Faculty of Arts: BA Curriculum Renewal Proposal

August 2016

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Goals of the BA Curriculum Renewal

The current structure of our Bachelor of Arts (BA) Core Requirements has been in place since the 2006 – 2007 academic year. In November 2011, Arts Faculty Council approved a five year Academic Plan that included a systematic review of the BA general requirements (see Appendix A). Associate Dean Mickey Adolphson (Teaching and Learning) was initially assigned to Chair the BA Curriculum Review and, in July 2015, the Dean of Arts, Lesley Cormack, asked Associate Dean Allen Ball (Student Programs: Teaching and Learning) to continue this process as the BA Curriculum Renewal.

The goal of the Renewal was to develop a simpler, more attractive, and sustainable BA program that provides Arts students with an exemplary undergraduate degree. A renewed Bachelor of Arts at the University of Alberta must be flexible enough to accommodate the exceptional programming offered in the Faculty and continue to enable a broad range of pedagogical methods, from traditional instructional strategies to community-engaged experiential learning, while retaining our rigorous academic standards.

Current BA Core Requirements

The Faculty of Arts Bachelor of Arts (BA) Core Requirements are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts Requirements (*36)</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL/WRS *6</td>
<td>*6 100-level ENGL or *3 ENGL and *3 WRS at the 100-level</td>
</tr>
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<td>LOE *6</td>
<td>*6 in one language other than English</td>
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<td>Science *6</td>
<td>Courses offered by the Faculty of Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Breadth and Diversity *18 | a) *6 Group 1 - creative arts (ART, ART H, DES, DRAMA, T. DES, MUSIC, WRITE)  
                             b) *6 Group 2 – study of cultures (CHINA, CHRTC, CHRTP, CLASS, C LIT, EASIA, ENGL, FREN, FS, GERM, GREEK, HIST, ITAL, JAPAN, KOREA, LA ST, MLCS, PHIL, POLISH, PORT, RELIG, RUSS, SCAND, SLAV, SPAN)  
                             c) *6 Group 3 – social systems (ANTHR, CSL, EAS (Arts courses only), ECON, HGP, INT D, LING, MEAS, POL S, PSYCO (Arts courses only), STS, SOC, WGS) |

1 University of Alberta, Arts – Chart 1: Basic Requirements, University of Alberta Calendar 2016-2017. [http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Undergrad/Arts/chart1.html](http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Undergrad/Arts/chart1.html)
2 The core requirements are referred to as the “Basic Requirements” in the University Calendar.  
The current BA Core Requirements are based on a distribution model that grounds a traditional liberal arts education in a breadth of disciplines and methodologies. On the one hand, in principle, the distribution model enforces breadth of study in students’ degree programs. On the other hand, it is not clear how these requirements relate to the many and diverse types of Arts majors, or how they benefit students during and after their degrees. The weakest aspect to this model is that the core requirements rarely align with courses taken as part of a student’s declared major nor do they connect with one another. Furthermore, the pedagogical value of these particular core requirements has not been clearly linked to our research-intensive institutional focus.

There are a variety of approaches to the structuring of BA programs in Canada and a broad threshold of core credit requirements among the top 20-ranked Canadian universities (see Appendix B). The lowest number of BA program core requirement credits is in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Calgary, which requires only *6 credits from the Faculty of Science, with all other requirements determined by departments or programs offering majors. Students in BA programs within the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta face the highest number of core requirements among the top 20 comparable Canadian programs, with *36 core course credits needed to graduate.

Having the highest number of BA core requirements among these top Canadian institutions produces a number of challenges for our Faculty. First, the high number of requirements is dissuading high school students from choosing our program for their post-secondary education; they now have other more attractive and less complex options locally, provincially, and nationally. The current requirements also make transferring into the Faculty of Arts difficult and potentially unattractive to prospective students from colleges, other University of Alberta programs, and other universities. As well, the Faculty of Arts encompasses a wide variety of disciplines; but the high number of core requirements neutralizes this diversity in programming by imposing too much similarity across disciplines and ignoring distinct disciplinary differences. In short, other institutions provide more flexibility to students; students increasingly opt for the program flexibility accessible at other institutions; and our current program does not represent or maximize the value of our diverse offerings. We are losing students to more attractive and easier-to-navigate programs offered elsewhere, even though we provide comparable or superior course offerings.

**Current Context for the BA Curriculum Renewal Process**

A number of factors inform the current institutional and provincial contexts in which this curriculum renewal occurs. First, in June 2015, the Government of Alberta introduced Bill 3, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act. Bill 3 reversed cuts made by the previous provincial administration (including a 1.4 percent reduction to post-secondary funding), increased base funding for post-secondary institutions by two percent, cancelled market modifiers that had previously been approved for 25 programs in Alberta, and restored apprenticeship and targeted enrolment funding. As well, the Bill implemented a two-year freeze on tuition and mandatory non-instructional fees for post-secondary students in both the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years. In Fall 2015, the Government also began a review of the overall funding model for

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Campus Alberta. Given the uncertain financial future, the current period of relative stability gives the Faculty of Arts the opportunity to re-envision its BA program to better meet the goal of offering a competitive program that attracts excellent students. If the Arts BA program is re-worked now to meet our goals, the Faculty will be better positioned to face future challenges and to take advantage of emergent opportunities.

Within our institution, central administrative units are also planning for substantive change. On May 30, 2016, General Faculties Council recommended approval of the University of Alberta’s new institutional strategic plan (ISP) “For the Public Good” (Au Service de l'intérêt public), which was ratified by the Board of Governors on June 17, 2016. (see Appendix C). The following is an excerpt from the ISP that outlines the strategic goals of the plan:

In *For the Public Good*—our institutional strategic plan for the coming decade—we embrace and affirm our vision to inspire the human spirit through outstanding achievements in learning, discovery, and citizenship in a creative community, building one of the world’s great universities for the public good.

We forge ahead, motivated and supported by the University of Alberta’s 108-year history of leadership, achievement, and public service. Inspired by this plan, we will strive to achieve the following strategic goals:

**BUILD** a diverse, inclusive community of exceptional students, faculty, and staff from Alberta, Canada, and the world.

**EXPERIENCE** diverse and rewarding learning opportunities that inspire us, nurture our talents, expand our knowledge and skills, and enable our success.

**EXCEL** as individuals, and together, sustain a culture that fosters and champions distinction and distinctiveness in teaching, learning, research, and service.

**ENGAGE** communities across campuses, city and region, province, nation, and the world to create reciprocal, mutually beneficial learning experiences, research projects, partnerships, and collaborations.

**SUSTAIN** our people, our work, and the environment by attracting and stewarding the resources we need to deliver excellence to the benefit of all.

In pursuit of these shared goals, the University of Alberta will deepen our dedication to excellence and extend our record of public leadership, playing a lead role in building a better province, a better Canada, and a better world.

The “Undergraduate Out-of-Province National Recruitment Strategy Discussion Paper,” recently released internally by the University of Alberta Office of the Registrar, lays the groundwork for a

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5 Government of Alberta, title, [http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=38498C947FED3-E72C-6CA8-6297F33D57AD6D0D](http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=38498C947FED3-E72C-6CA8-6297F33D57AD6D0D)

coordinated approach to the recruitment challenges facing the University of Alberta. As outlined in the introduction to the “Discussion Paper”:⁷

… the environment within which we recruit students has been changing as a result of provincial and national trends. Post-secondary participation rates within the province are comparatively low [Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education], the number of degree-granting institutions in Alberta has increased [Canadian Association of University Teachers Bulletin], and national demographics have shifted [Statistics Canada]. These factors have combined to result in a smaller pool of potential undergraduate students nationally, prompting increasing and aggressive recruitment of Alberta students by other out-of-province institutions. (p.2)

In light of these demographic shifts and changes in the competitive environment for post-secondary students, it is critical that the Faculty craft a distinct, well-designed, and competitive BA with attractive programs if the expanded recruitment effort is to be successful. We must respond to the growing pressure to effectively articulate the value of a BA degree in this new educational environment, and to communicate its benefits and outcomes clearly to students, parents, employers, and government.

**History of the BA Curriculum Review Process**

In November 2011, Arts Faculty Council approved a five-year Academic Plan that included a systematic review of the BA general requirements (see Appendix A).

After determining the reasons why such a review was necessary, five working groups were formed in September 2012 to develop visions for the future of the BA degree. A series of open meetings and focus-group sessions were held with the members of the five working groups and others in the Faculty of Arts. These lengthy discussions centered on the question of whether or not to define the BA degree in terms of “attributes.” “Attributes” were defined as the qualities, values, and dispositions that students develop during the process of obtaining an Arts degree. Broader than, but including skills, attributes are not discipline-specific and are developed by all students as they progress through their degrees. The working group discussions were informed by specialists in curriculum development, including Dr. Jennifer Summit from Stanford University and Dr. John Galaty from McGill University, who presented lectures in January 2013 (see Appendix D).

The five working groups were merged into a single Task Force in February 2013. The Task Force members investigated the ways in which other universities, primarily in the United States and Australia, had organized their BA core requirements around the concept of attributes. Comprehensive surveys of University of Alberta undergraduates were conducted in 2011-2012 using some of the various guiding principles used by other institutions across the world (see Appendix E).

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A set of key attributes were put forward at the end of 2013, along with a proposed table of BA requirements, that clearly outlined the number of course credits and expected learning outcomes for each set of attributes (see Appendix F). Five core attributes were identified:

- Analysis and Interpretation
- Research, Creation, and Inquiry
- Communication and Culture
- Global Citizenship
- Lifelong, Adaptive, and Engaged Learning

This working proposal was then sent out to all stakeholders in the Faculty of Arts for feedback.

In September 2014, an ad hoc committee was constituted at the request of Dean Lesley Cormack and Associate Dean Mickey Adolphson, then Chair of the BA Curriculum Review. This committee was asked to bring the work of earlier iterations of the BA Review Committee to fruition by drafting a proposal based on the attributes for presentation to Arts Faculty Council. In Spring 2015, a draft entitled “The BA Core Review – The Proposed Attributes BA” (see Appendix G) was presented to various Arts stakeholder groups, including Undergraduate Student Services, Dean’s Executive Council, and Chairs Council. There were concerns expressed that the attribute model was too complex and would make advising individual students nearly impossible. It also became clear that there was a perception that a full conversation about the attributes themselves had not yet happened, including whether the identified attributes were the appropriate ones on which to form the foundation for our BA requirements. Further, it was obvious that many, if not most, of the degree programs offered by the Faculty incorporated many of these attributes, so it was not clear why the required core would need to duplicate the efforts of these offerings by requiring specific types of core courses. The draft proposal was brought to Arts Executive Committee and the Committee voted against forwarding the proposal to Arts Faculty Council.

Although the Faculty did not move forward with the recommendations as presented, it was agreed, in principle, by the Dean’s Executive Council that the identified attributes were a valuable means of understanding undergraduate programs, shifting attention away from thinking about content and towards the diverse skills and competencies our students gain throughout their degrees. Disciplinary requirements are the primary mechanism that shapes students’ paths through their degrees. These discipline-specific program requirements develop many of the core attributes that become the transferable skills with which students enter the workforce upon graduation. Exactly how these attributes are embedded in the trajectories of specific majors and minors is best determined by each individual department or program.

**Ongoing BA Curriculum Renewal Consultation Process**

In July 2015, Associate Dean Allen Ball (Student Programs: Teaching and Learning) took on the leadership of the BA Curriculum Review process. The review process was renamed the BA Curriculum Renewal; and direction was given to draft a new BA Curriculum Renewal proposal for consideration by all members of the Faculty of Arts by the end of the 2015-2016 academic year.
Associate Dean Ball has undertaken a consultative process with input from the 2015-2016 Dean’s Executive Councils, which included the following members of faculty:

- Acting Dean Lise Gotell (Women’s and Gender Studies)
- Acting Vice-Dean Stuart Landon (Economics)
- Associate Dean (Graduate) Tom Spalding (Psychology)
- Associate Dean (Research) Michael O’Driscoll (English and Film Studies)
- Associate Dean (Student Programs) Rebecca Nagel (History and Classics)
- Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) Allen Ball (Art and Design)

Additional input has also been received from the following faculty members of the 2016-2017 Dean’s Executive Council:

- Dean Lesley Cormack (History and Classics)
- Vice-Dean Lise Gotell (Women’s and Gender Studies)
- Associate Dean (Graduate) Tom Spalding (Psychology)
- Associate Dean (Research) Steve Patten (Political Science)
- Associate Dean (Student Programs) Rebecca Nagel (History and Classics)
- Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) Allen Ball (Art and Design)

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Associate Dean Ball held individual meetings with all 15 Faculty of Arts Department Chairs, as well as the Executive Director of Community Service Learning, and the Director of the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies:

- Dr. Pamela Willoughby, Chair (Anthropology)
- Associate Professor Cezary Gajewski, Chair (Art and Design)
- Dr. David Peacock, Executive Director (Community Service Learning)
- Professor Betty Moulton, Chair (Drama)
- Dr. Constance Smith, Chair (Economics)
- Dr. Walter Davis, Interim Chair (East Asian Studies)
- Dr. Peter Sinnema, Chair (English and Film Studies)
- Dr. David Marples (History and Classics)
- Dr. Sean Gouglas, Director (Office of Interdisciplinary Studies)
- Dr. Herbert Colston, Chair (Linguistics)
- Dr. Laura Beard, Chair (Modern Languages and Cultural Studies)
- Professor William Street, Chair (Music)
- Dr. Jack Zupko, Chair (Philosophy)
- Dr. Lois Harder, Chair (Political Science)
- Dr. Jeff Bisanz, Chair (Psychology)
- Dr. Gillian Stevens, Acting Chair (Sociology)
- Dr. Philomena Okeke, Acting Chair (Women’s and Gender Studies)

Ongoing updates on the BA Curriculum Renewal process have been provided by Associate Dean Ball to members of the central administration, including:

- Meg Brolley, General Faculty Council Secretary
- Dr. Sarah Forgie, Vice Provost (Learning Initiatives)
Further, in-process discussions are underway with Dr. Christine Brown, Head Librarian, to identify and address any resource implications that the proposed BA Curriculum Renewal may generate for library services.

The potential changes to our BA have also been discussed with Faculties across campus. To date, the following Associate Deans have been consulted on this initiative by Associate Dean Ball:

- Dr. Jason Carey, Associate Dean (Programs & Planning), Faculty of Engineering
- Dr. Janice Causgrove Dunn, Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs), Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
- Dr. Robin Everall, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
- Dr. Elaine Geddes, Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Services), Faculty of Education
- Dr. Clive Hickson, Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Services), Faculty of Education
- Dr. Tim Joseph, Associate Dean (Student & Co-op Services), Faculty of Engineering
- Dr. Brenda Leskiw, Senior Associate Dean (Undergraduate), Faculty of Science
- Dr. Karsten Mundel, Director & Associate Dean (Academic), Augustana Campus
- Dr. Frank Tough, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Native Studies

An update on the BA Curriculum Renewal consultation process was presented by Associate Dean Ball at Arts Faculty Council on October 5, 2015. The process has also been discussed extensively in each 2015-2016 Arts Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee meeting and at the Associate Chairs (Undergraduate) 2015-2016 meetings.

Roundtable sessions have taken place with the Undergraduate Student Services staff to address the possible administrative impacts of different changes to the BA core requirements. In addition, the Recruitment and Engagement team have articulated the needs and interests of prospective students.

The Faculty of Arts: BA Curriculum Renewal Discussion Paper was distributed across the Faculty on January 8, 2016. The proposal was initially discussed at Faculty of Arts Chairs Council on January 20, 2016, and again at Faculty of Arts Chairs Council on February 3, 2016. Associate Dean Ball also presented and discussed the proposal at Arts Executive Council on February 25, 2016.

A town hall meeting was held on February 5, 2016. More than 100 student, staff, and faculty attended this open forum. An online form was also circulated prior to the event, inviting feedback about the BA Curriculum Renewal Discussion Paper from those who would not be able to attend the town hall (see https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/about/ba-renewal/feedback-from-the-february-5-town-hall).

During Winter 2016, Associate Dean Ball presented the BA Curriculum Renewal Discussion Paper at the following Departmental Councils: Anthropology; Art and Design; English and Film
Studies; History and Classics; Linguistics; Modern Languages and Cultural Studies; and Philosophy.

We have developed an open and robust dialogue with students about the renewal process through numerous discussions with our Faculty of Arts Students’ Association OASIS (Organization for Arts Students and Interdisciplinary Studies). Associate Dean Ball was invited to participate in a student town hall organized by OASIS on March 8, 2016. All BA students were invited to attend to ask questions and give feedback. The event was well-attended and the students’ thoughtful observations, along with the complete record of students’ contributions, were added to the Faculty’s consideration of the BA Renewal (see https://d1pbog36rugm0t.cloudfront.net/-/media/arts/about/student-comments-from-ba-renewal-student-town-hall.pdf).

A survey was distributed on March 10, 2016 (closing March 20, 2016), to gauge students’ and faculty members’ initial response to the BA Renewal Discussion Paper. The survey garnered nearly 1000 responses, with 831 students and 167 faculty members submitting their opinions. The aggregated results were made available on April 7, 2016 (see https://uofa.ualberta.ca/arts/-/media/arts/about/student-survey-results.pdf).

On April 27, 2016 Associate Dean Ball met with the executive members of OASIS to discuss the results of the surveys. Associate Dean Ball met with representatives from the Graduate Student Association (GSA) on May 19, 2016 to explore the impacts the proposed changes to the BA may have on graduate student recruitment and retention.

Throughout the BA Curriculum Review and the BA Curriculum Renewal processes, the Faculty of Arts Dean’s Office has engaged and consulted widely, hearing from key campus partners and stakeholders, including students, faculty, contract instructors, staff, and alumni. The revised recommendations laid out in the next section of this document are the direct result of this comprehensive consultation process.

**Proposed Changes to the Common Structure of the BA**

To enhance our competitiveness among peer institutions and strengthen the quality and flexibility of our BA degree, the Faculty of Arts proposes these core requirements:

- **120**
- one major (**30-48** maximum at the senior level)
- **3** ENGL or WRS at the 100-level
- **6** in one language other than English
- **6** from a non-Arts discipline

The proposed changes have multiple advantages:

i) The proposed requirements promote diversity and breadth. The maximum of **48** in any single Arts discipline, and the **6** required in non-Arts disciplines, mean that students must experiment by taking courses in several disciplines.

ii) The added flexibility will create significantly more opportunities for students to take double majors or multiple minors. For example, a student could graduate with a single major, two majors, a major and one or more minors.
iii) If students no longer require minors (which, by their very nature are limited to single departments), they would be free to undertake more of the certificates that are developed and offered across disciplines and departments.

iv) Students will have considerable flexibility in determining the directions in which they choose to pursue their education.

v) Students will also take on greater responsibility for designing their own program, which is part of the educational experience.

vi) The proposed requirements enable a straightforward transition for students transferring from other programs at the University of Alberta and other post-secondary institutions.

vii) The requirement for *6 of non-Arts credits ensures that students will be exposed to the disciplinary perspectives and pedagogical environments of other Faculties and programs, which will ensure and enrich students’ experiences of the full breadth of university learning.

viii) A flexible Arts degree means that our students will easily be able to accommodate any mandated University-wide Indigenous studies requirement in their degrees, should this requirement be embraced institutionally.

The new core requirements introduce significant flexibility to students, while sustaining the academic excellence and rigour of Faculty of Arts programs. This structural shift creates a continuum of options that can adapt to both specific departmental programmatic outcomes and disciplinary specificity, while simultaneously facilitating breadth in pedagogical scope and curricular demands.

See the chart below for details and a comparison of the proposed and current requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Requirement</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>*120</td>
<td>*120</td>
<td>No change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>*30 -*48 at the senior level</td>
<td>*30 -*48 at the senior level</td>
<td>No change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Subject(s)</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Maximum of *48 senior courses in any discipline</td>
<td>To allow students who wish to do so to complete a double major, but also to ensure that students diversify their studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts Courses</td>
<td>Minimum *63</td>
<td>Minimum *63</td>
<td>No change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Note 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>English/ Writing Studies</strong></th>
<th>*6 100-level ENGL or *3 ENGL and *3 WRS at the 100-level</th>
<th>*3 ENGL at the 100 level or *3 WRS at the 100 level or other approved courses</th>
<th>A reduction of *3 in the ENGL/WRS requirement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language other than English (LOE)</strong></td>
<td>LOE *6</td>
<td>LOE *6</td>
<td>Exemptions from the *6 LOE requirement. See Note 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Arts Discipline Courses</strong></td>
<td>*6 from Faculty of Science</td>
<td>*6 from a non-Arts discipline</td>
<td>Encourages experimentation outside Arts disciplines and expands breadth. See Note 1 for exceptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Junior (100-) level</strong></td>
<td>*48 maximum</td>
<td>*48 maximum</td>
<td>No change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minor</strong></td>
<td>*12 - *42 senior</td>
<td>*12 - *42 in a minor if the option of a minor is chosen</td>
<td>Students are not required to choose a minor, but may choose one or more minor subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Arts/Science</strong></td>
<td>Maximum *18 Not open to students in the After Degree program</td>
<td>Maximum *18 Open to students in the After Degree program</td>
<td>Change opens this option to After Degree program students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Courses Completed at the U of A</strong></td>
<td>Minimum *60</td>
<td>Minimum *60</td>
<td>No change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

1. Some Courses offered by other Faculties are recognized as “Arts courses”:
   i) Native Studies (NS)
   ii) Arts disciplines from Campus St Jean and Augustana (e.g. HISTE, SC PO, AUFRE, AUSOC)
   iii) Approved Cross-listed ALES courses (in Sociology (R SOC) and Economics (AREC))
2. Exemptions from the *6 LOE requirement include:
   i) Students that present the 30-level (matriculation) equivalent of a Language Other than English, or
   ii) Students that are required by the Registrar’s office to take any English proficiency test to qualify for admission.

Governance Pathway for the Proposed Changes to BA Core Requirements

The proposed changes to the BA Core Requirements must follow a standard governance pathway. Within the Faculty of Arts, changes must be reviewed and approved first by Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), then by Arts Executive Committee (AEC), and, finally, by Arts Faculty Council (AFC). Since there are no changes to academic standing, admissions (including high school subjects to be used for admission), or graduation requirements, the proposed changes would not need to be approved by Academic Standards Committee (ASC) of GFC. Approval of GFC is required through routine circulation in Winter 2017 for implementation in Fall 2018.

The BA Curriculum Renewal Proposal will be presented for consideration at the following meetings:

- Academic Affairs Committee (AAC): October 26, 2016
- Arts Executive Committee (AEC): November 3, 2016
- Arts Faculty Council (AFC): November 24, 2016

Next Steps in the BA Curriculum Renewal Process

The BA Curriculum Renewal is an opportunity for us as a Faculty to shape our future. This proposal promotes a new BA structure that will replace our current BA Core Curriculum. The new core requirements will increase flexibility and ensure our requirements are competitive with other post-secondary institutions.

The change process will involve ongoing dialogue and further opportunities for feedback and input from all members of the Faculty of Arts in 2016-2017. We will be considering how we advise our students and offer guidance in assisting them in building their programs through appropriate course selection.

In consultation with Departments, specifically through the Arts Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee (ATLEC) and Undergraduate Student Services, the Faculty of Arts will create a series of thematic pathways as an optional guide for students. Associate Dean Ball will continue to lead these consultations. This consultation process will ensure that our diverse programs can be promoted equally, thus exposing students to the full range of departments and disciplines. These thematic pathways will echo and build upon the excellent work of the last five years to define BA attributes. The principle values at the heart of our discussions regarding attributes include the following:

- the attributes must clearly articulate what we understand to be foundational principles and objectives in the Faculty of Arts.
• the attributes should expand students’ engagement with diverse courses and areas of study within the Faculty.
• the attributes must be easy to identify by students, instructors, or administrators, particularly those in the Undergraduate Student Services Office, to whom much of the work of supporting students falls.
• the attributes must easily illustrate the work and the value of the BA without instrumentalizing courses as “training,” or by reducing Arts knowledge, learning, pedagogies, and research to “skillsets” or “toolboxes.”
• the attributes indicate a recognition that we are responsible to our students. It is important for students to understand the value of their BA to their future plans. Our BA must provide them with qualities that can be readily identified as the basis for continued learning, employment, and social, political, and cultural engagement. This is not the promise of a job, but rather the identification of the ways in which learning in Arts can be understood, valued, and translated to future opportunities.
• clarification of our purpose is a worthwhile undertaking; it is important to provide ways for students to think about the courses they take and to be involved in the process of building a BA that works for them.
• many existing BA courses embody one or more attributes already; this process will reinforce, as well as clarify the BA and its complement of courses.

Together, these recommendations form a critical part of a broader effort by the Faculty of Arts to offer a truly outstanding BA program that will attract and retain the very best and brightest students from Alberta, Canada, and the world.