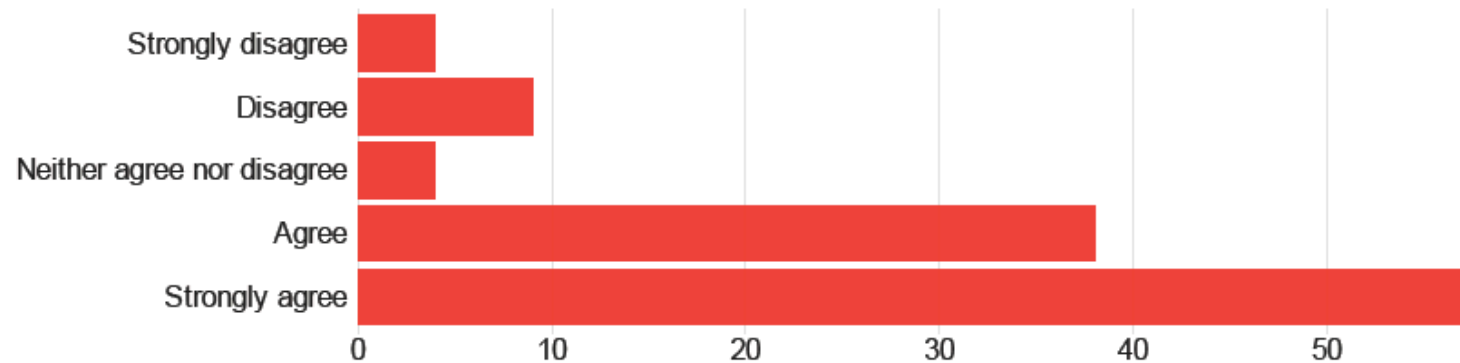
As an advisor to undergraduates, I devote time and attention to making sure students understand the theory and outcomes of the CC



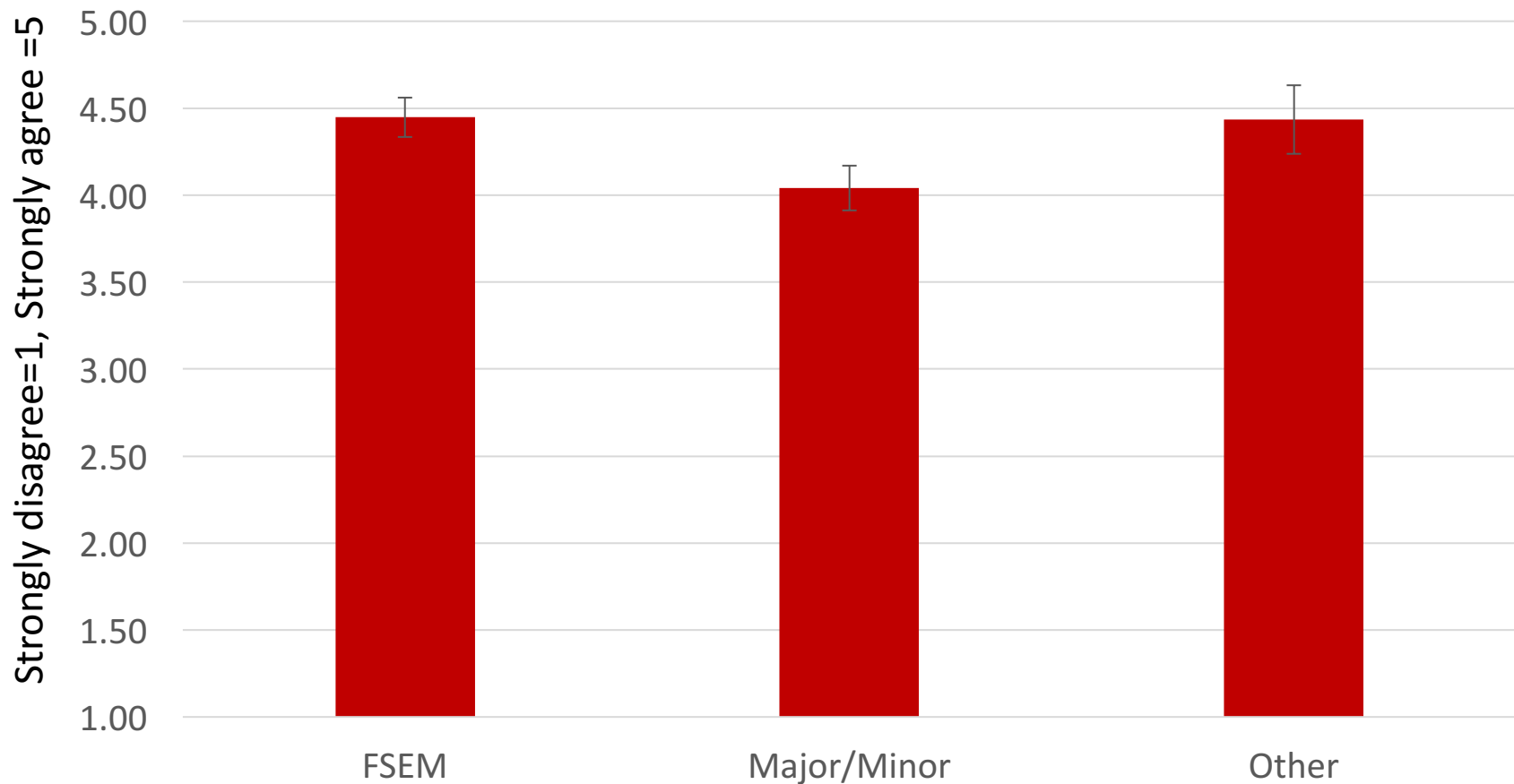
As an advisor to undergraduates, I devote time and attention to making sure students understand the theory and outcomes of the Common Curriculum.



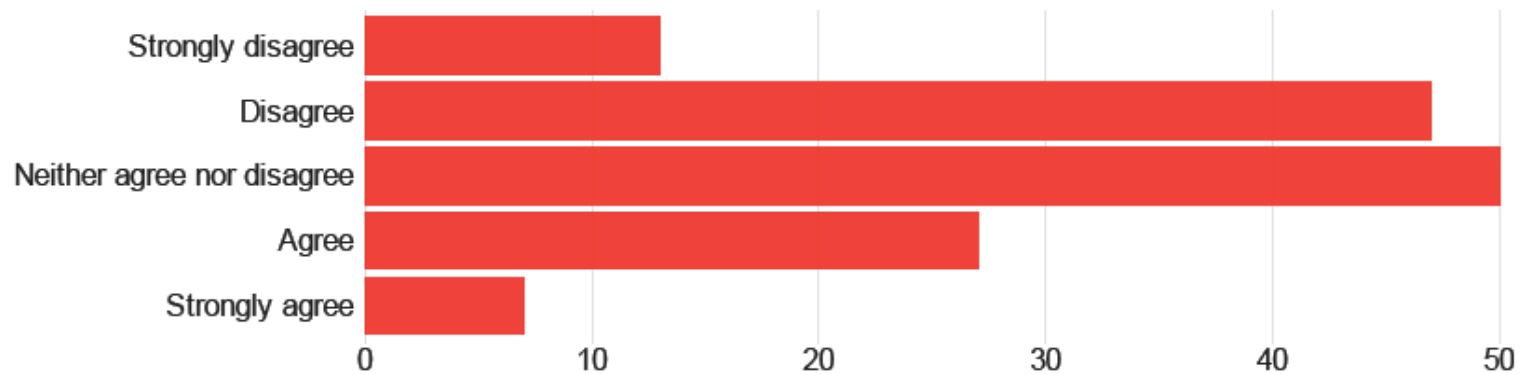
As an advisor to undergraduates, I devote time and attention to practical matters of helping students find courses which meet requirements



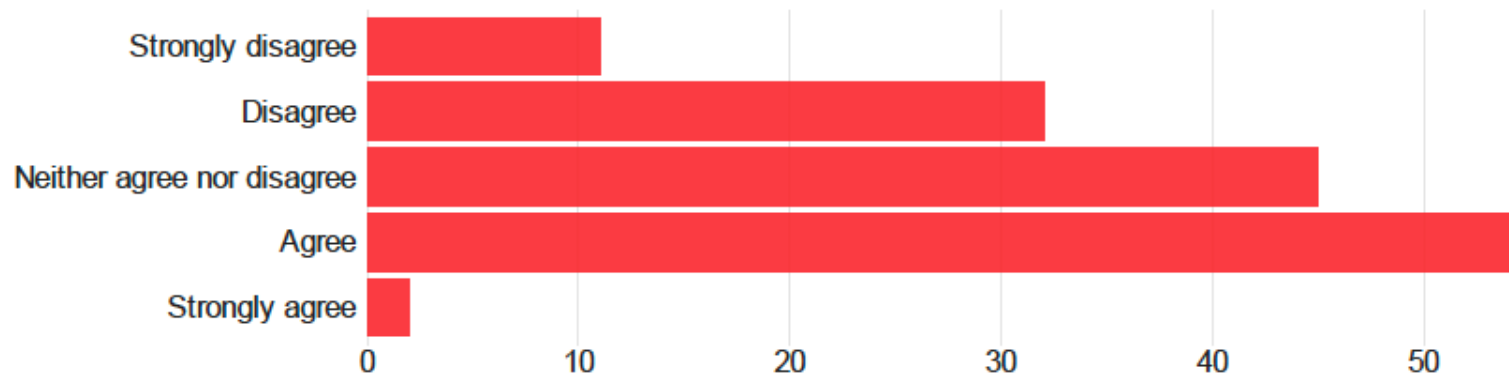
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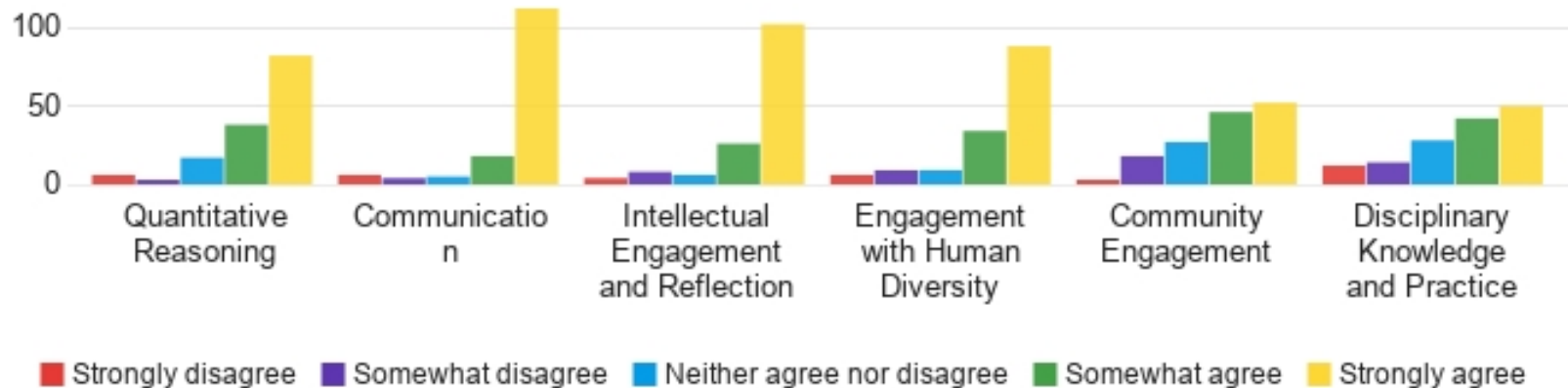
I perceive that most undergraduate students understand and value the theory and outcomes of the current CC, taken as a whole



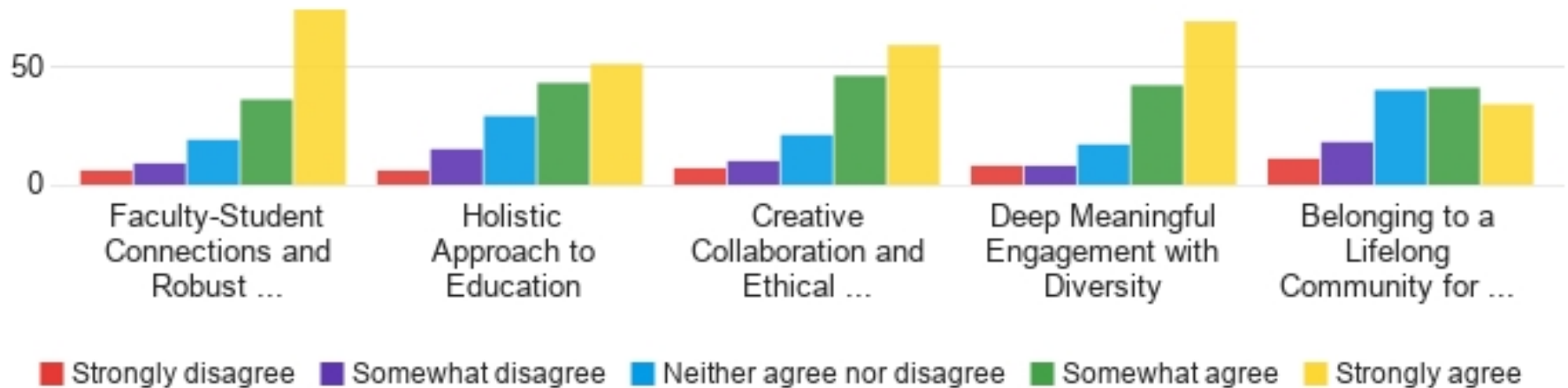
I perceive that most DU faculty understand and value the theory and outcomes of the current CC, taken as a whole



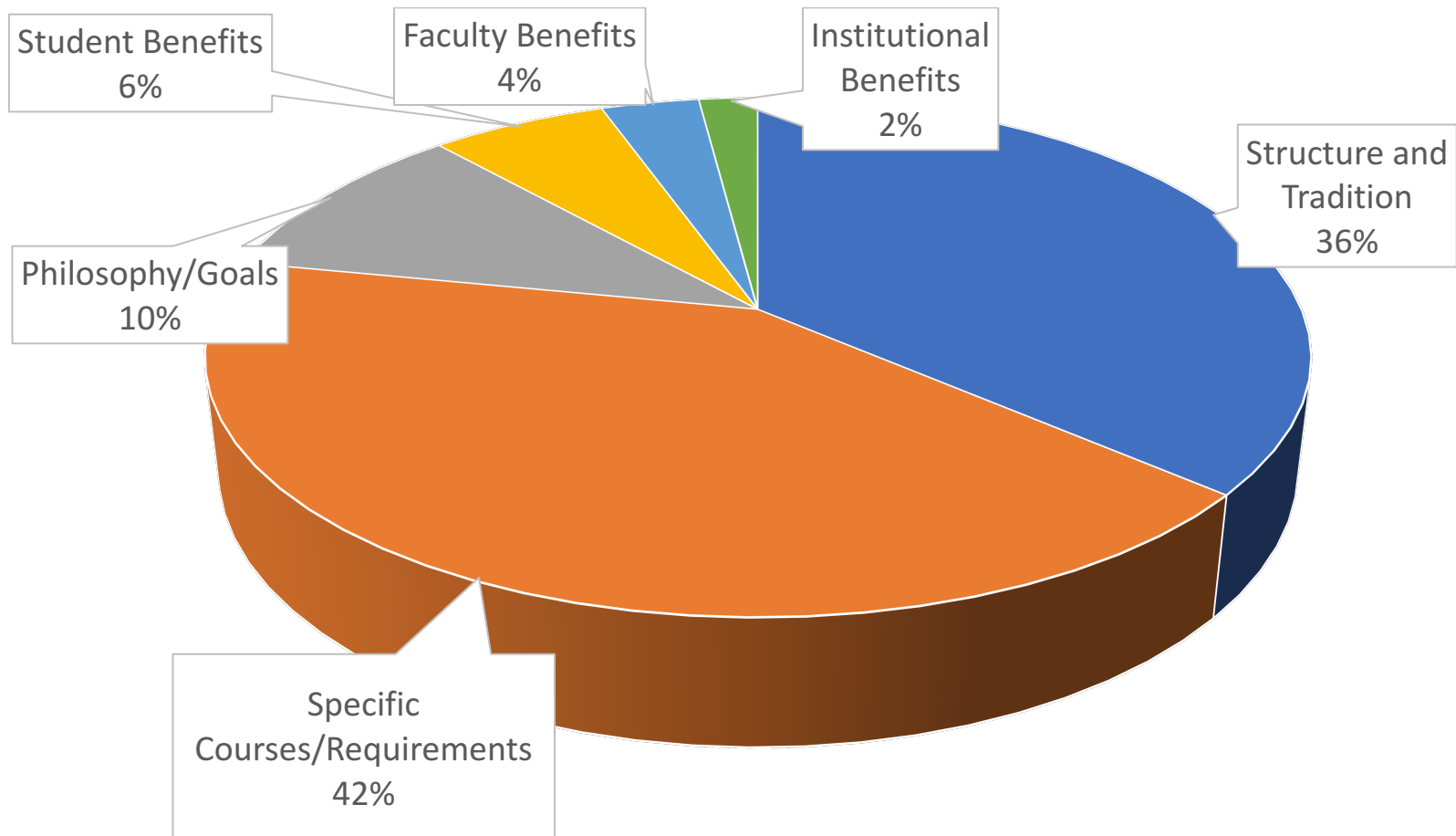
The CC should have a central role advancing the following outcomes



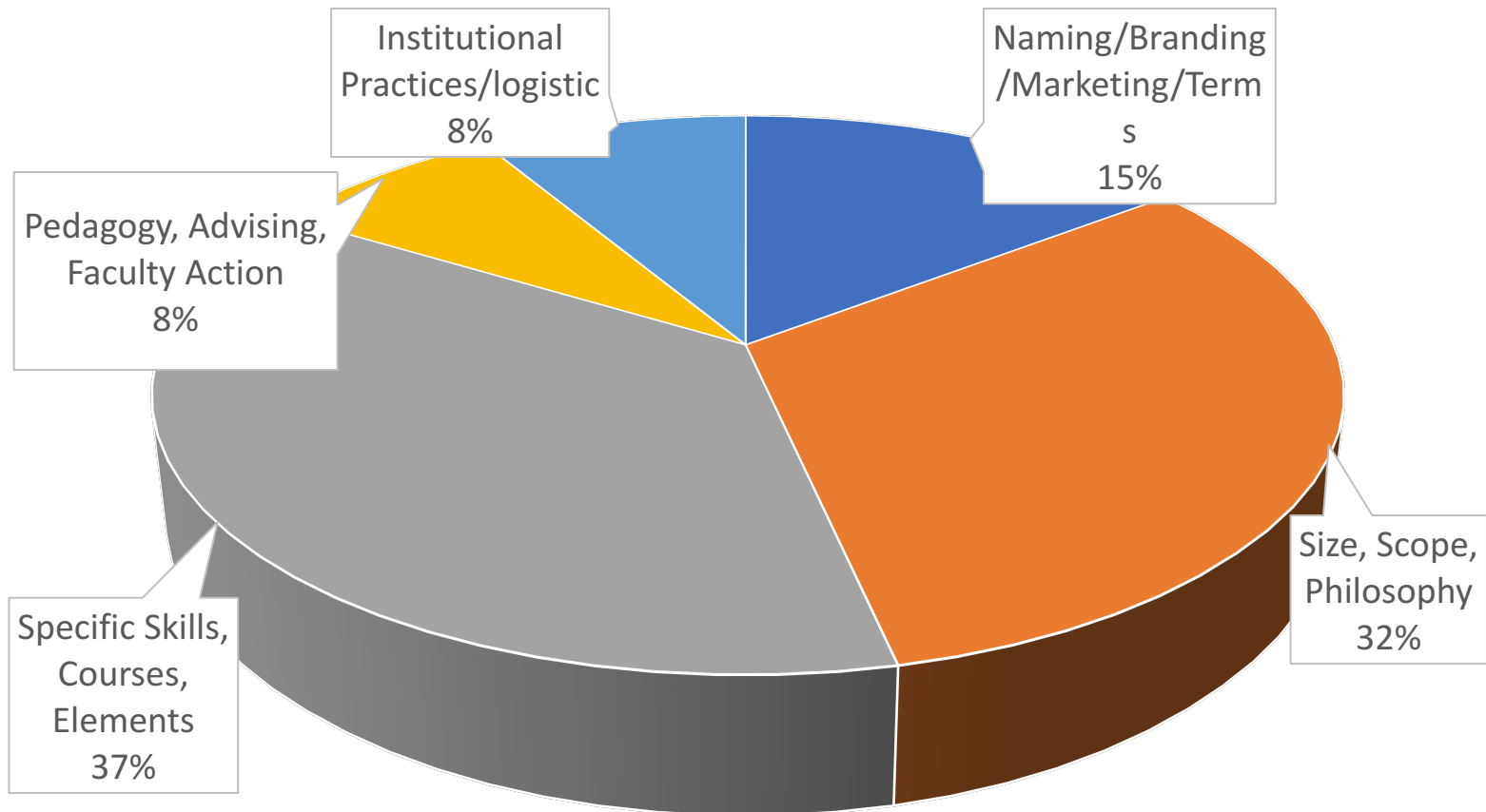
The CC should have a central role advancing the following promises



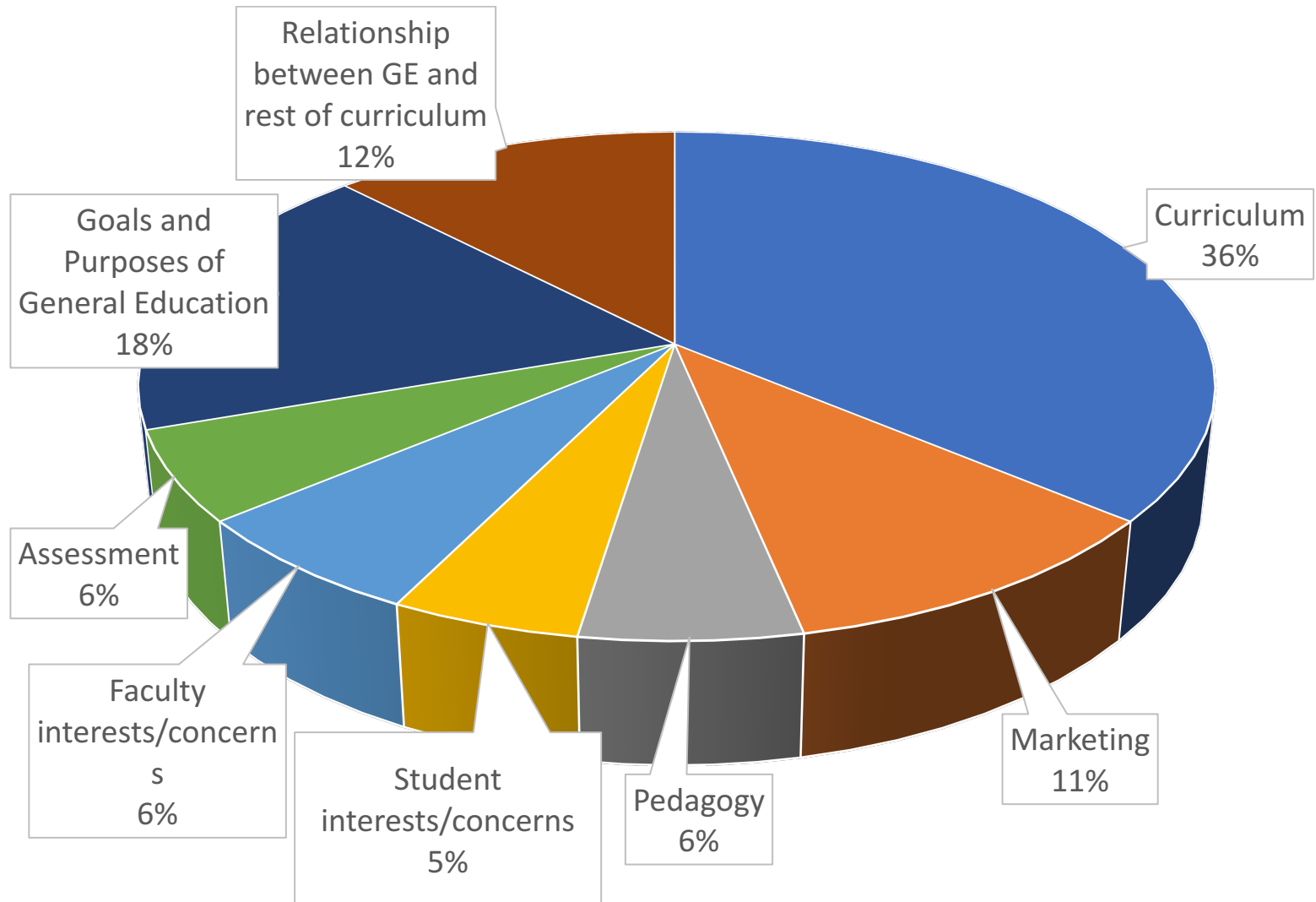
In your view, what are the strengths of the current Common Curriculum at DU?



In your view, what aspects of the current Common Curriculum at DU could be improved?



What is a question or idea that you think important to be considered during the review and possible revision of the Common Curriculum?



Following are the questions asked on the faculty survey. A more detailed summary is available on the GERI Portfolio site: <http://portfolio.du.edu/GenEdReviewInquiry2017>

- With which department(s) or program(s) are you affiliated?
- In which area(s) of the Common Curriculum do you teach? Check all that apply.
- When I design and teach Common Curriculum (CC) courses, I keep in mind the student learning outcomes for my CC area.
- When I design and teach Common Curriculum courses, I make connections/relationships between my courses and others in the Common Curriculum.
- It is my perception that colleagues in my department or program make deliberate connections between the Common Curriculum and courses/requirements in the major.
- Do you advise students regarding the current Common Curriculum (or have you recently advised)? Check all that apply.
- As an advisor to undergraduates, I devote time and attention to making sure students understand the theory and outcomes of the Common Curriculum.
- As an advisor to undergraduates, I devote time and attention to practical matters of helping students find courses which meet requirements.
- I perceive that most undergraduate students understand and value the theory and outcomes of the current Common Curriculum, taken as a whole.
- I perceive that most DU faculty understand and value the theory and outcomes of the current Common Curriculum, taken as a whole.
- Along with Majors/Minors, electives, and co-curricular activities, the Common Curriculum helps achieve DU's Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes. Please rate your agreement that the Common Curriculum should have a central role advancing the following outcomes:
 - Quantitative Reasoning
 - Communication
 - Intellectual Engagement and Reflection
 - Engagement with Human Diversity
 - Community Engagement
 - Disciplinary Knowledge and Practice

- If you'd like, please explain any of your responses concerning the role you believe the Common Curriculum should (or shouldn't) play in DU's Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes (listed in the previous question).
- The vision expressed in DU Impact 2025 is organized around a series of promises to students, to be met by the Common Curriculum, the Major/Minor, and the co-curriculum. Please rate your agreement that the Common Curriculum (rather than other activities) should advance the following promises:
 - Faculty-Student Connections and Robust Intellectual Engagement
 - Holistic Approach to Education
 - Creative Collaboration and Ethical Engagement
 - Deep Meaningful Engagement with Diversity
 - Belonging to Lifelong Community
- If you'd like, please explain any of your responses concerning the role you believe the Common Curriculum should (or shouldn't) play in any of the five promises listed in the previous question.
- In your view, what are the strengths of the current Common Curriculum at DU?
- In your view, what aspects of the current Common Curriculum at DU could be improved?
- What is a question or idea that you think important to be considered during the review and possible revision of the Common Curriculum?
- In the next weeks and months, the General Education Review and Inquiry Committee will be meeting with students, faculty and advisors in a variety of formats. Although invitations to these meetings will be distributed broadly, if you would like to receive an additional invitation or reminder for these events, please enter your email address below.

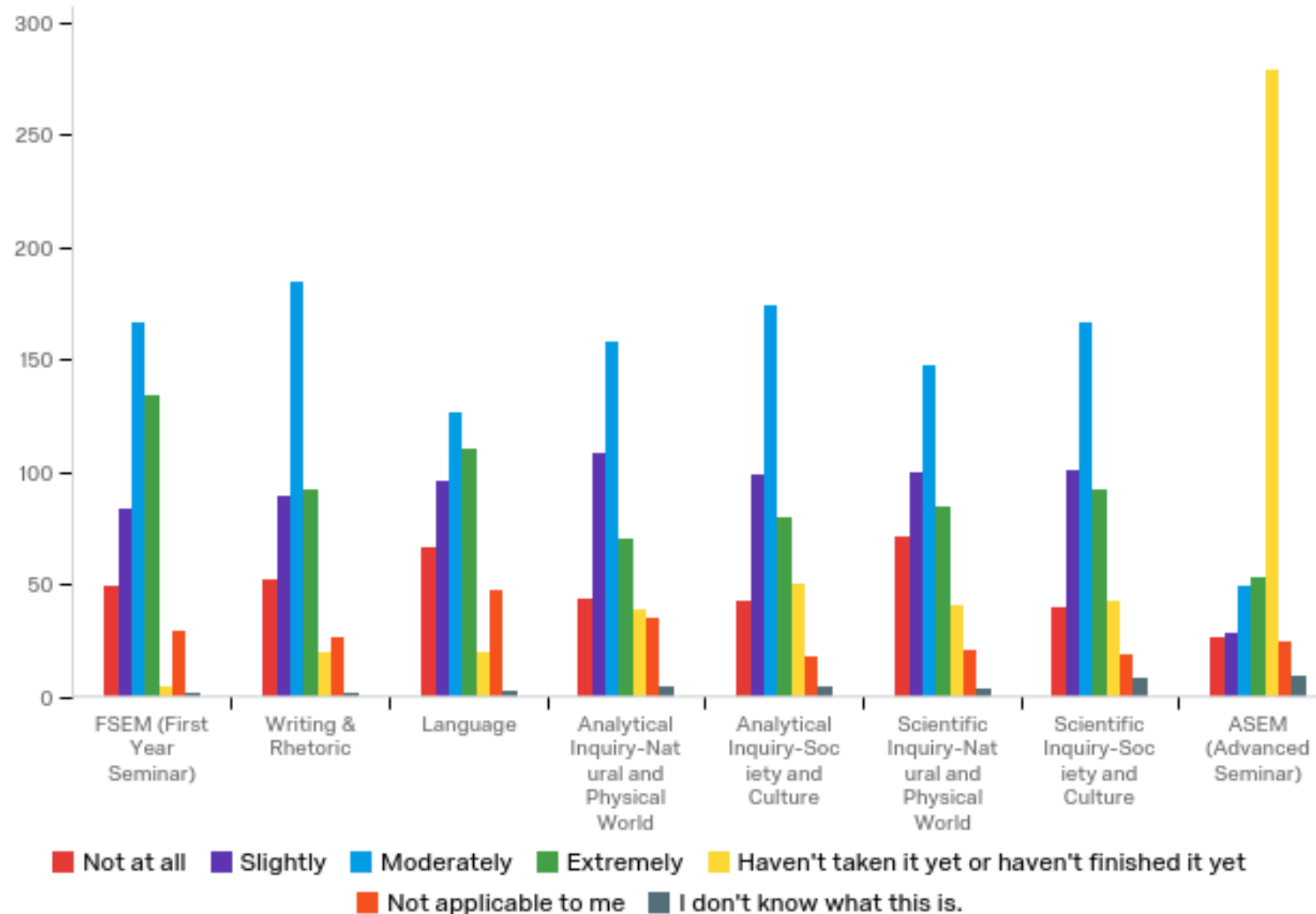
Appendix C

Student Survey

Starting January 30, 2018, the GERI committee distributed a survey to a target group of currently enrolled students, mostly in Advanced Seminars. The survey was comprised of 13 questions, including 2 open-ended questions. We also asked for demographic information not included in this total. Over 450 students completed the survey. The full list of questions is included at the end of this presentation.

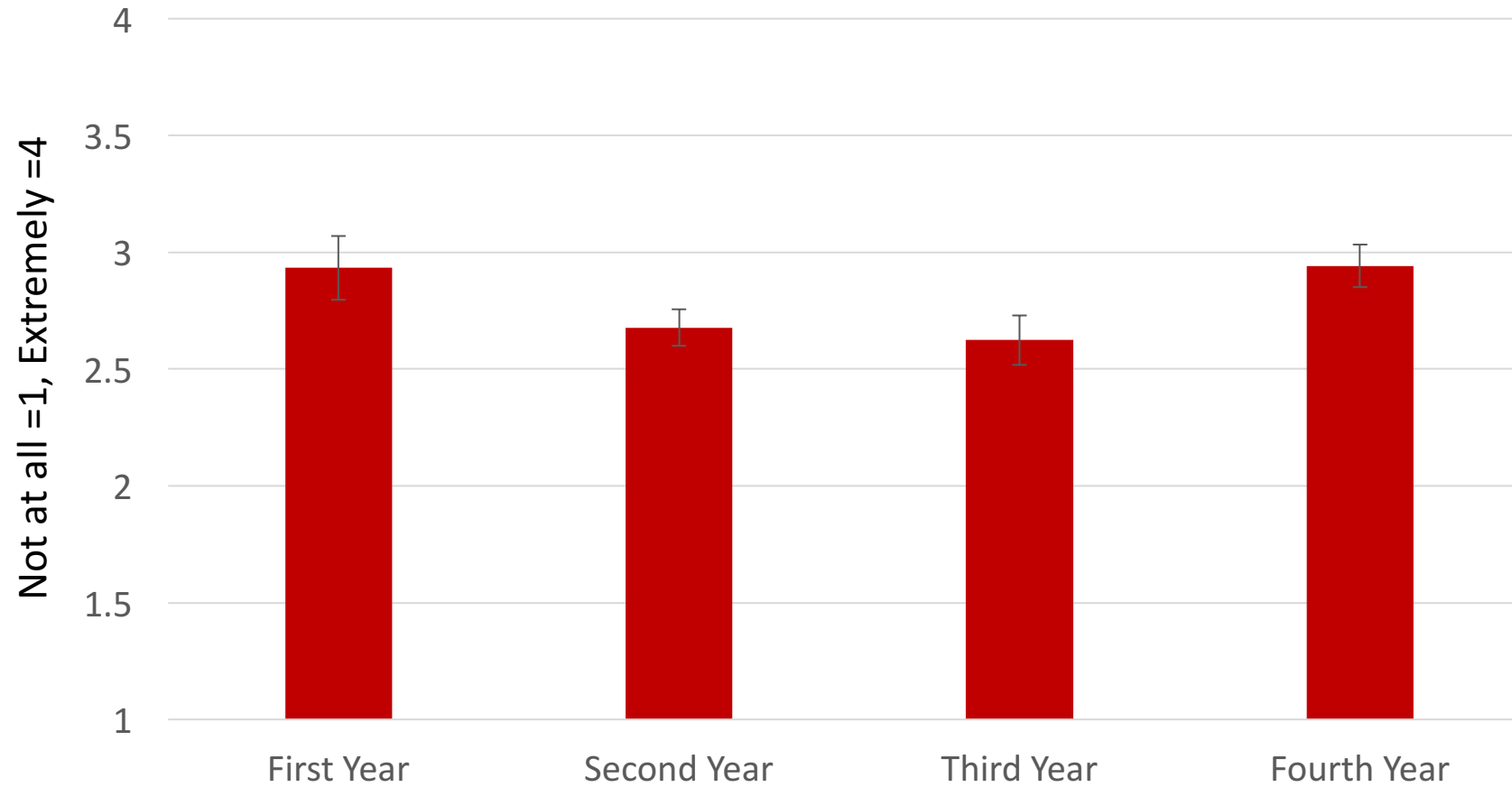
For year at DU and major, ANOVAs were conducted to test for at least one significant difference between groups. If statistically significant ($p < .05$), group-specific plots follow the overall response plots. On the group-specific plots, error bars indicate standard error of the mean. Almost always, non-overlapping error bars indicate statistically significant differences between means. For group-specific plots, students who indicated they had not yet taken or were not aware of a particular element of CC were not included for the corresponding questions.

Indicate how valuable, meaningful, or impactful were the following components of the Common Curriculum (General Education) for you at DU?



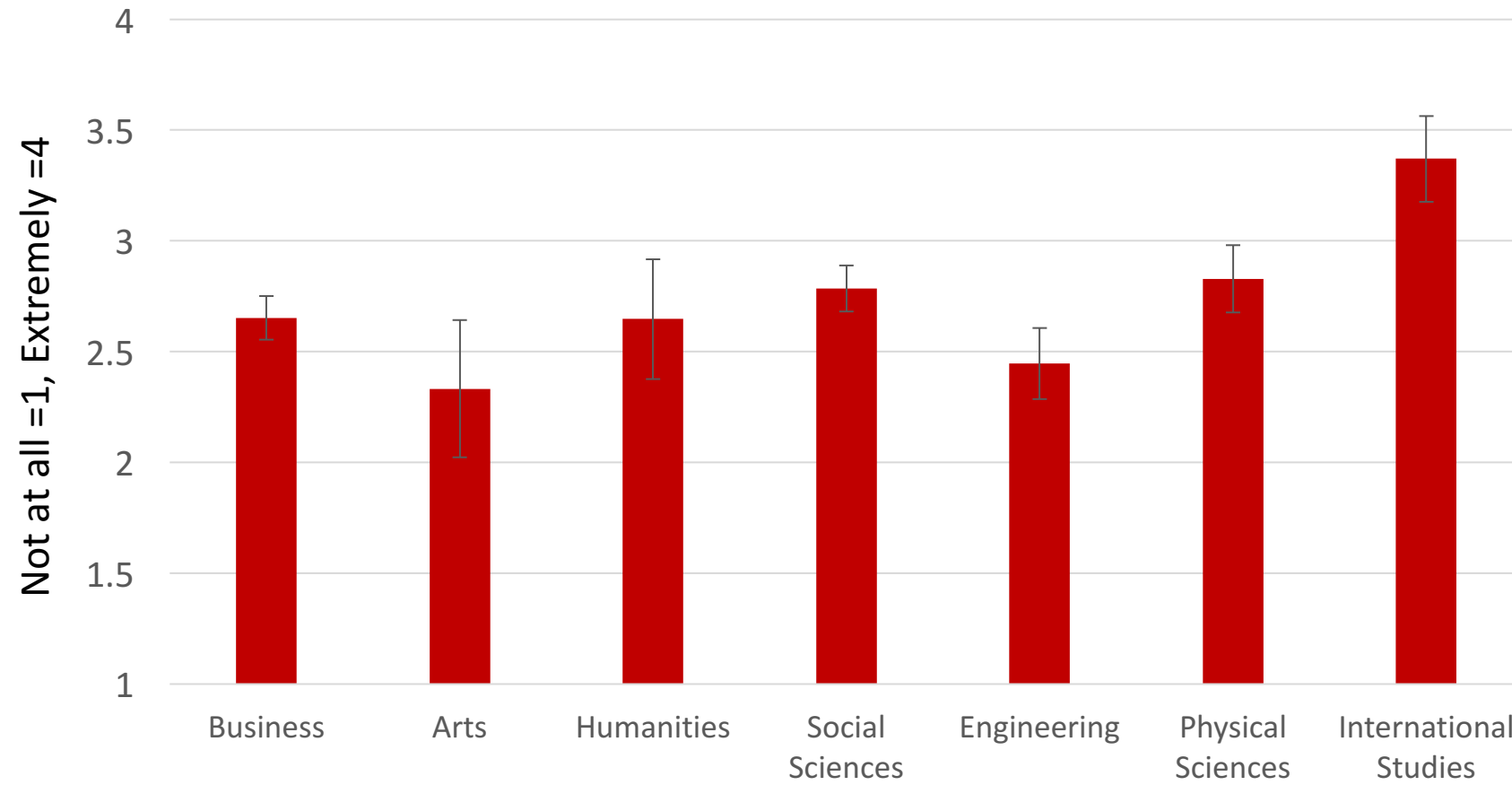
Effects that vary significantly
by year at DU

Scientific Inquiry-Society and Culture

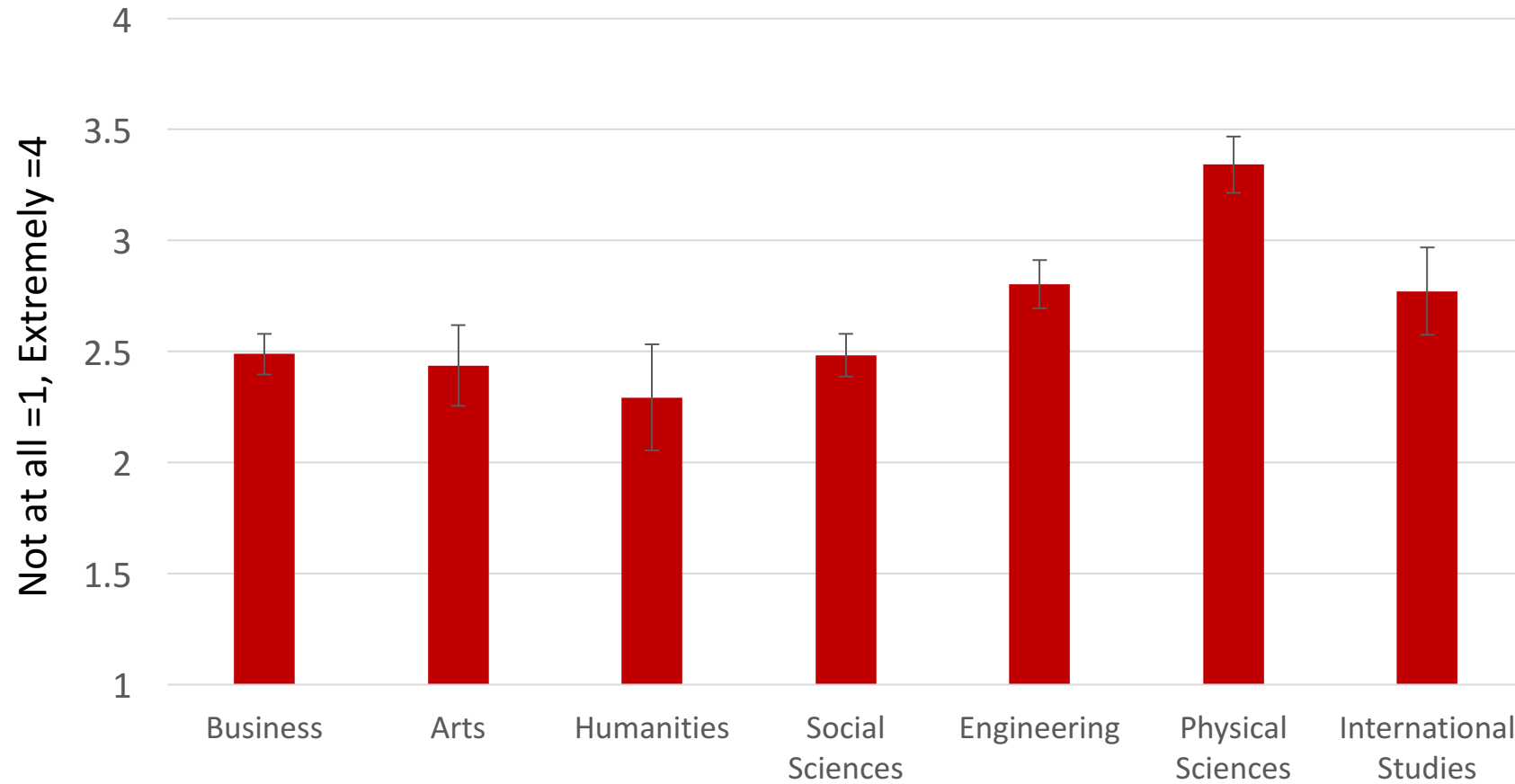


Effects that vary significantly
by major

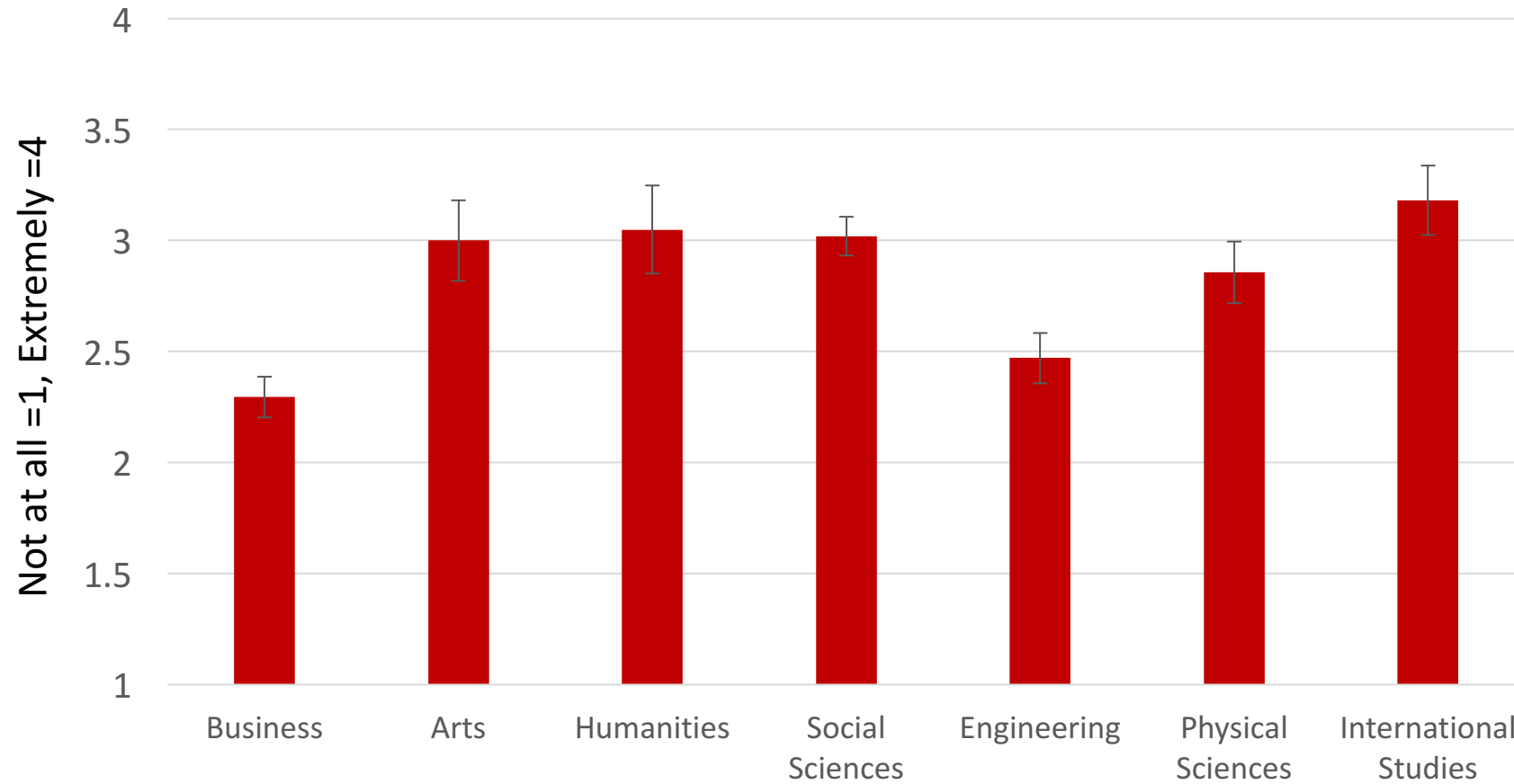
Language



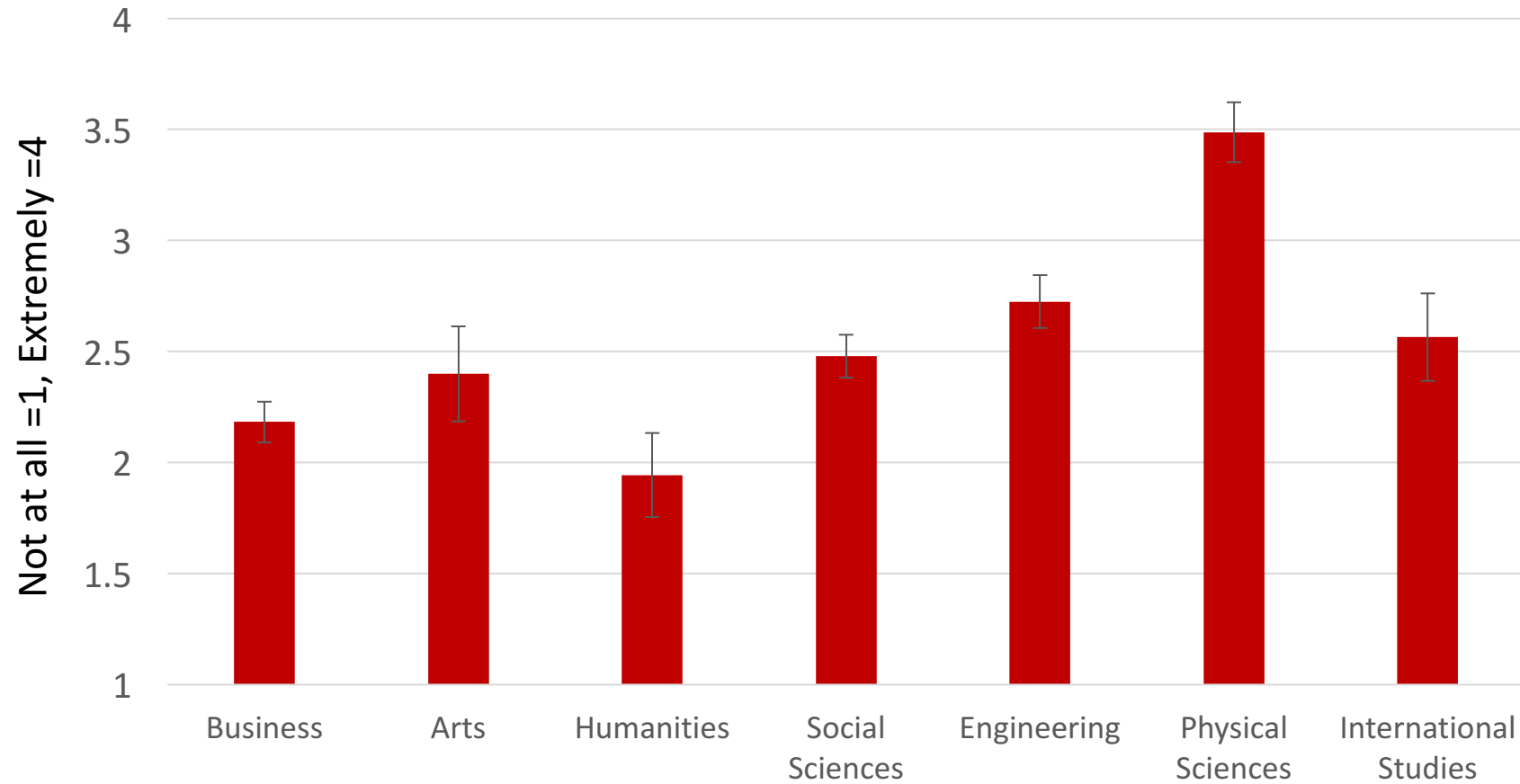
Analytical Inquiry: Natural & Physical World



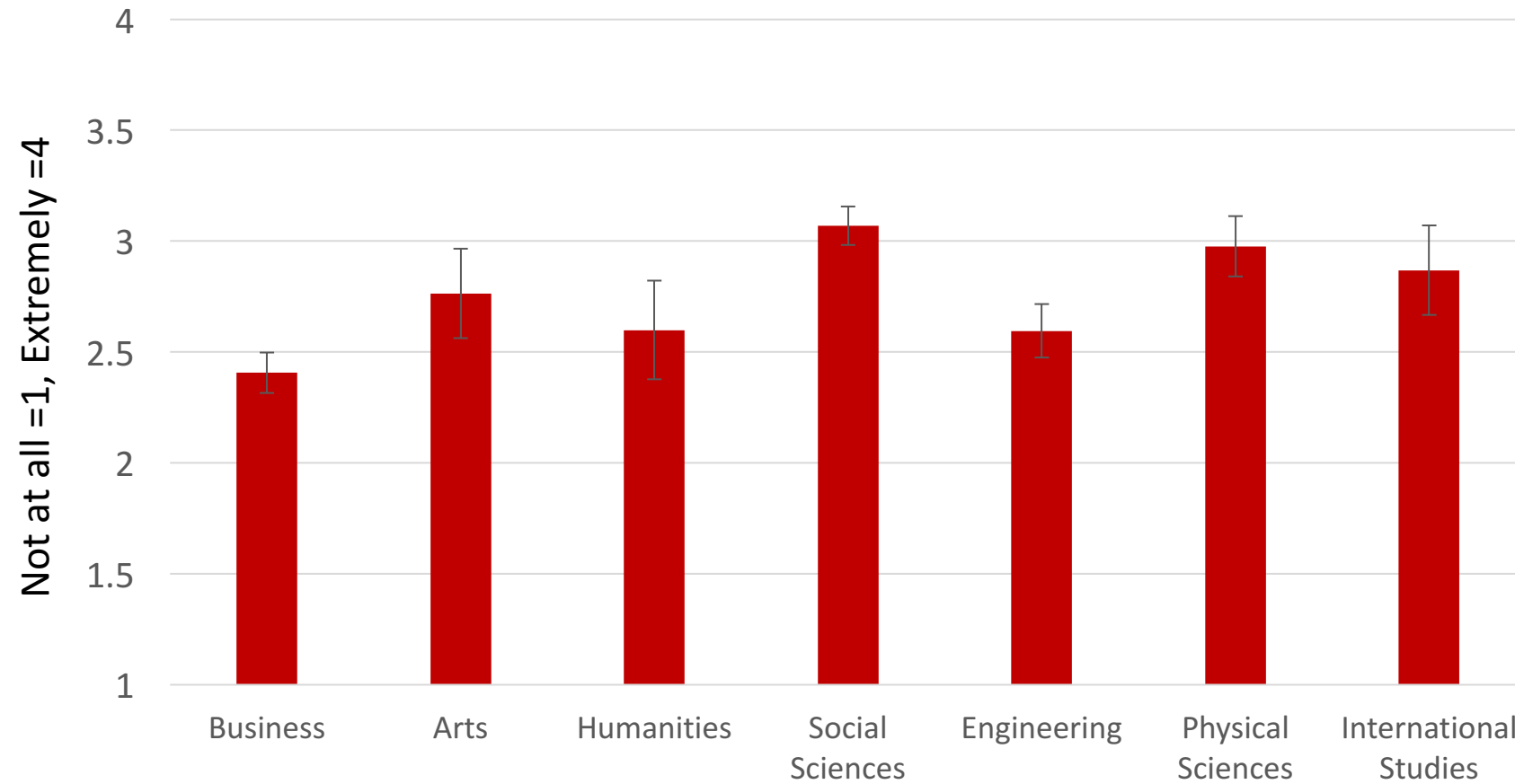
Analytical Inquiry: Society & Culture



Scientific Inquiry: Natural & Physical World

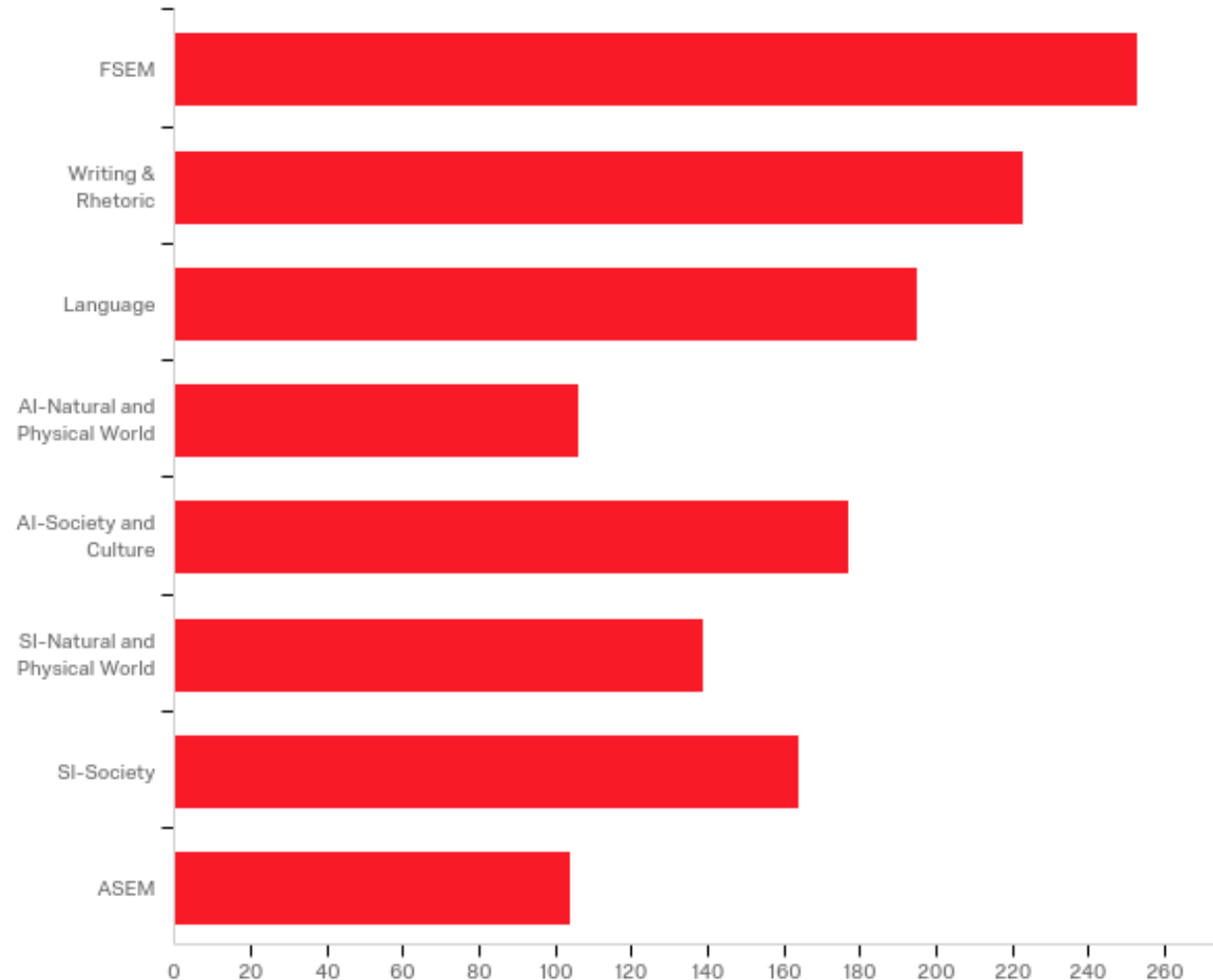


Scientific Inquiry: Society & Culture



Please drag and drop [RANK]the MOST valuable, meaningful, or impactful component of the Common Curriculum (General Education) for you at DU. You may select as many components as you wish.

Please drag and drop the MOST valuable, meaningful, or impactful component...



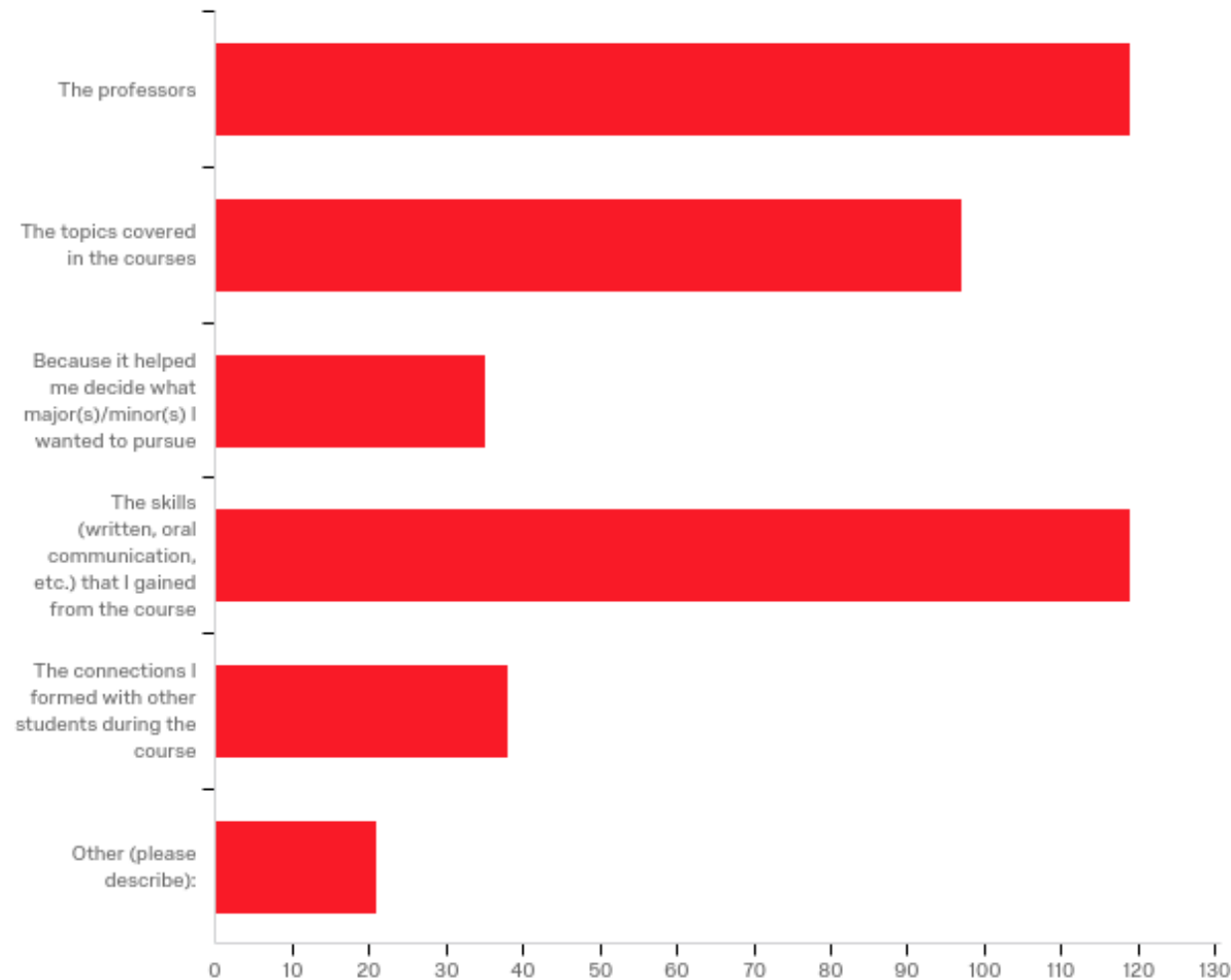
Effects that vary significantly by year at DU

- 4th year students ranked FSEM significantly lower (compared to other three years)
- 3rd and 4th year students tended to rank AI: Natural lower than 1st and 2nd year students
- 3rd and 4th year students ranked ASEM significantly higher than 1st and 2nd year students (very few of whom had taken ASEM)

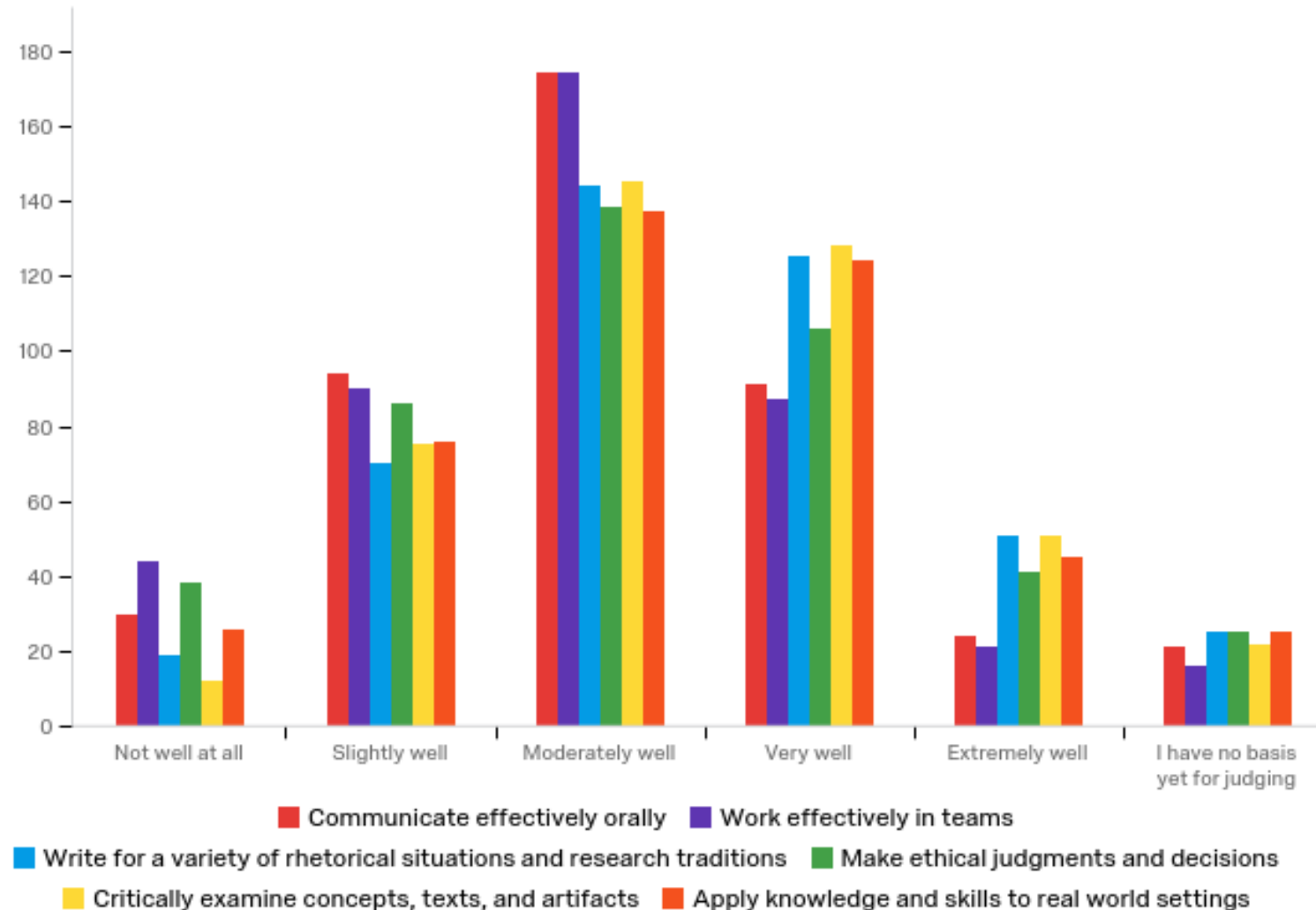
Effects that vary significantly by major

- Arts, social science and international studies majors rank AI: Natural significantly higher (worse) than others
- Business, engineering and physical science majors rank AI: Society significantly higher (worse) than others
- Engineering and physical science majors rank SI: Natural significantly lower (better) than others

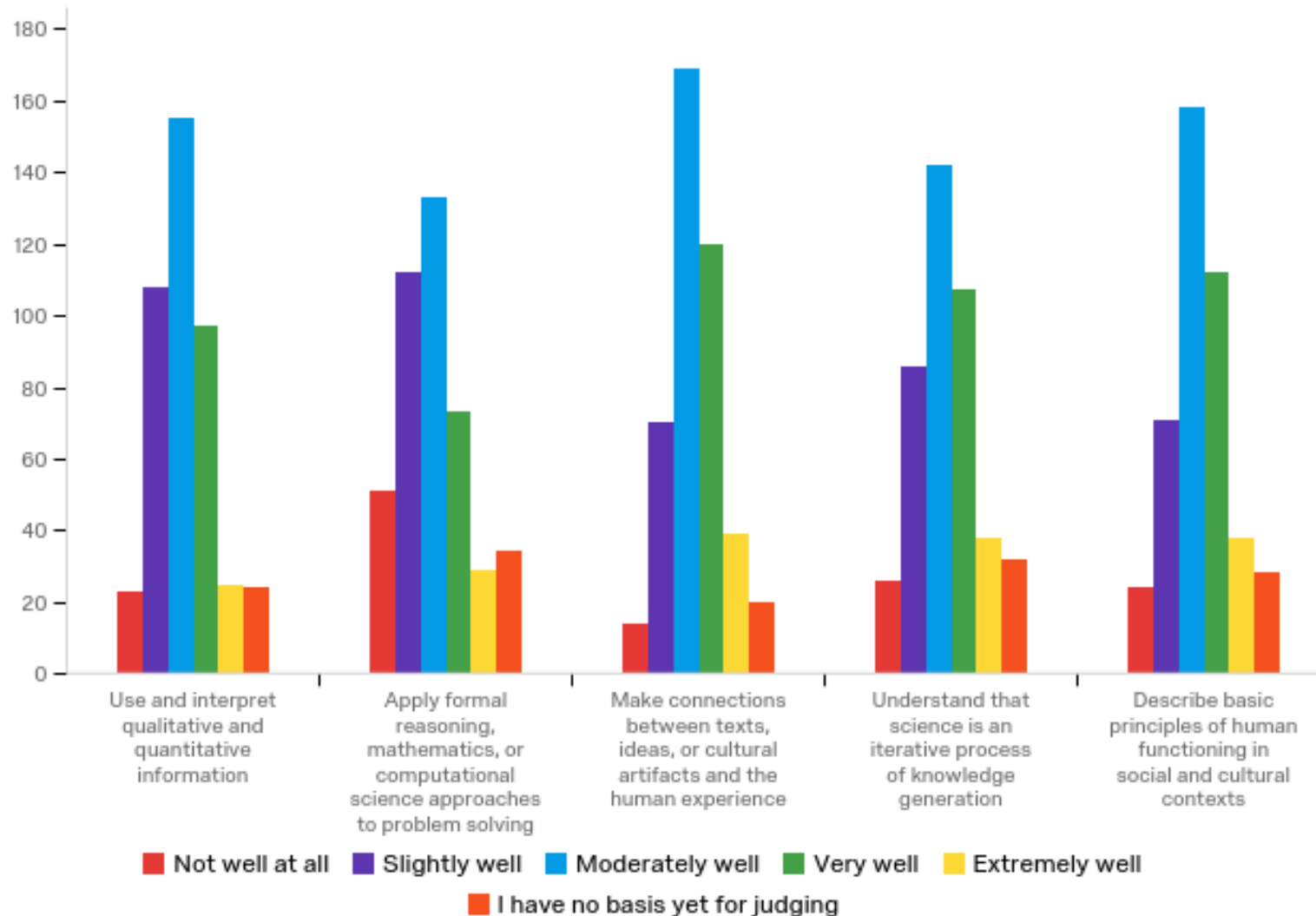
What was it about the component(s) of the Common Curriculum (General Education) you selected above that made it the most valuable, meaningful, or impactful?



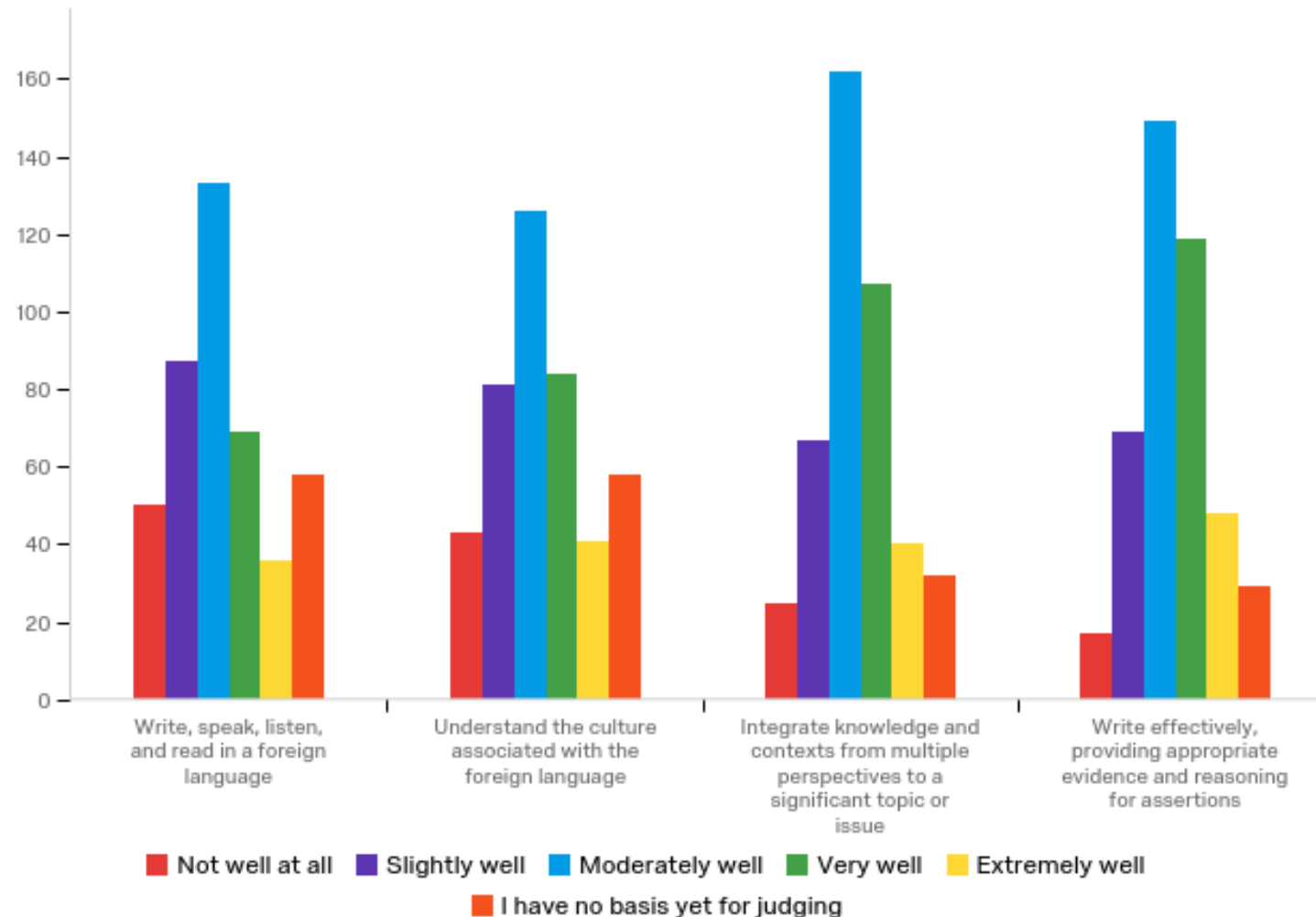
How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?



How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?



How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?



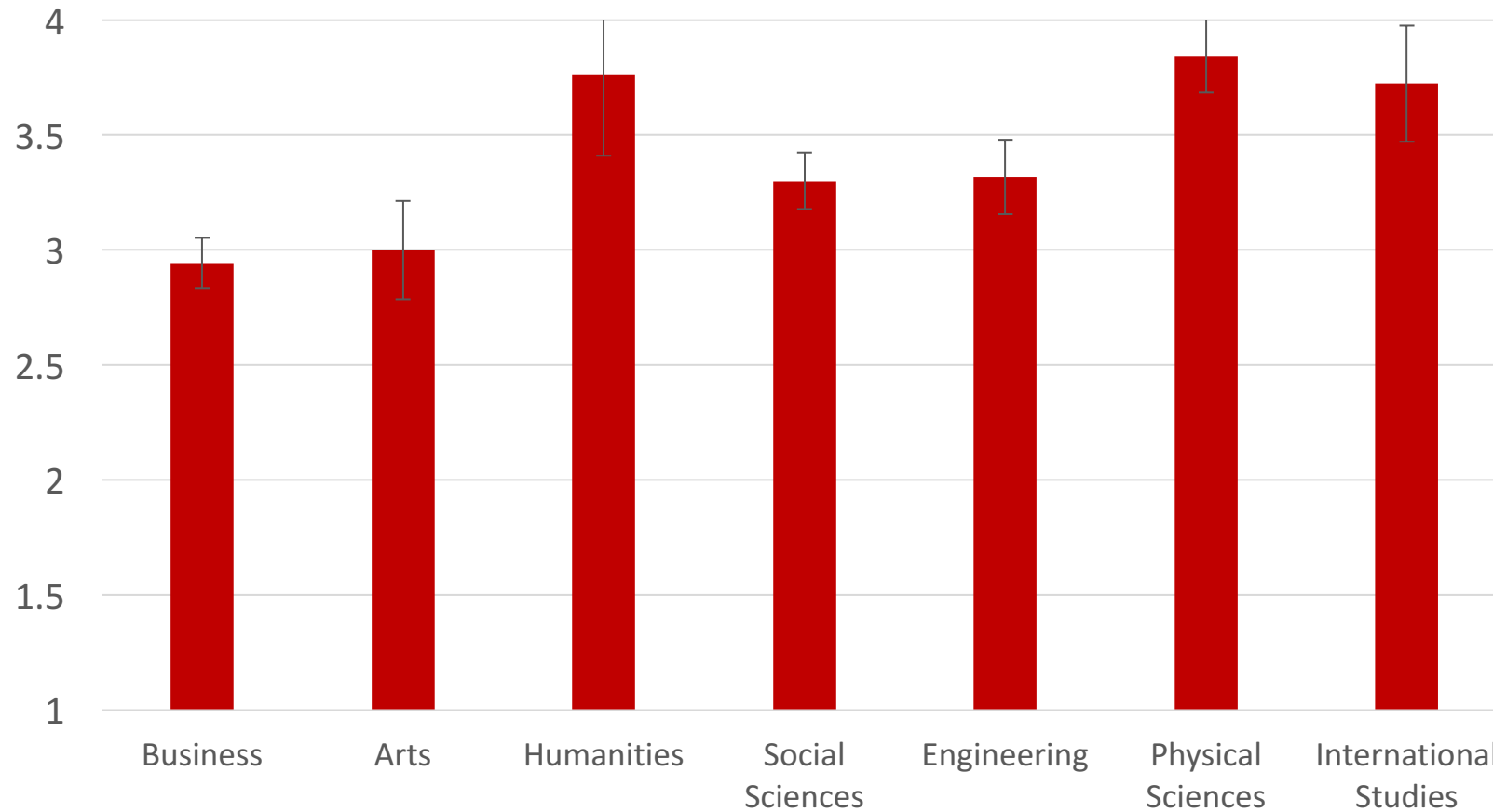
Effects that vary significantly by year at DU

- 1st year rated almost all learning outcomes significantly higher than other years
- In addition, 4th years also indicated that the CC prepared them to integrate knowledge and contexts from multiple perspectives
- Writing effectively, providing appropriate evidence shows no difference by year at DU

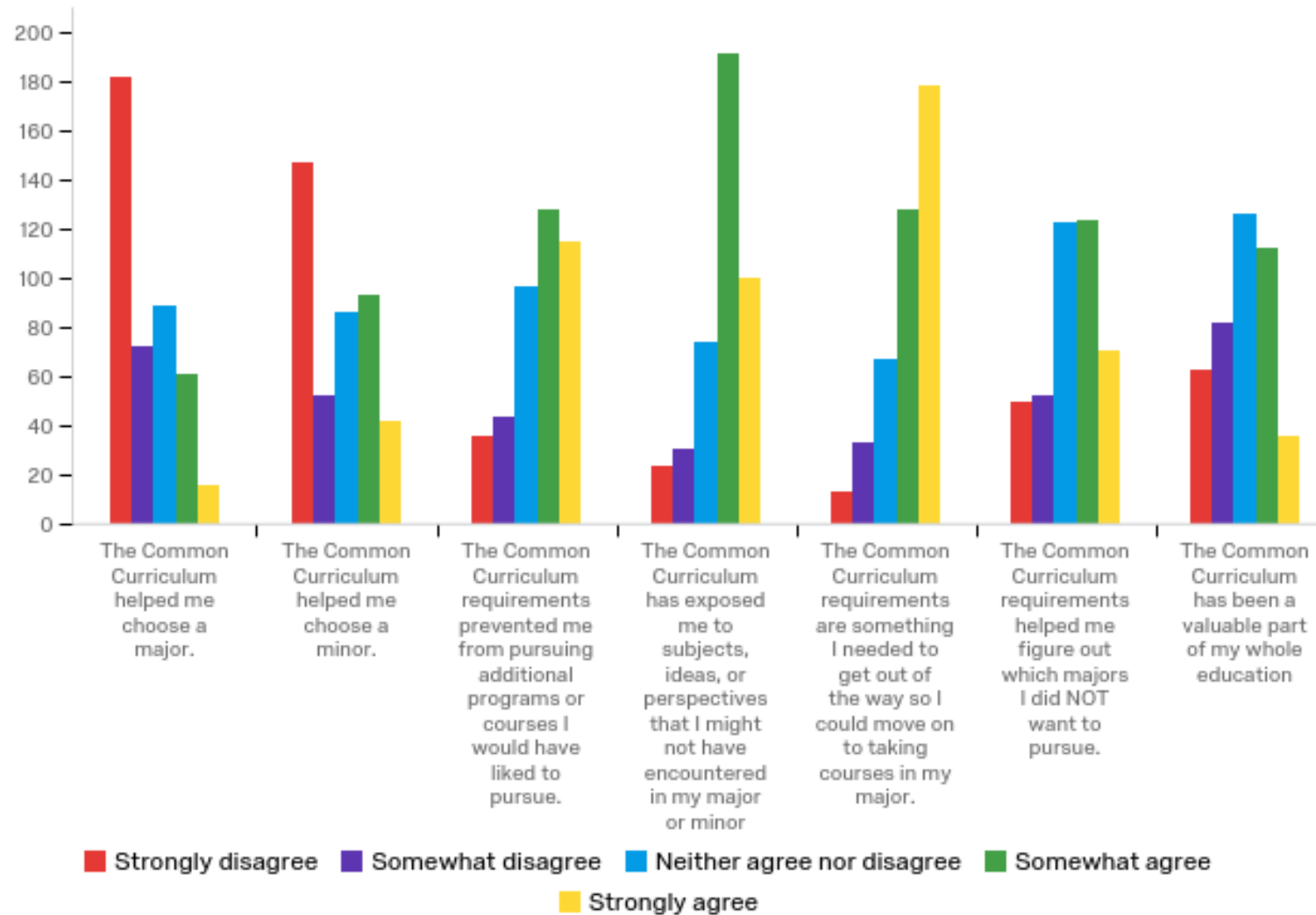
Effects that vary significantly by major

- Humanities majors were significantly more likely to endorse “critically examine concepts, texts and artifacts” than others
- Humanities, engineering and physical science majors were significantly more likely to endorse “use and interpret qualitative and quantitative information” and “apply formal reasoning, mathematics or computational science approaches to problem solving”
- Business majors were significantly less likely, and humanities majors more likely to endorse “make connections between texts, ideas, or cultural artifacts and human experience”
- Engineering, physical science and international studies majors were significantly more likely to endorse “write, speak, listen and read in a foreign language”

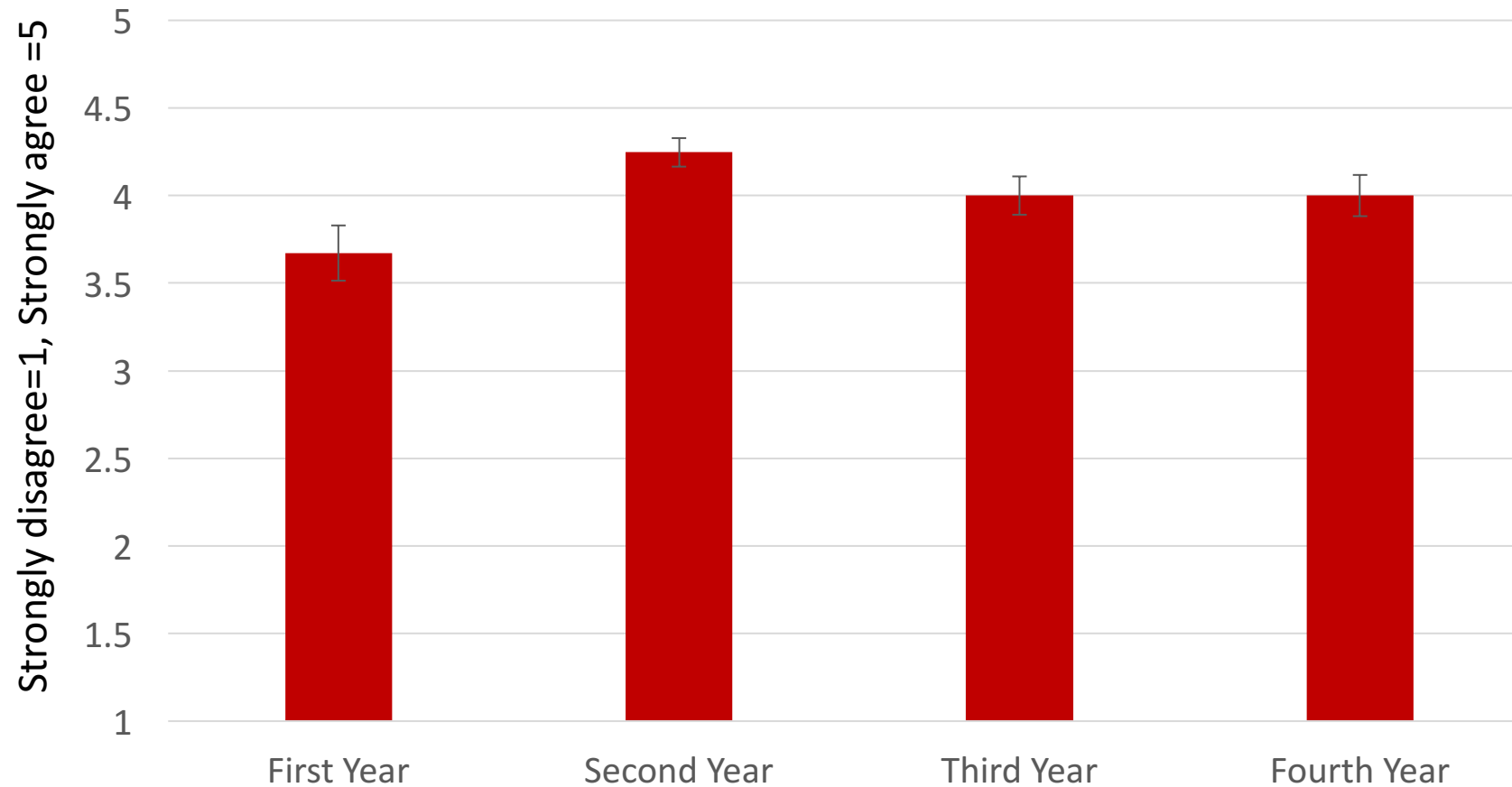
Understand that science is an iterative process of knowledge generation



Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU.



The Common Curriculum requirements are something I needed to get out of the way

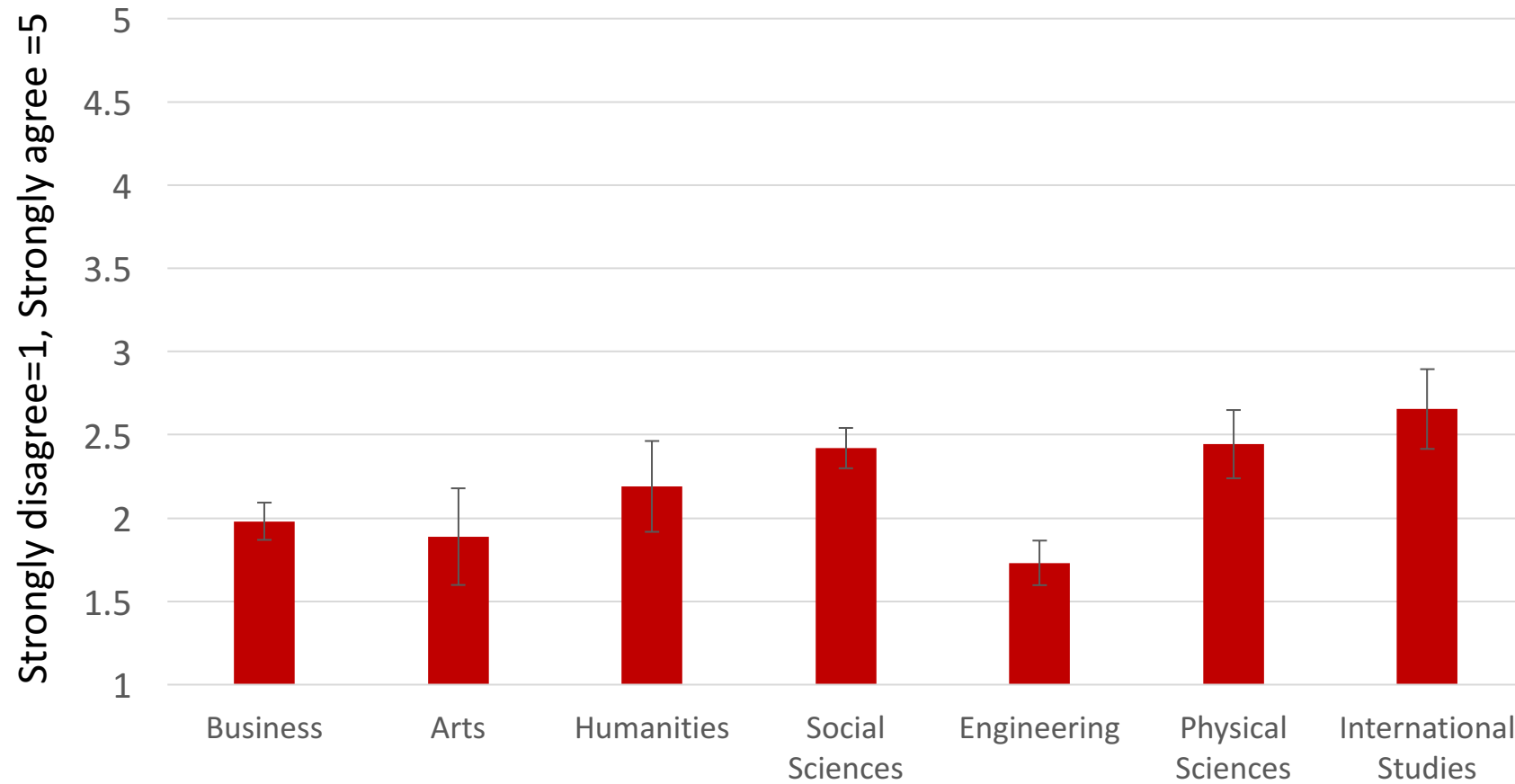


Effects that vary significantly by year at DU

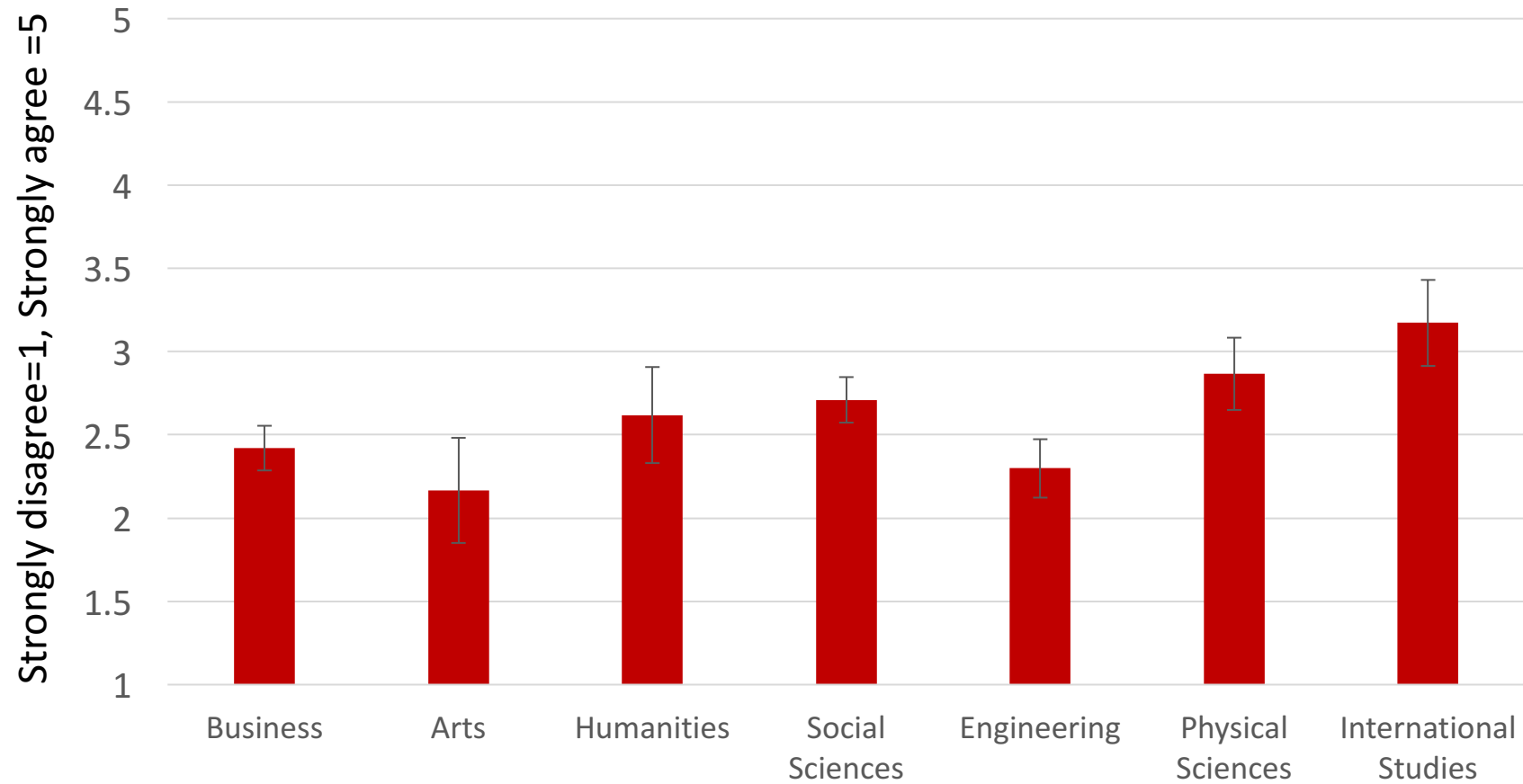
- 1st years tended to rate “prevented me from pursuing additional programs or courses” less than other three years
- 2nd year and 4th years tended to endorse “are something I need to get out of the way” more than 1st years (3rd years between)

Effects that vary significantly
by major

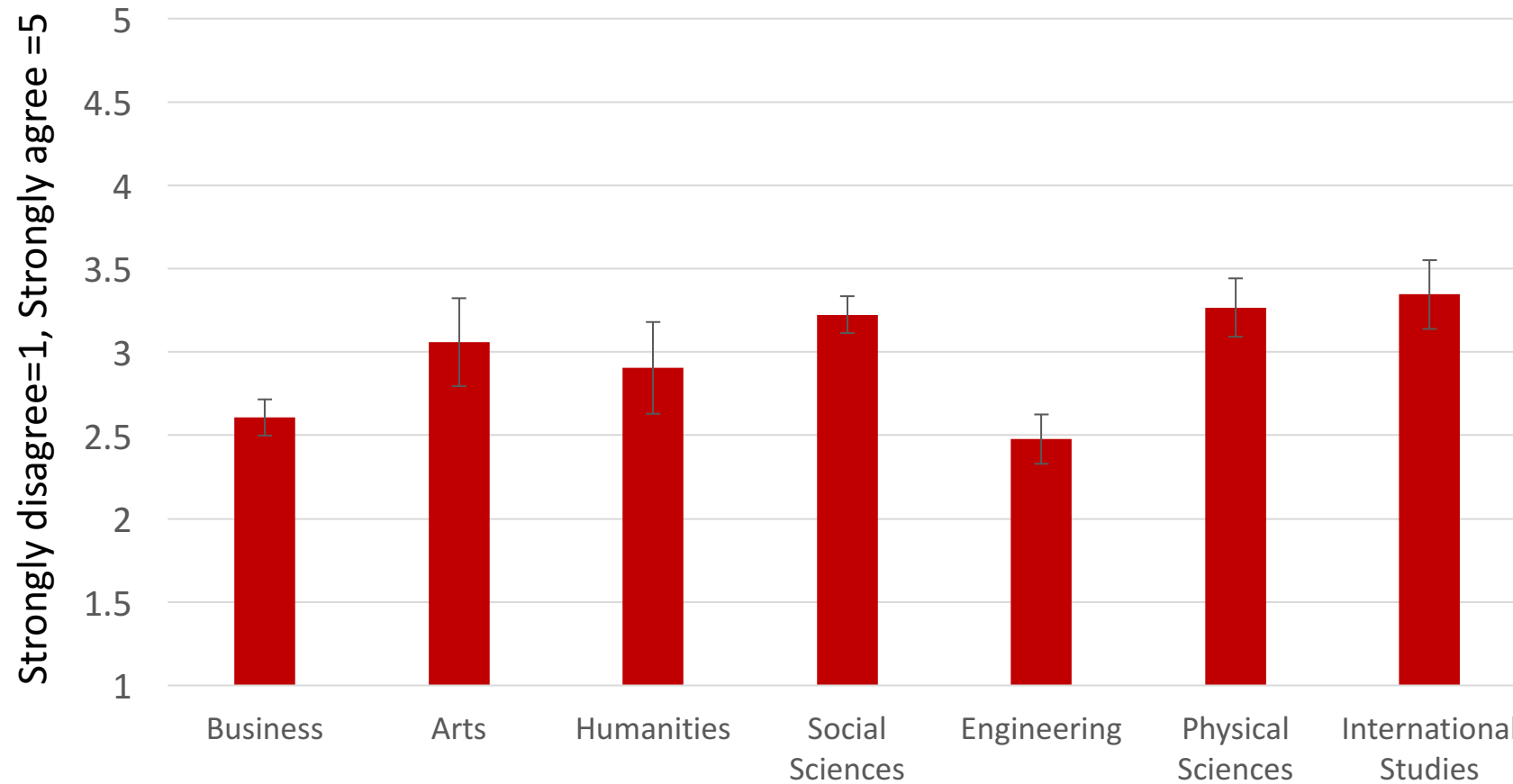
The Common Curriculum helped me choose a major.



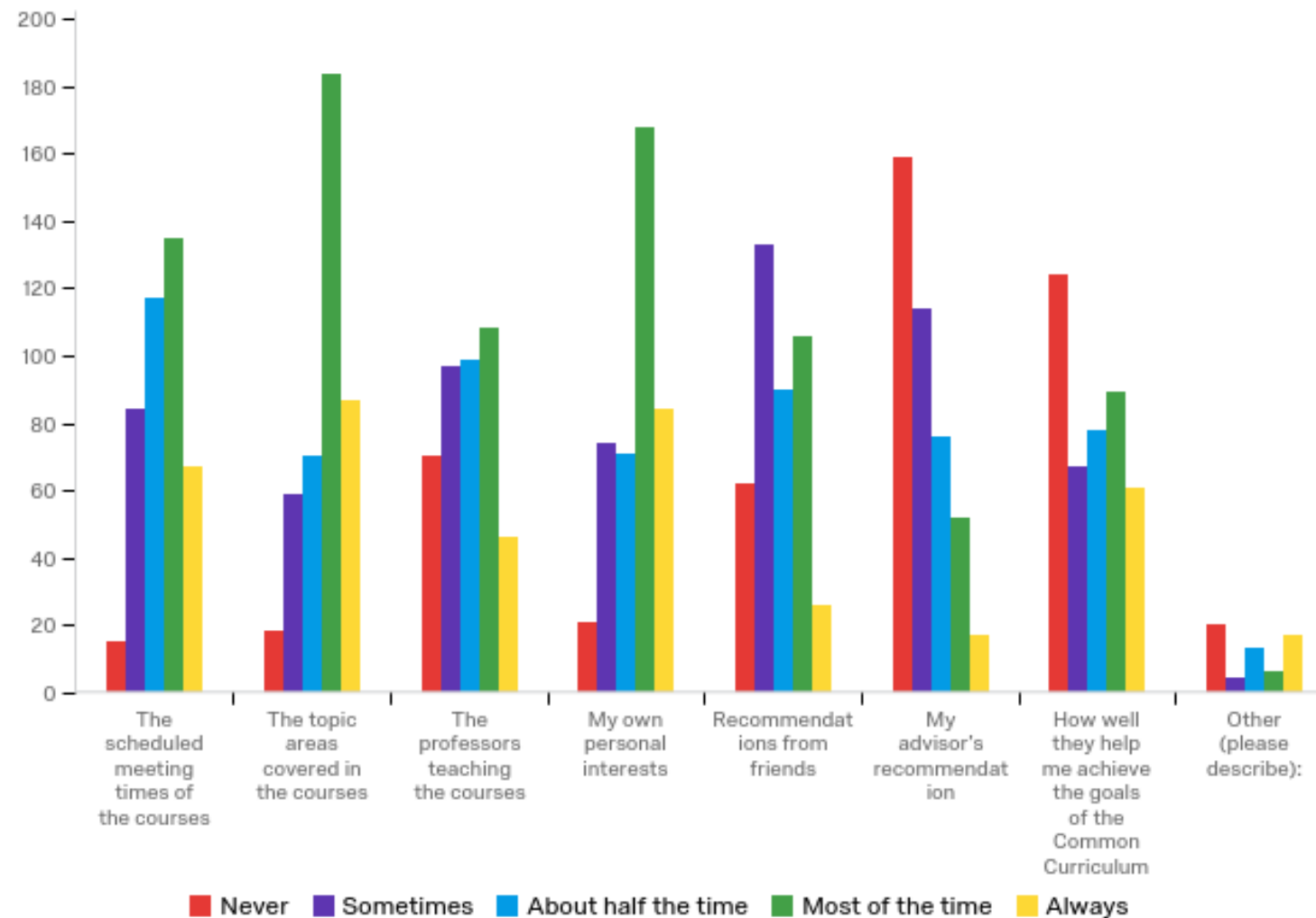
The Common Curriculum helped me choose a minor.



The Common Curriculum has been a valuable part of my whole education

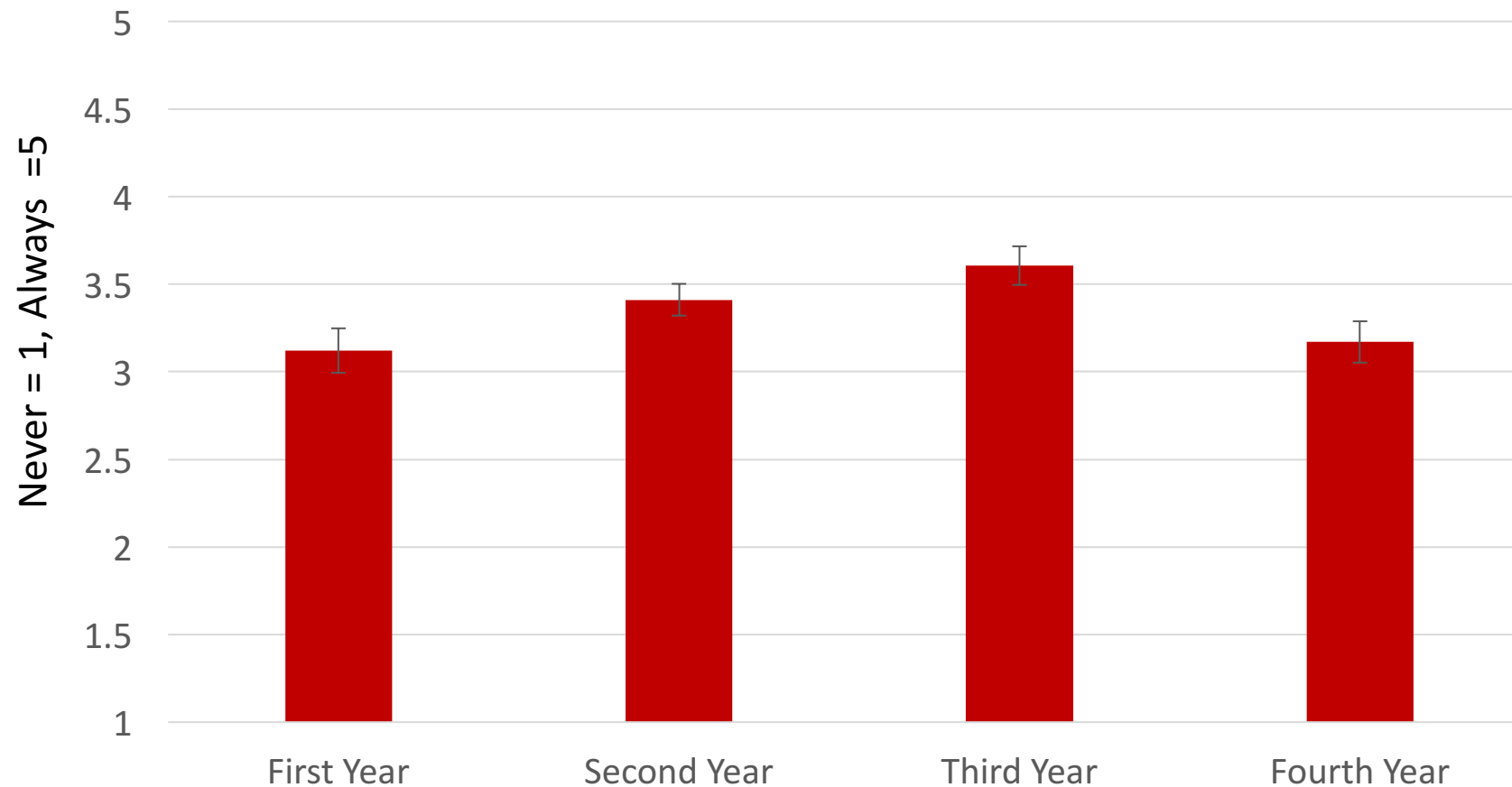


My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on:

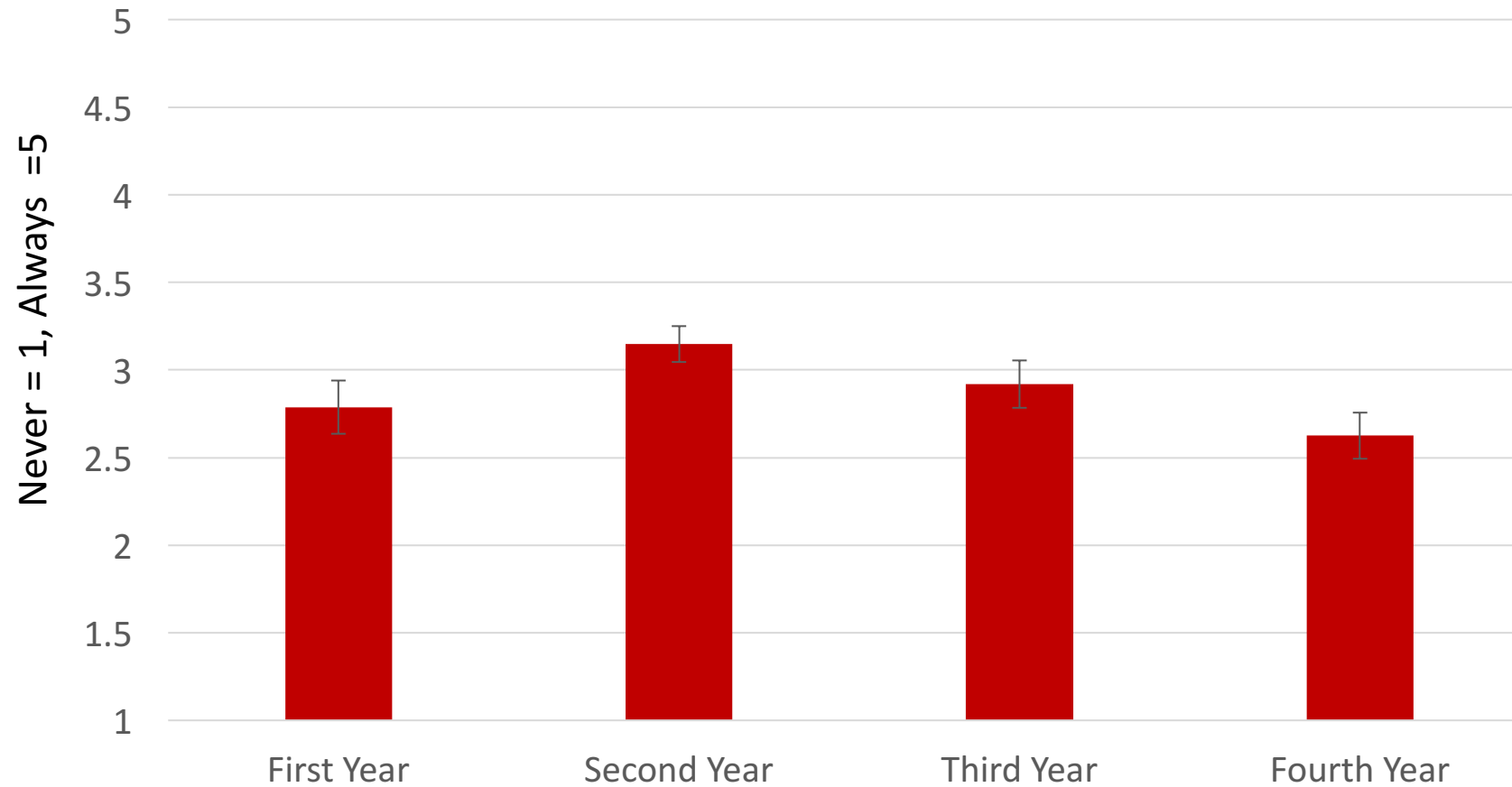


Effects that vary significantly
by year at DU

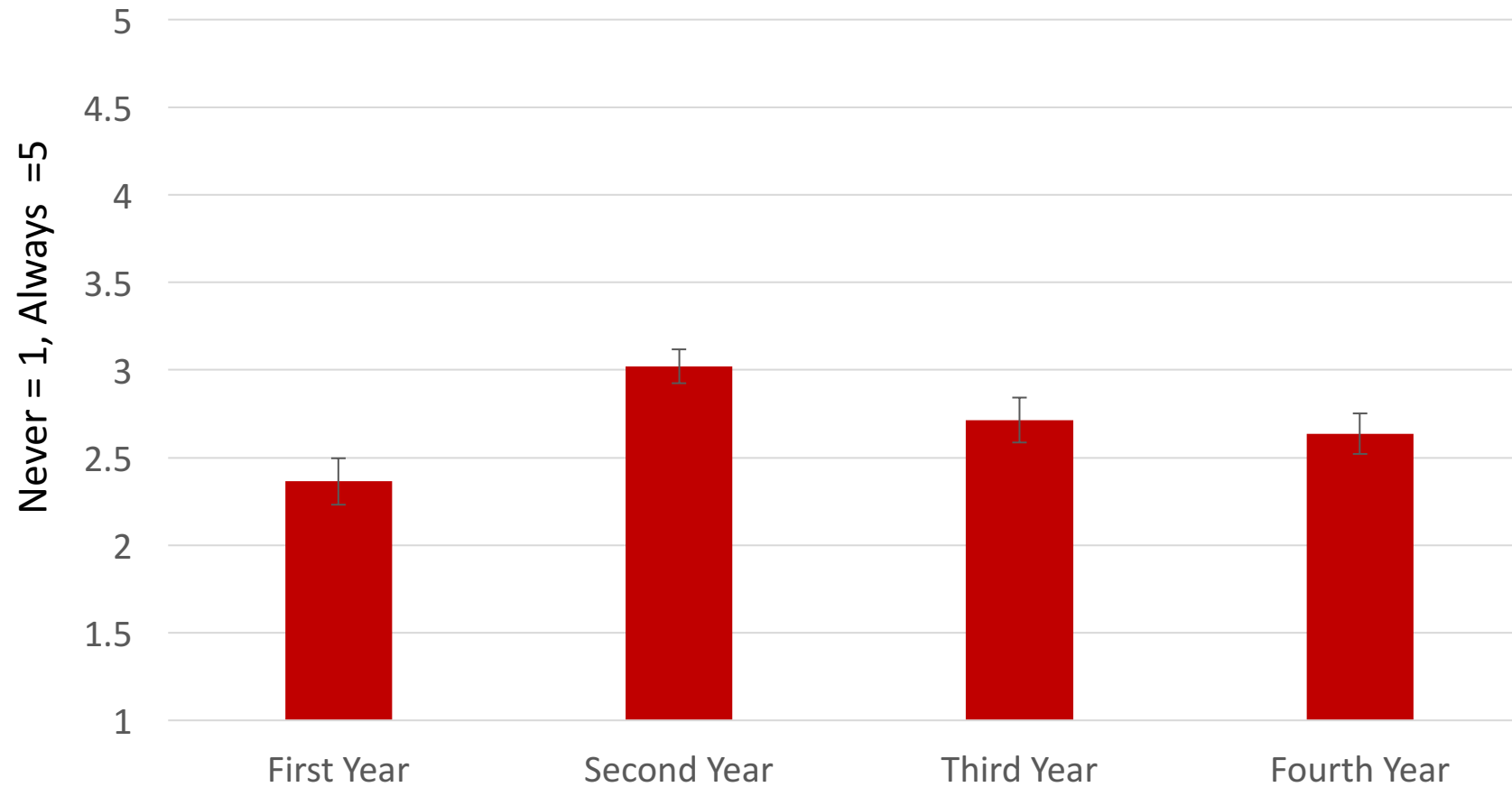
My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - The scheduled meeting times of the courses



My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - The professors teaching the courses

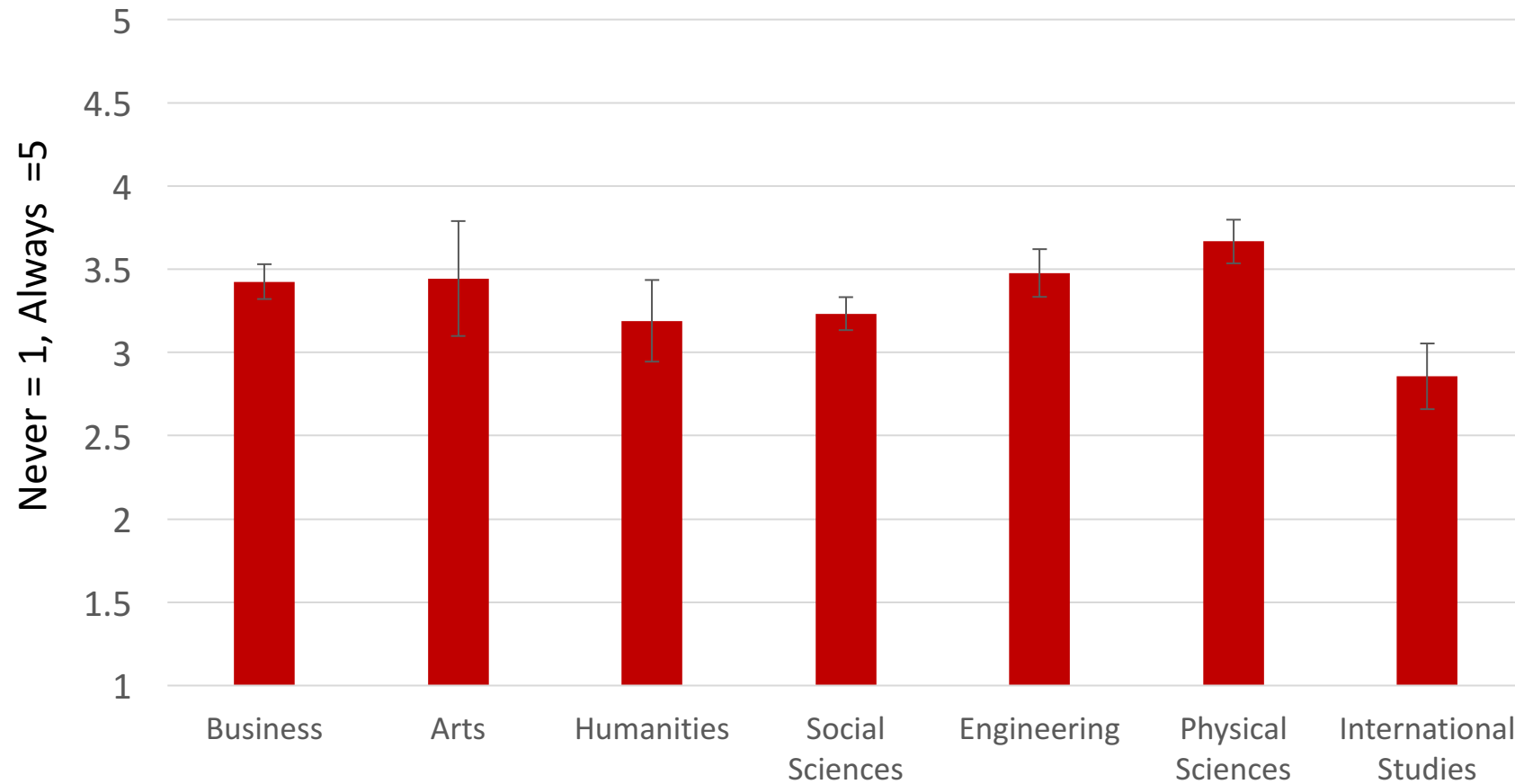


My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - Recommendations from friends

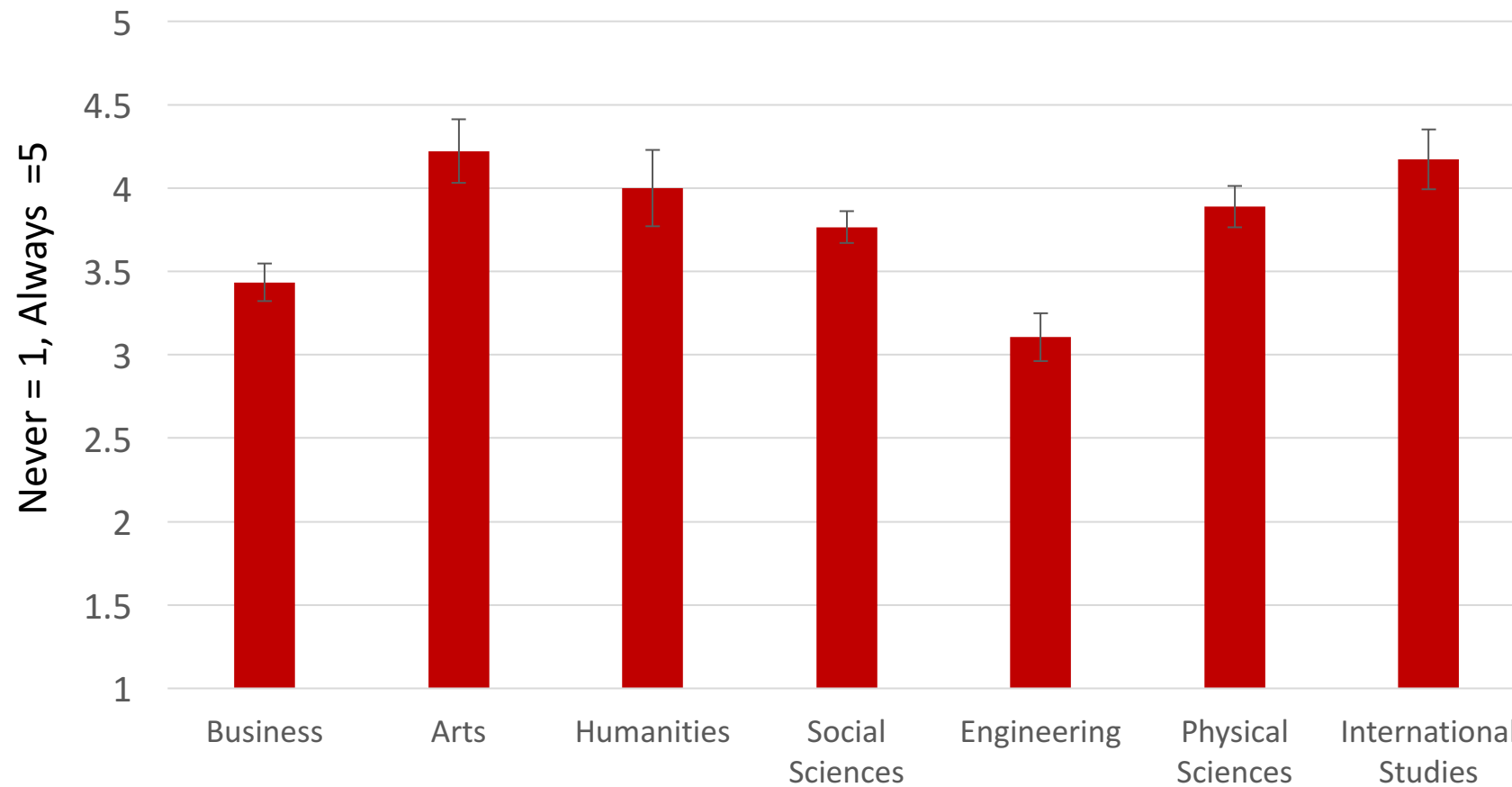


Effects that vary significantly
by major

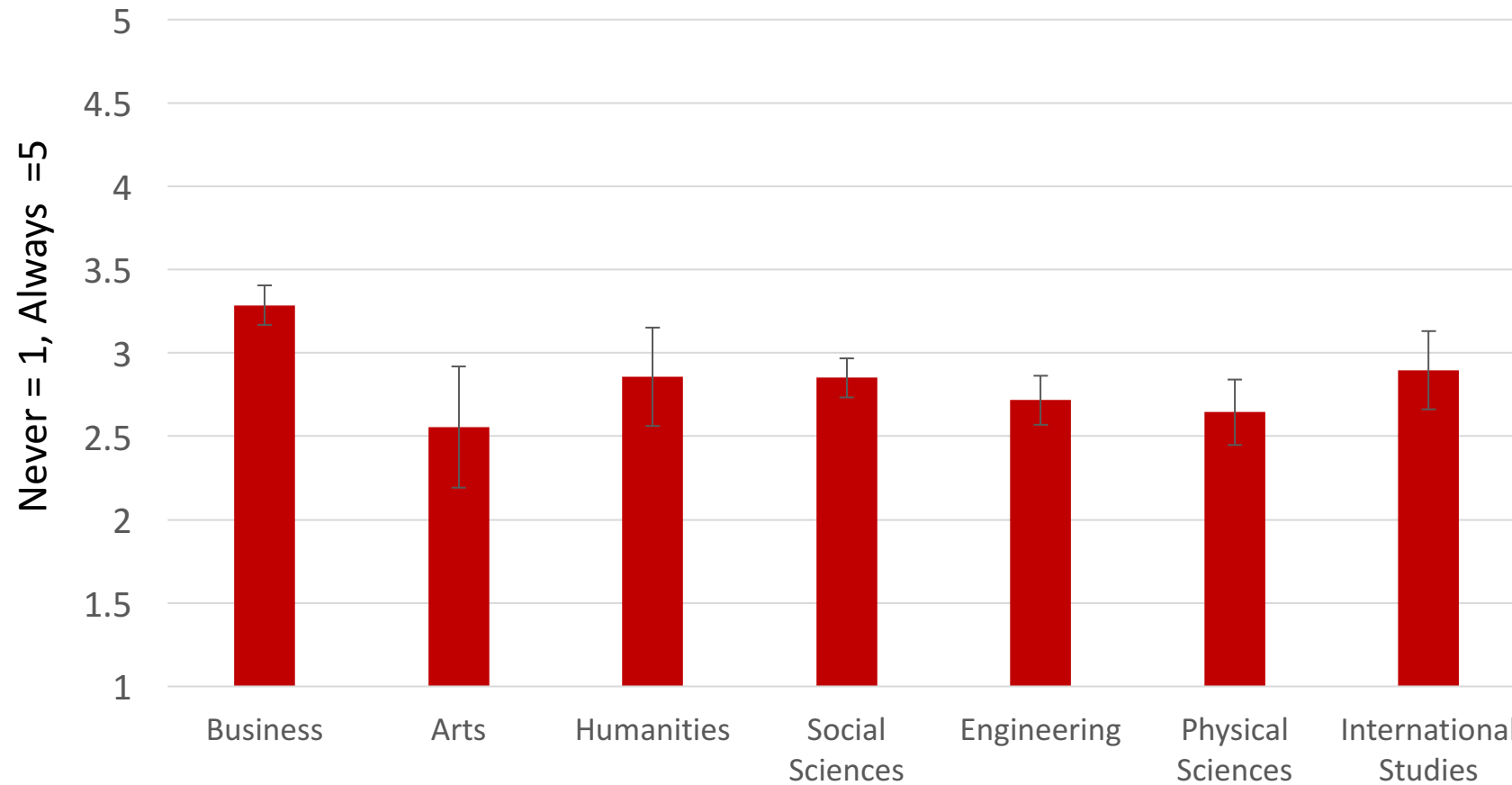
My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - The scheduled meeting times of the courses



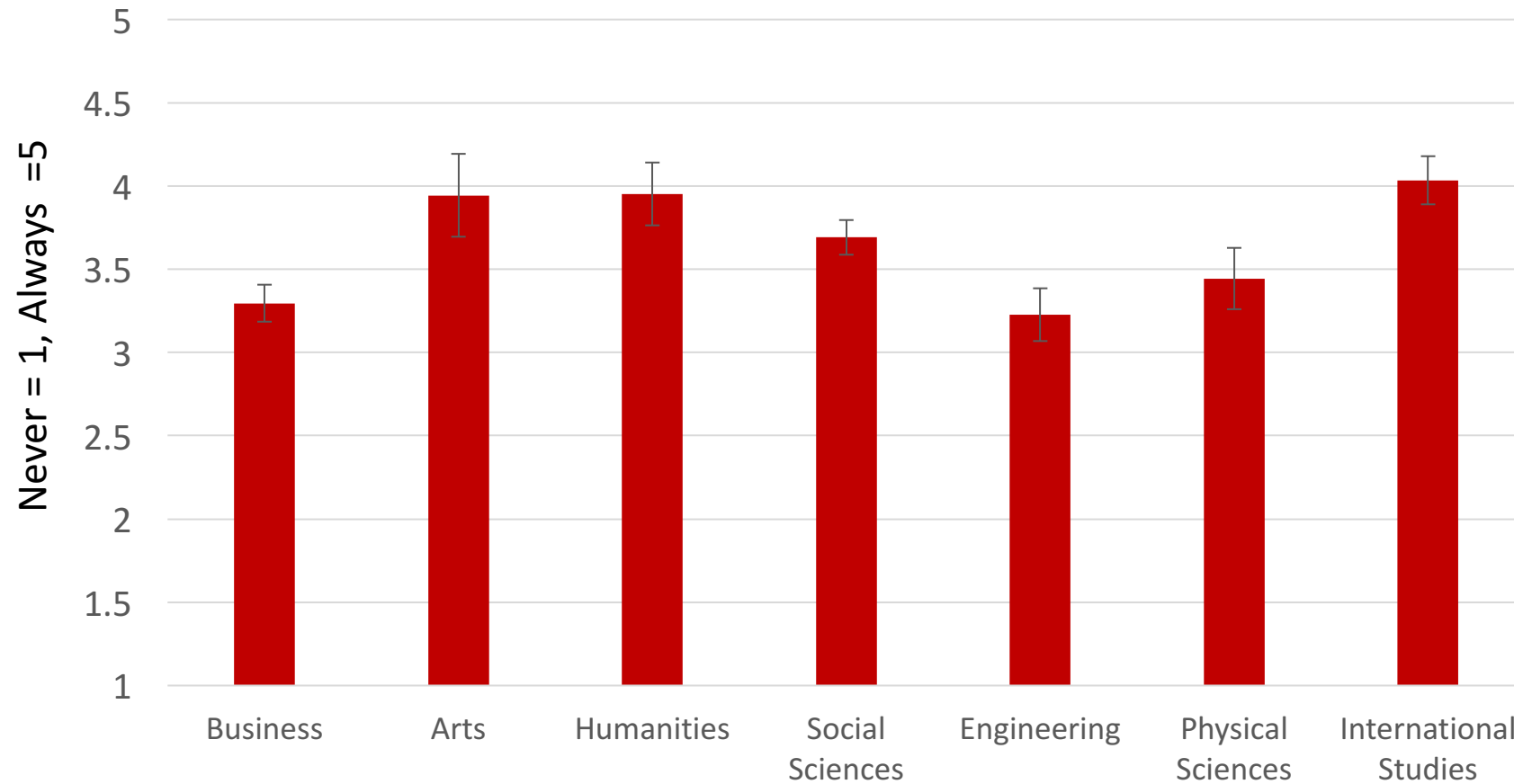
My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - The topic areas covered in the courses



My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - The professors teaching the courses



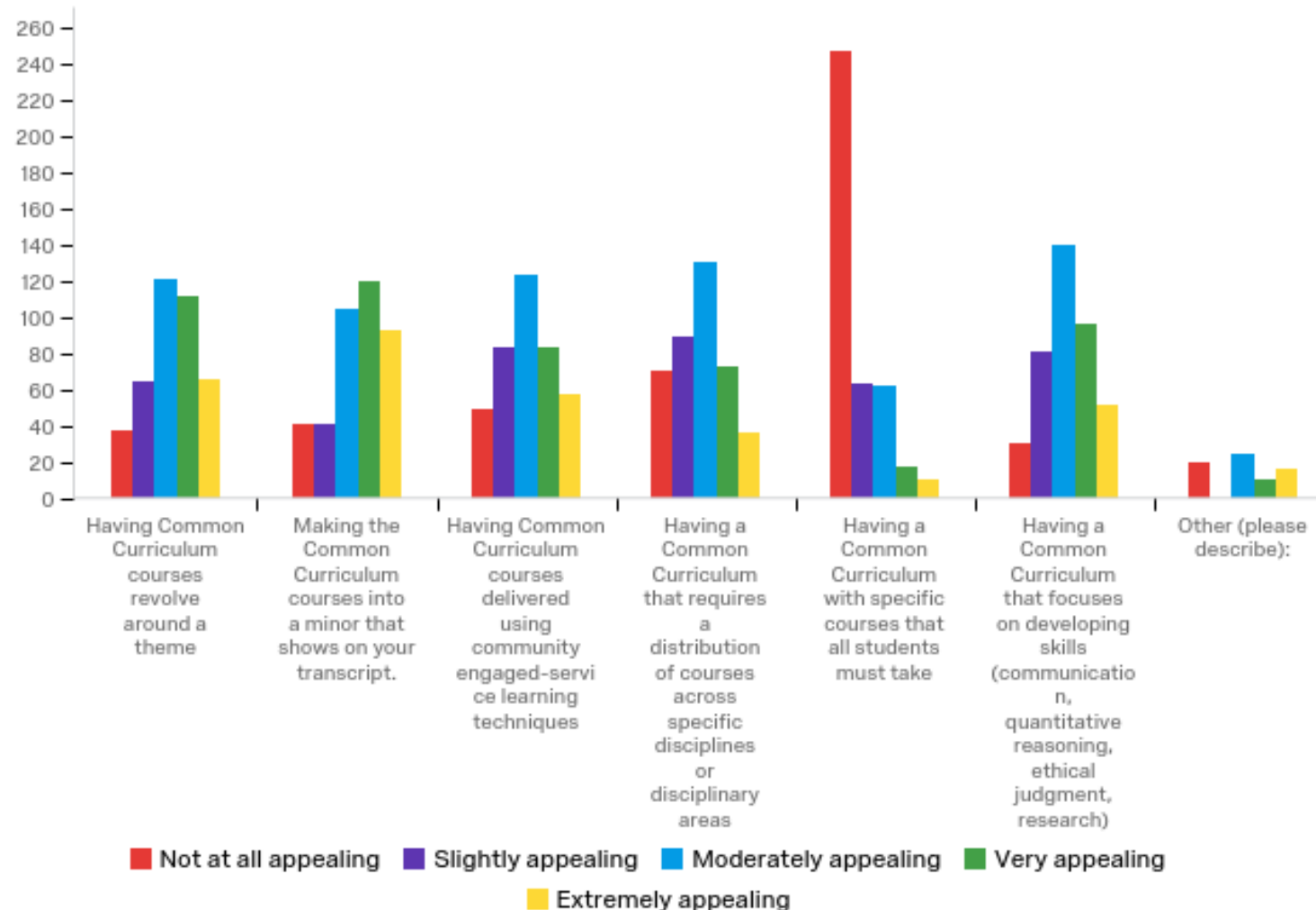
My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on: - My own personal interests



Other effects that vary by major

- Business and arts majors significantly more likely to select CC courses on recommendations from friends
- Business and humanities majors significantly more likely to select CC courses on recommendations from advisors

Many models for delivering the Common Curriculum (General Education) exist at universities around the world. Please indicate how appealing each of the following models of Common Curriculum delivery would be to you.



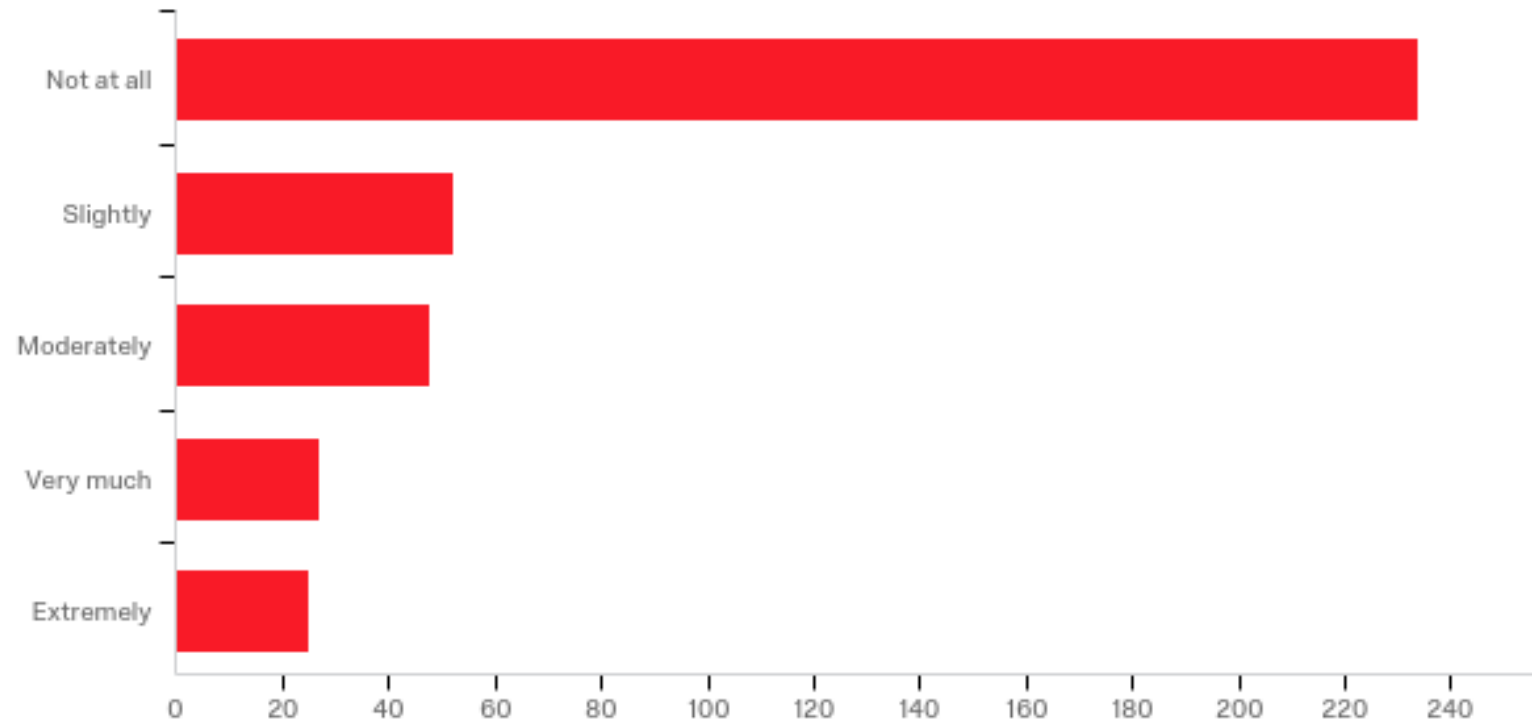
Effects that vary significantly by year at DU

- No significant differences in endorsement of models by year
- Trend for more endorsement of CC focused on developing skills as class year increases

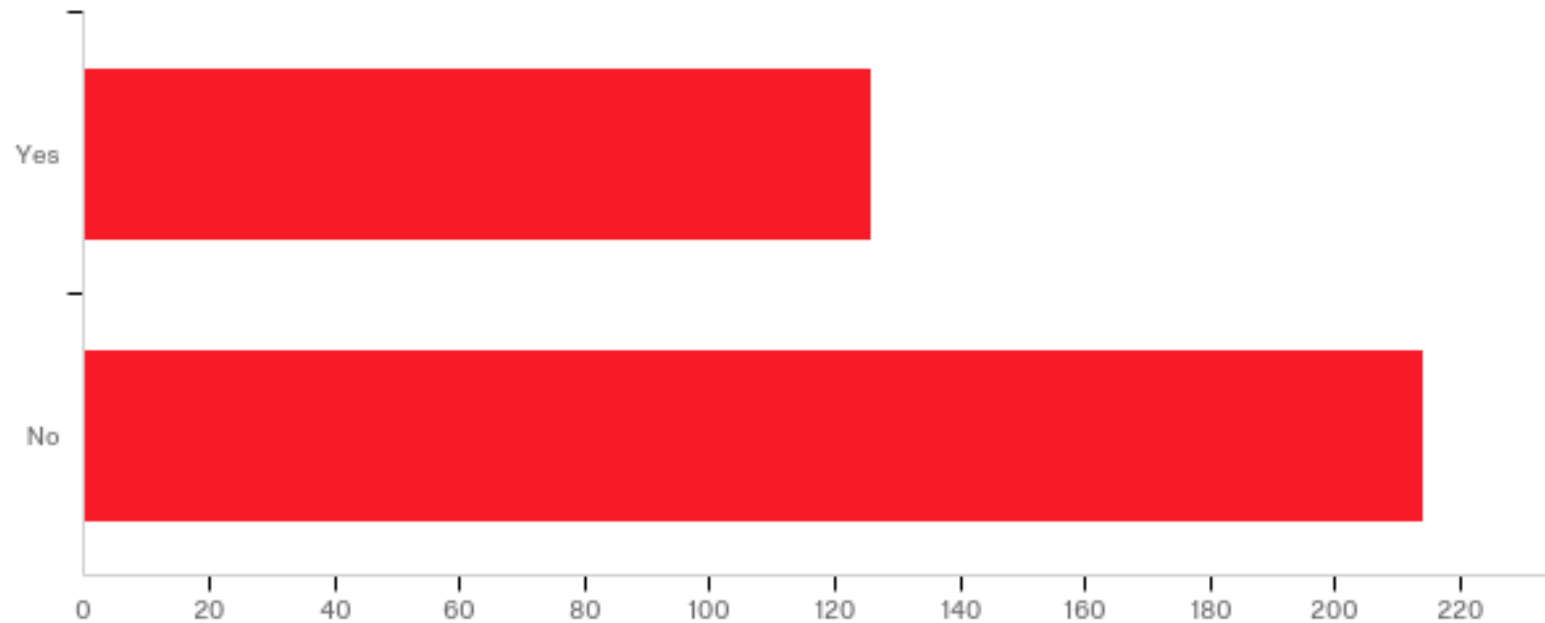
Effects that vary significantly by major

- Engineering majors endorse a CC that would revolve around a theme, a CC that require courses distributed, and a CC that focuses on developing skills significantly less than others
- Physical science and international studies majors endorse a CC with courses delivered with community engagement more than others

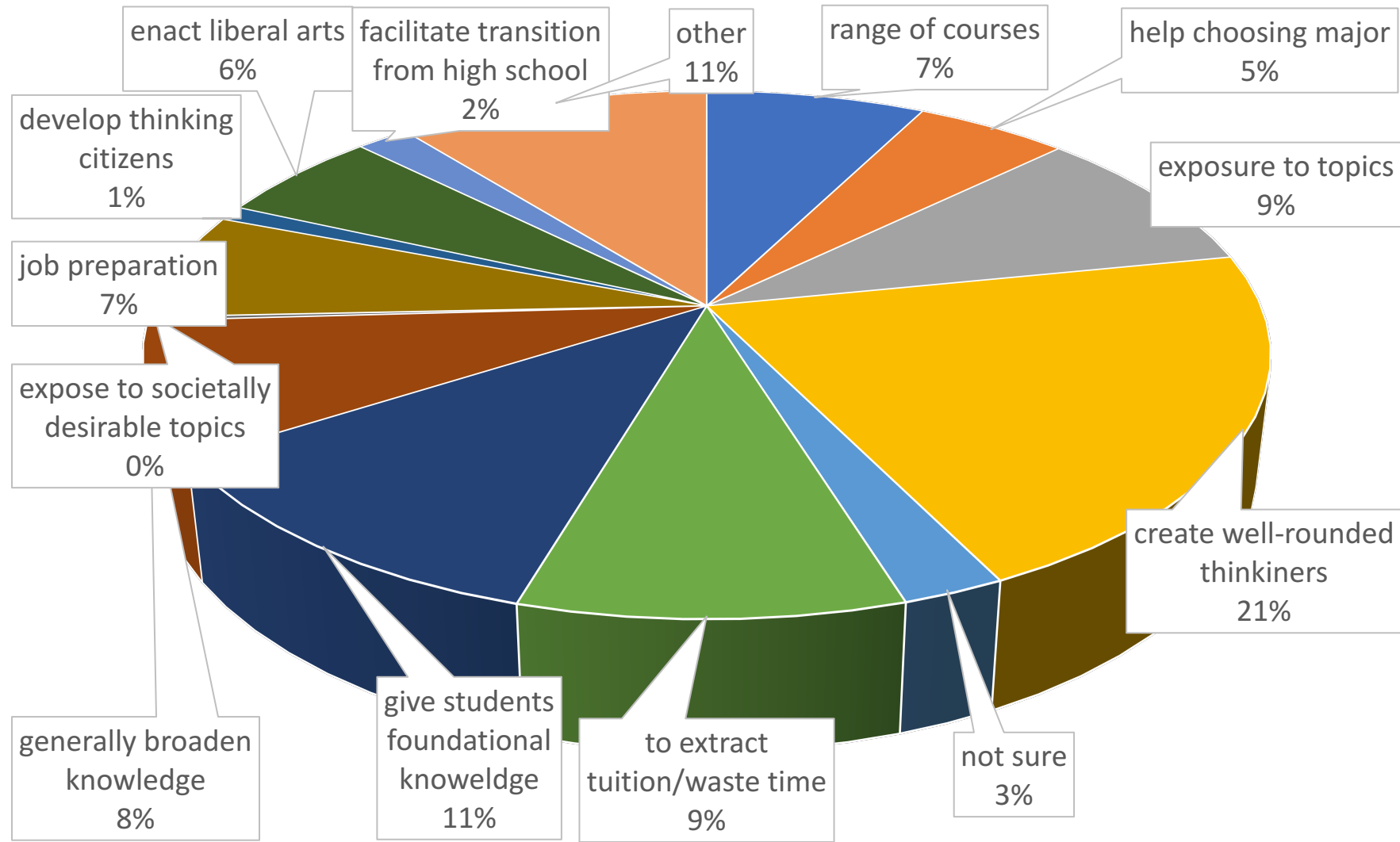
Did the language requirement for the Common Curriculum
(General Education)
influence your choice for study abroad?



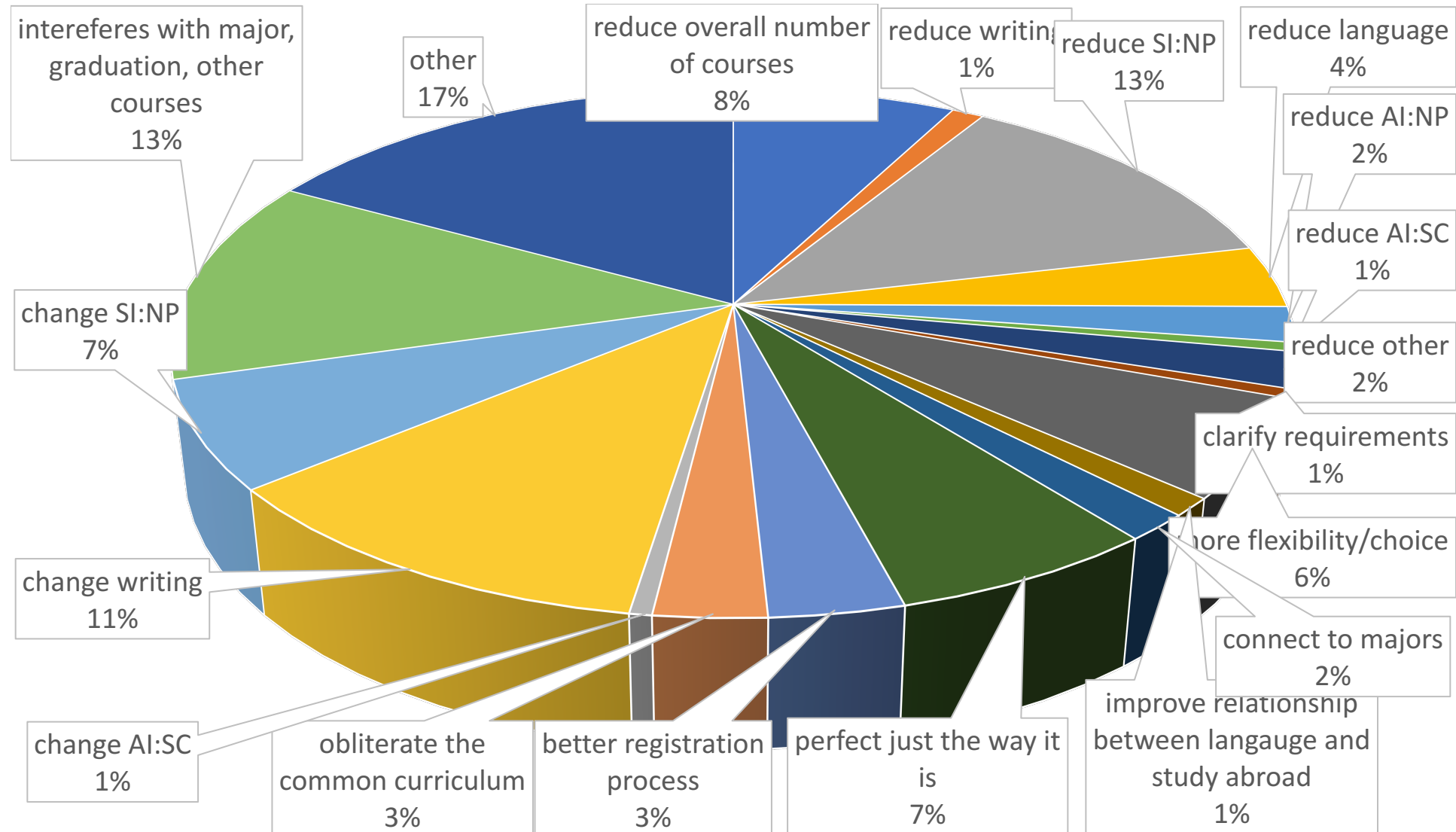
Did you (or do you intend to) study in a country that speaks the language that you studied (or are studying) for your language requirement for the Common Curriculum (General Education) (e.g., study abroad in France after taking French classes)?



What do you think the purpose of the Common Curriculum (General Education) is at DU?



Any further comments about or suggestions regarding the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU?



Following are the questions asked on the student survey. A more detailed summary is available on the GERI Portfolio site:

<http://portfolio.du.edu/GenEdReviewInquiry2017>

- **Indicate how valuable, meaningful, or impactful were the following components of the Common Curriculum (General Education) for you at DU?**
 - FSEM
 - Writing & Rhetoric
 - Language
 - Analytical Inquiry – Natural and Physical World
 - Analytical Inquiry – Society and Culture
 - Scientific Inquiry - Natural and Physical World
 - Scientific Inquiry – Society and Culture
 - ASEM
- **Please drag and drop the MOST valuable, meaningful, or impactful component of the Common Curriculum (General Education) for you at DU. You may select as many components as you wish. (Same choices as above)**

- **What was it about the component(s) of the Common Curriculum (General Education) you selected above that made it the most valuable, meaningful, or impactful?**

- The professors
- The topics covered in the courses
- Because it helped me decide what major(s)/minor(s) I wanted to pursue
- The skills (written, oral communication, etc.) that I gained from the course
- The connections I formed with other students during the course
- Other (please describe)

- **How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?**

- Communicate effectively orally
- Work effectively in teams
- Write for a variety of rhetorical situations and research traditions
- Make ethical judgments and decisions
- Critically examine concepts, texts, and artifacts
- Apply knowledge and skills to real world settings

- **How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?**
 - Use and interpret qualitative and quantitative information
 - Apply formal reasoning, mathematics, or computational science approaches to problem solving
 - Make connections between texts, ideas, or cultural artifacts and the human experience
 - Understand that science is an iterative process of knowledge generation
 - Describe basic principles of human functioning in social and cultural contexts
- **How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following?**
 - Write, speak, listen, and read in a foreign language
 - Understand the culture associated with the foreign language
 - Integrate knowledge and contexts from multiple perspectives to a significant topic or issue
 - Write effectively, providing appropriate evidence and reasoning for assertions

- **Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU.**
 - The Common Curriculum helped me choose a major.
 - The Common Curriculum helped me choose a minor.
 - The Common Curriculum requirements prevented me from pursuing additional programs or courses I would have liked to pursue.
 - The Common Curriculum has exposed me to subjects, ideas, or perspectives that I might not have encountered in my major or minor.
 - The Common Curriculum requirements are something I needed to get out of the way so I could move on to taking courses in my major.
 - The Common Curriculum requirements helped me figure out which majors I did NOT want to pursue.
 - The Common Curriculum has been a valuable part of my whole education.
- **My choice of Common Curriculum (General Education) courses is primarily based on:**
 - The scheduled meeting times of the courses
 - The topic areas covered in the courses
 - The professors teaching the courses
 - My own personal interests
 - Recommendations from friends
 - My advisor's recommendation
 - How well they help me achieve the goals of the Common Curriculum
 - Other (please describe)

- **Many models for delivering the Common Curriculum (General Education) exist at universities around the world. Please indicate how appealing each of the following models of Common Curriculum delivery would be to you.**
 - Having Common Curriculum courses revolve around a theme from which you could choose, such as climate change, health policies/access, education, ending poverty, gender equality, clean water, sustainable energy, etc.
 - Making the Common Curriculum courses into a minor that shows on your transcript.
 - Having Common Curriculum courses delivered using community engaged-service learning techniques where students work with community partners to learn from them and provide a service to them
 - Having a Common Curriculum that requires a distribution of courses across specific disciplines or disciplinary areas (such as Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, and so on).
 - Having a Common Curriculum with specific courses that all students must take (rather than a menu of choices from broad categories)
 - Having a Common Curriculum that focuses on developing skills (communication, quantitative reasoning, ethical judgment, research) as a feature or aspect of many possible courses rather than as a required focus of specific courses.
 - Other (please describe)

- Did the language requirement for the Common Curriculum (General Education) influence your choice for study abroad?
- Did you (or do you intend to) study in a country that speaks the language that you studied (or are studying) for your language requirement for the Common Curriculum (General Education) (e.g., study abroad in France after taking French classes)?
- What do you think the purpose of the Common Curriculum (General Education) is at DU?
- Any further comments about or suggestions regarding the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU?

Appendix D

Compilation of Significant Emails to DU Faculty

October 18, 2017

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

The General Education Review and Inquiry (GERI) process launched in spring 2017 as an aspect of DU Impact 2025. Our group is charged with answering the question, “What should general education at DU look like in the next few years?” Our purpose is to identify the best possible outcomes and structure for the DU common curriculum, given *our* campus, *our* faculty, *our* students, *our* resources, *our* mission, and *our* vision.

The GERI Committee was formed after all deans and the faculty senate were asked to nominate potential members. Faculty were also individually invited to nominate themselves or others, and a member from student affairs was chosen. Individuals were selected less to represent a constituency than to analyze general education on behalf of the entire university.

We will soon begin the first round of surveys and discussion groups to garner insights and ideas. Faculty will have multiple, extensive opportunities to share their thoughts and experiences. We’ll invite you to respond to themes as they develop, including contributing to drafts of any proposed revisions. After all, general education requirements must represent the best thinking of the people entrusted with teaching and supporting them. Ultimately, the Undergraduate Council has responsibility for undergraduate programs, including the general education program.

Our process may yield results ranging from a reaffirmation of the existing common curriculum, to small adjustments of particular aspects of the program, to significant renovations, to a complete reconstruction. Should we repaint? Or would it be best to scrape and rebuild?

Our Process

After an orientation meeting in June, the committee has met weekly since the start of fall quarter. Four broad questions shape our deliberations.

1. What can we learn from leading theories, best research, and aspirations in the scholarly literature?
2. What can we learn from examining general education programs at other schools, especially schools who share features with DU—this while recognizing that DU has its unique traditions, identity, resources, and goals?
3. What can we learn about the strengths and weaknesses of our current DU common curriculum? What are the experiences and effects for students? What are the experiences and effects for faculty? These questions demand that we carefully study our philosophy, goals, and outcomes and how they’re being realized.
4. What can we learn from DU’s aspirations and goals? Recent strategic planning efforts have created a vision of how DU should identify and enact itself. Any general education program should be consonant with campus visions.

We've initiated our work by considering goals and outcomes. We'll then analyze how these are expressed in requirements. There are crucial practical considerations, certainly, born of our institutional history and how the DU faculty has been built and organized. We'd be foolish to ignore them. But our first phase is inquiry, suspending nuts and bolts practical barriers until later in the process, when they surely will and must matter. Along the way we'll systematically seek ideas, input, and reactions from students, various constituencies, and most crucially faculty. We expect this iterative process to require the 2017-18 academic year.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there something wrong with the current Common Curriculum?

We neither presume the Common Curriculum is flawed nor presume it's perfect. It's healthy to understand how the Common Curriculum is working—how it's achieving its outcomes and whether those outcomes are the best for our community. It's wise to explore new possibilities, even ones we might ultimately reject.

2. Why should we re-invent the wheel of general education?

We shouldn't. Legions of theorists and researchers have generated thoughtful perspectives on what constitutes a best education, going back to the days of the medieval university's *trivium* and *quadrivium*. Recent scholars and educators have produced numerous syntheses of that work, taxonomies of possible philosophies and rationales. Organizations like the American Association of Colleges and Universities have devoted considerable time and expertise to identifying features they consider crucial to general education. Rather than devising everything from scratch, we're attending to that literature. We welcome you to do the same, if you'd like. The Committee has created a [Portfolio page with a number of readings and a bibliography](#). Most sections of the page are open to the entire University community.

3. Why not just identify the best gen ed program "out there" and emulate it at DU?

We are, in fact, looking at other general education programs, including at DU's peer institutions. If we identify a structure that looks like a perfect fit, we'll pay it careful attention. However, it's crucial to remember that DU is DU. That is, we're an institution with a particular history and mission, a particular concatenation of programs and faculties, a particular set of resources, a particular geographical and higher educational position, a particular set of students and would-be students, a particular set of visions. Fort Lewis College might have a splendid gen ed program. We're not Fort Lewis. MIT might have a splendid gen ed program. We're not MIT. The challenge is determining the best general education program for who we are and who we aspire to be. Perhaps what we're doing now is very close to those aspirations. We'll determine that through the current process.

4. How can I make sure my voice is heard in the process?

Expect soon to receive a survey that seeks your perspectives and insights on the current goals of the Common Curriculum. This will be but the first of many invitations to provide input. We'll use results to structure small group conversations, offering numerous opportunities for participation and engagement. We'll identify and synthesize broader themes from those conversations and from our own discussions of the literature, and we'll solicit responses, either in subsequent surveys, additional discussion groups, or combinations of both. We'll invite comments on draft proposals before we generate a final proposal. And, of course, you're welcome to share thoughts and ideas with the Committee. Please contact chair Doug Hesse at dhesse@du.edu or 303-871-7447.

5. *Doesn't everything eventually just come down to practical considerations of staffing, course offerings, seats, and schedules?*

At some level, yes. DU has finite resources, the faculty that we have, and so on. At an appropriate point, we'll ask and answer the important practical questions. But we shouldn't prematurely truncate options and potential based upon perceived limitations.

6. *Why should busy faculty make time for this process?*

Professors are fully engaged in teaching, research, and professional service, both on campus and in disciplines and community sites beyond. We're all busy—and includes members of our committee. DU faculty have devoted considerable energy in recent years shaping academic initiatives and institutional identities, and it may be easy to become weary or cynical. However, nothing is more fundamental to a university than determining what its graduates should learn and how they should come about the knowledge that they carry with them upon graduation. Along with chosen majors and minors, the general education experience is fundamental to undergraduate education. Likewise, the curriculum that we develop and teach is crucial faculty work.

Sincerely,

Chris Coleman, Professor of Emergent Digital Practices

Doug Hesse, Professor of English and Executive Director of Writing (Chair)

Barbekka Hurtt, Teaching Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences

Tonnett Luedtke, Director of Academic Advising

Kateri McRae, Associate Professor of Psychology

Nic Ormes, Associate Professor of Mathematics

Matt Rutherford, Associate Professor of Computer Science

Alison Schofield, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies

Laura Sponsler, Clinical Assistant Professor, Morgridge College of Education

Billy J. Stratton, Associate Professor of English

John Tiedemann, Teaching Associate Professor of Writing

Cheri Young, Associate Professor of Hospitality

Questions or comments? Please contact Doug Hesse at dhesse@du.edu or 303-871-7447.

November 3, 2017

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee values insights from our faculty colleagues about the goals, outcomes, and features of the existing Common Curriculum at DU. We will seek your input several times. As a first step, we ask that you complete the survey at:

https://udenver.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5ur2LeXeBRRVmp7.

In addition to asking specific questions, the survey includes opportunities for open-ended comments. We think it will take 5 to 10 minutes.

For information about the Committee, please see the portfolio page at <http://portfolio.du.edu/GenEdReviewInquiry2017>. It includes our October 18 letter to the faculty. Doug Hesse (dhesse@du.edu) or any member of the committee can answer questions.

Thank you!

Chris Coleman, Professor of Emergent Digital Practices

Doug Hesse, Professor of English and Executive Director of Writing (Chair)

Barbekka Hurtt, Teaching Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences

Tonnett Luedtke, Director of Academic Advising

Kateri McRae, Associate Professor of Psychology

Nic Ormes, Associate Professor of Mathematics

Matt Rutherford, Associate Professor of Computer Science

Alison Schofield, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies

Laura Sponsler, Clinical Assistant Professor, Morgridge College of Education

Billy J. Stratton, Associate Professor of English

John Tiedemann, Teaching Associate Professor of Writing

Cheri Young, Associate Professor of Hospitality

November 7, 2017

Two quick things. **First**, thanks to the 100+ faculty who have completed the survey about the Common Curriculum. If you haven't yet, please consider doing so.

https://udenver.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5ur2LeXeBRRVmp7.

Second, here's a reminder of the first event in a series of faculty conversations about general education at DU: Noon, Monday, 11/13 in AAC 290.

*First Event in a Faculty Series on
Undergraduate General Education at DU*

The Common Curriculum at DU:

Goals, Outcomes, Perceptions, Strengths, Opportunities

Noon to 1:00 pm

Monday, November 13, 2017

290 Anderson Academic Commons (The Events Room)

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee invites all DU faculty to a conversation about the general education (Common Curriculum) program at DU. Other opportunities will follow.

Participants will meet at tables, each with a note taker, to discuss broad questions raised in the First Faculty Survey (sent 11/3/17—along with preliminary survey responses—and to share ideas.

We'll provide cookies and drinks. Feel free to bring your own lunch.

For more information about the committee's work and resources, including a copy of the October 18 letter to faculty, please see the portfolio page at <http://portfolio.du.edu/GenEdReviewInquiry2017>

Please contact Lauren Salvador (lauren.salvador@du.edu) with questions.

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee (GERI)

Chris Coleman, Emergent Digital Practices; Doug Hesse, English and Writing (Chair);
Barbekka Hurtt, Biological Sciences; Tonnelt Luedtke, Academic Advising; Kateri McRae,
Psychology; Nic Ormes, Mathematics; Matt Rutherford, Computer Science; Alison Schofield,
Religious Studies and Judaic Studies; Laura Sponsler, Morgridge College of Education; Billy J.
Stratton, English; John Tiedemann, Writing; Cheri Young, Hospitality

January 3, 2018

Dear Colleague,

We're writing to update you on work done by the General Education Review and Inquiry (GERI) Committee. We explained the nature and scope of our work in an [email that was distributed](#) by Kate Willink, Faculty Senate President, on October 20. We'll send further updates at least once per month, but certainly feel to contact Doug Hesse, Chair, (dhesse@du.edu) or any other member of the committee.

This email has 4 parts, 3 of them with links to supporting documents:

1. Recent Committee Work and Timeline (with further link)
2. Issue Brief: Parameters of Gen Ed (with further link)
3. Findings from the Survey of Faculty (with further link)
4. Forums with Faculty and Students

We also list committee members and invite contacts.

Recent Committee Work and Timeline

The Committee met on campus December 5 for an all-day retreat to analyze responses to date and to map out our efforts for winter and spring 2018 and beyond. We have divided our work into five broad phases, [elaborated in a draft timeline](#). We have spent this fall in an Identification phase characterized by reading, listening, and data gathering, work that will continue in January 2018 and will be capped with a report in February. Our second phase, Focused Analysis, will occur in February and March and feature another round of campus input and analysis, focused around specific topics and propositions. A Modeling phase will propose specific modifications to the Common Curriculum, with a draft of recommendations by mid-June. A Revision and Refinement phase will occur in September and October 2018, culminating in a final proposal submitted for approval by December. We expect action on the proposal in winter 2019, with full Implementation in fall 2020. Please see a more detailed timeline.

Parameters of General Education (an issue brief)

There's an extensive scholarly literature on general education programs, which have an interesting history in higher education. The committee has read and discussed much of that literature, and we've written [a short primer on the Parameters of General Education](#), to share with the campus at large. It summarizes thinking on the possible functions/purposes of general education. Is it an individual student good? A social/civic good? An institutional good? The primer also summarizes three dominant models (and a fourth, emerging one): the Core model, the Distribution model, the Skills/Competencies model, and the Thematic model. In that context, the issue brief characterizes the DU Common Curriculum, including its relationship to the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes.

Survey Findings

As you know, on November 3, 2017, we invited all faculty to complete a survey about aspects of the current Common Curriculum at DU. After the initial invitation and one reminder, 160 of 714 faculty had replied, many of them writing extended comments along with completing multiple choice questions. [A preliminary analysis of findings is available on our portfolio site](#). It includes

tables of results, some interpretations, and some analysis of the open-ended comments that were coded.

Forums with Faculty and Students

GERI hosted a first open listening session on November 13. Approximately 30 faculty discussed three questions: What seems to be working well (or has strong potential) in the current Common Curriculum? Given who we are at DU, what should be distinctive features of a general education program here? What additional perspectives would you like to share? We will host similar forums in weeks two and three of winter quarter 2018. We also conducted focus groups with two ASEM courses, asking them several questions about their knowledge of and experiences in the Common Curriculum, now that most had completed the requirements. Additionally, we'll survey students.

The GERI Portfolio Site, with many documents open to the University Community (including those linked above), is at <http://portfolio.du.edu/GenEdReviewInquiry2017>.

As always, we invite your ideas and input.

Doug Hesse, Chair, Professor of English and Executive Director of Writing
Chris Coleman, Professor of Emergent Digital Practices
Barbekka Hurtt, Teaching Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences
Tonnett Luedtke, Director of Academic Advising
Kateri McRae, Associate Professor of Psychology
Nic Ormes, Associate Professor of Mathematics
Matt Rutherford, Associate Professor of Computer Science
Alison Schofield, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies
Laura Sponsler, Clinical Assistant Professor, Morgridge College of Education
Billy J. Stratton, Associate Professor of English
John Tiedemann, Teaching Associate Professor of Writing
Cheri Young, Associate Professor of Hospitality

January 11, 2018

Second and Third Events in a Faculty Series on
Undergraduate General Education at DU

The Common Curriculum at DU:

Goals, Outcomes, Perceptions, Strengths, Opportunities

Noon to 1:00 pm

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

or

Monday, January 22, 2018

290 Anderson Academic Commons (The Events Room)

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee invites all faculty to additional conversation about the general education (Common Curriculum) program at DU. These listening sessions will be identical to the one held on 11/13.

Participants will meet at tables, each with a note taker, to discuss broad questions and to share ideas. We'll provide cookies and drinks. Feel free to bring your own lunch.

[We emailed a comprehensive update about the committee's work to the entire faculty on January 3, 2018.](#) (Note: this link downloads the document.)

Contact Lauren Salvador (lauren.salvador@du.edu) with questions. As always, faculty are invited to read documents on the [GERI Portfolio site](#).

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee (GERI)

Chris Coleman, Emergent Digital Practices; Doug Hesse, English and Writing (Chair); Barbekka Hurtt, Biological Sciences; Tonnnett Luedtke, Academic Advising; Kateri McRae, Psychology; Nic Ormes, Mathematics; Matt Rutherford, Computer Science; Alison Schofield, Religious Studies and Judaic Studies; Laura Sponsler, Morgridge College of Education; Billy J. Stratton, English; John Tiedemann, Writing; Cheri Young, Hospitality

January 16, 2018

Just a quick reminder of today's (Tuesday, 1/16) informal faculty discussion of the Common Curriculum/General Education at DU. It will be noon to 12:50 in AAC 284 (the Events Room). Cookies and coffee. A similar event will be Monday, 1/22, at the same time and place.

Doug Hesse for the GERI Committee

(Email sent 1.11.18 follows)

Appendix E

General Education at DU Since 2000

--with Brief Notes on Earlier Programs

DU has made two significant revisions of its general education requirements since 2000. Following are brief synopses of the programs that emerged, with some paragraphs of context that were cut and pasted, for the most part, from a document titled “GERC History,” produced by the 2009 General Education Review Committee chaired by Luc Beaudoin.

The 2001 “University Requirements”

In September 2001, following approval in 2000, the University implemented a new system of general education requirements, replacing the "Core" curriculum of earlier years with a set of "University Requirements. (See page 3, below, for the earlier Core requirements.) The 2001 requirements included a "foundational" level and an upper-level requirement of three quarters of three interdisciplinary, thematic "Core" courses. Students were required to take one course in each theme. In theory, students would receive a solid grounding in disciplines at the foundational level, and then bring together their knowledge across disciplines in the upper-level Core courses. The themes were designed to ensure that students had a common experience in their general education courses. A Faculty Core Committee was established to oversee the Core and to approve course proposals. Divisions and departments were responsible for approving courses at the foundational level. This system remained in place, with some modifications until 2009, when a new undergraduate General Education Program was approved, for implementation in 2010.

From the 2007 Undergraduate Bulletin

Foundations

- Arts and Humanities (AHUM) 8 qtr. Hrs.
- Creative Expression (CREX) 4 qtr hrs.
- Language Proficiency 12 qtr hrs
- First-Year Seminar (FSEM) 4 qtr hrs
- Writing Sequence (WRIT) 8 qtr hrs
- Mathematics and Computer Science (MATC) 4 qtr hrs
- Natural Sciences (NATS) 12 qtr hrs
- Social Sciences (SOCS) 8 qtr hrs

Core Curriculum

The core is a set of three 4-quarter-hour courses that all students take after completing the foundational requirements in their freshman and sophomore years. Students must have junior standing to enroll in core courses.

- Communities and Environments 4 qtr hrs
- Self and Identities 4 qtr hrs
- Change and Continuity 4 qtr hrs

Students are required to complete one writing-intensive course to meet the core requirement and at least one of the students' core courses must be taken at the University of Denver.

The 2010 “Common Curriculum”

By AY 2007-2008, there were calls from a variety of quarters to reconsider the existing University Requirements. As noted above, the staffing problems had never been resolved, and it had become clear that it was not possible to provide the necessary seats while still meeting the needs of majors, minors, and graduate programs. Concerns over the coherence and goals of Core were also expressed in some quarters, and a proposal was presented to the Faculty Senate in 2006-2007 to replace the Core with a "mini-minor" of several courses in a single department. In light of these developments, the Provost convened the General Education Review Committee (GERC) in February 2008. The committee was composed of faculty representatives from all academic units that participated in undergraduate teaching, as well as the chair of the Faculty Core Committee and two non-voting members (one from the Provost's office and one from the Office of Academic Assessment). Its charge was to examine the University of Denver's existing undergraduate requirements and to propose either modifications to those requirements or entirely new requirements, as appropriate. The committee sent the proposal out for review by the University community in February 2009, and over the next three months met with divisions, departments, and the Faculty Senate to discuss the proposal and solicit feedback. A final, modified version of the proposal was approved for implementation in September 2010. **Members of the 2009 committee were:** Beaudoin, Luc - Languages and Literatures (Chair), Andrews, Anneliese - Computer Science, Benson, Janette - Office of Academic Assessment (Ex-Officio), Buxton, Rod - Mass Communications and Journalism Studies, Connolly, Dan - Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management, DeLyser, Ron - Engineering (Core Curriculum Committee Chair), Donnelly, Jack - International Studies, Espenlaub, Margo - Women's College, Johnson, Sandy - International Studies, Karas, Jennifer - Office of the Provost, Keables, Mike - Natural Sciences and Mathematics, McIntosh, Danny - Psychology, Silver, Bill - Daniels College of Business, Tague, Ingrid - History, Tate, Linda - University Writing Program (Faculty Senate Representative)

Current Common Curriculum Requirements

- First Year Seminar 1 course (4 credits)
- Writing and Rhetoric 2 courses (8 credits)
- Language 1–3 courses (4–12 credits)
- Analytical Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World 1 course (4 credits)
- Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture 2 course minimum (8 credits)
- Scientific Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World 3 sequential courses (12 credits)
- Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture 2 course minimum (8 credits)
- Advanced Seminar

Broader Context for the 2009 Review

Alongside the restructuring of undergraduate education made possible with Marsico funding (2002-05), the University developed a new Vision, Values, Mission, and Goals (VVMG) document. The 2009 general education requirements were directly linked to the approved Undergraduate Learning Outcomes. These commitments to an integrated and coherent educational experience were designed to carry over to other aspects of undergraduate education, such as the Living and Learning Communities, the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, the Undergraduate Research Center, and specific programs such as those that take place during first-year orientation week (Discoveries).

Three Selected Earlier General Education Programs: 1997, 1971, 1946

From the 1997 Undergraduate Bulletin “University Core Curriculum”

Common-Experience Core

First-year English, 12 qtr hrs

Mathematics/Computer Science/8 qtr hrs

Oral Communication, 4 qtr hrs

U of Denver Campus Connection, 1 qtr hr

Language, 0-12 qtr hrs

Integrated-Experience Core

SOCS 1000 Social Sciences sequence, 8 qtr hrs

NATS 1000 Natural Sciences sequence, 8 or 12 qtr hrs

AHUM 1000 Arts and Humanities sequence, 8 qtr hrs

Integrated Experience Core 2000

Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Arts and Humanities, 8 or 12 qtr hrs

“Normally, students will take three Core 2000 courses: one combining NATS and SOCS, one combining SOCS and AHUM, and one combining NATS and AHUM.”

From the 1971 Undergraduate Bulletin “General Minimum Requirements”

General English (9 Qtr Hrs)

Physical Education (three activity courses) 3

Humanities Courses (15)

- The Nature of Art or Arts and Ideas

- The Literary Experience (required)

- Introduction to Religions

- Any 100-level course in philosophy

Science Courses (12-15)

Any three or more approved elementary courses from the fields of astronomy, biology, chemistry, mathematics, physical anthropology, physical geography, geology or physics

Social Science Courses (15)

Three 5-quarter-hour courses chosen from the following:

- Cultural anthropology

- Man and His Geographic Environment

- Historical Introduction to the Modern World

- Introduction to International Relations

- Introduction to Psychology

- Introduction to Sociology

- Principles of Economics

From the 1946-47 DU Bulletin “Lower Division Requirements”

Basic Communication (15 quarter hours)

Physical Education (3 quarter hours)

15 quarter hours in three of the following fields:

- Biological Sciences

- Humanities

- Languages and Literature

- Physical Sciences and Mathematics

- Social Sciences

Appendix F

Timeline for General Education Review Committee Work

December 2017

Note: This timeline is subject (and likely) to change based on needs, opportunities, and complexities. We will produce an email update to the campus at least every month, and more likely every 2 or 3 weeks.

1. Identification Phase

Characterized by reading, listening, data gathering, idea exploration, with the goal of identifying understandings, strengths, issues, and opportunities.

December 18

Send an update email to all faculty.

Weeks of January 1 and January 8, 2018

Distribute student survey in ASEM courses, courses taught by GERI committee members, and among students of FSEM advisors

Hold two more ASEM focus groups

Weeks of January 8 and January 15, 2018

Hold two more open faculty forums, similar to the November 13 forum

Offer to have discussions with other entities: Senate, Divisions, Departments.

Early February, 2018

Report of findings from the Identification stage. "This is what we know about the current Common Curriculum, in terms of its philosophy, how it is perceived by students and faculty, its logistics, its relation to best current ideas in general education, and its relation to current campus planning."

2. Focused Analysis Phase

Characterized by another round of campus input, focused around issue briefs produced about aspects of DU general education and framing propositions for discussion. (For example, "The guiding philosophy of DU's common curriculum should be X. The main learning outcomes should be A, B, C.")

February through March

Numerous forums, focus groups, and small group opportunities to gather insights and responses about the issue briefs and propositions.

Possible second faculty survey

3. Modeling Phase

Characterized by developing specific revisions of the Common Curriculum, with continued sharing of information and opportunities for input, including discussions of resource and other “practical” considerations.

June 15

First draft of Committee Recommendations: Proposed Revised General Education at DU.

4. Revision and Refinement Phase

Characterized by gathering responses to the proposed plan and revising accordingly

September 1 to October 15

Hearings, meetings, and written input on the draft

November 20

Final report distributed to campus and to the Undergraduate Council

5. Adoption and Implementation Phase

Winter quarter 2019

Approval or rejection by the Undergraduate Council

If approved, implementation planning begins.

Fall quarter 2020

New general education begins

CAVEAT

It could be the case that few or no significant structural changes will be recommended. In other words, the recommendations will focus on reconceptualizing, renaming, and rebranding the existing framework—accompanied by faculty development, better goals and requirements for courses, coherent assessment and so on. If that is the case, the implementation phase will be quite different (and “lighter”) than it will if we adopt significantly different requirements.