

Cornerstone Theme Section Plan

Beginning in the fall semester of 2016, we will allow a limited number of Cornerstone sections to focus on a “theme” in addition to the required components of the course – both the required assignments as well as the spirit of an interdisciplinary approach. This is not dissimilar to our long-standing policy to allow faculty to select their own supplemental text book and additional “instructor’s choice” assignments (worth up to 15% of the overall grade), except it would communicate more of that in advance to allow for student selection. These “themed sections” would be built around themes or ideas which would appeal to a cross section of majors but would be open to students of all disciplines. Some potential theme ideas are:

- a. Faith in Action - an exploration of intentionally living out your faith through your career and your community. This theme might appeal to students in these areas: Bible, Nursing, Child & Family Services, and Social Work.
- b. Healing Mind & Body – an examination of the interaction of mental and physical health and how professionals in these areas are working together to minister to their patients. This themes might appeal to students in these areas: Psychology, Pre-Health, and Kinesiology.
- c. Seeking Justice – an inquiry into the calling we have as Christians to seek justice and how that may intersect with our careers and ministries. This theme might appeal to students in these areas: Political Science, Sociology, and Bible.
- d. Teaching in the 21st Century – delving into the role of the teacher and the learner in our technology-driven culture and how those who choose to teach can best be prepared. This theme might appeal to students in these areas: teaching majors across colleges and those interested in collegiate teaching as well.
- e. Scientific Exploration Behind the Scenes – an exploration of the ways that science and mathematics intersect with our everyday world. This theme might appeal to students in these areas: Biology, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Engineering and Physics, Mathematics, and the School of Information Technology and Computing.
- f. Global Perspectives – in a world that feels increasingly smaller, a perspective that is global in scope is important as we work, serve and learn. This theme might appeal to students in these areas: Agricultural and Environmental Science, Art, Business, Communication, History/Global Studies, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Language & Literature.

Application Process

To be considered for a theme section, a faculty member will complete a Cornerstone Theme Section Proposal form indicating the proposed theme, providing a brief explanatory statement that would convey the theme to students, presenting all proposed supplemental text or experience that would be required, identifying the major areas where potential students might be found, and an affirmation that the required components of the course will be retained.

Cornerstone sections generally enroll 30 students, and the theme sections will need to enroll a similar number of students for the section to be offered – under-enrolled sections might need to be reverted to general sections. All sections of the course will be assessed using the same IDEA evaluation template and student work from all sections will be assessed through the Cornerstone assessment team to maintain a focus across all sections on the interdisciplinary student learning outcomes for the course. These assessment results will be reviewed annually and will impact the opportunity for a specific themed section to continue to be offered.