**Draft Proposal for College Option at CSI: Model 6**

**AKA – Academic Boot Camp**

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**Rationale:** The College of Staten Island Core Curriculum serves a key functional role in the education of our students. As such, the structure and format of both the course content as well as the interrelationship of the courses are critical to providing the richest educational environment for our students. In addition, it is important to consider both the course content as well as the delivery methods for our courses that will allow the greatest educational attainment for our student body. It is not the delivery method, but the outcome that matters. Our methods should be high impact and have high quality outcomes as our goal.

Today, much of America is under the influence of a barrage of commercial media, social media and information content that impacts their perception of the world. Our general education should be targeted to produce lifelong citizen scholars who have the analytical and critical thinking skills that are needed to make choices as an engaged member of our public in the 21st Century. Our focus is intended to confront students with a more engaged form of learning and also encourage them to fully explore topics that previously may have been presented in jingoistic ways either in prior educational settings or in the media.

The model proposed here is based in part on the experiential learning model that uses active witnessing as a model of learning (explained in Peters and Sterns (2003)). In such a model, the students are confronted with moral and ethical challenges and are expected to evaluate these situations using their critical thinking abilities. As such, we propose a somewhat tighter and more functional curriculum with a limited number of tracks in curriculum.

Limiting the number of courses in the general education program is not without precedent: One extreme, but highly respected example would be St. John College in Annapolis, Maryland where the program uses a Great Books Curriculum as well as a single academic route for all students. The result of this is that St. John’s College uses it curriculum to effectively bond their students through a common experience – to quote from them:

“All St. John's graduates study the same four-year program, thus ensuring everyone not only a quality education but the opportunity to talk to almost anyone on campus about almost anything. St. John's is a true intellectual community”

Therefore, we propose a much more moderate model than St. John’s College, but one that still presents a somewhat tighter general educational curriculum that takes all of our students on a similar pathway only divided slightly by their broad educational goals (B.A. versus B.S.).
The CSI General Education Plan

Given the above conceptual ideas, we propose the following for the CSI Pathways Core and College Option Credits:

All areas are to be served by a limited but well managed list of courses that meet the minimum standard of content in each area. Further content development is expected to enhance the role of each course in reinforcing the content area requirements as well as developing a lifelong scholar. It is also expected that the courses proposed will fit within the guidelines of the general Pathways goals by area.

Possible courses listed in the individual content areas are included just for illustrative purposes in that they appear on the surface to have the potential to meet the desired goals. Any final determination of individual courses included in a content area would be subject to proposals by individual departments or interdisciplinary committees and approval by the appropriate college committees.

Common Core

1 English – Literature and Writing I - Write, Write, Think, Write

Potential Courses: English 111 and other writing courses as proposed

1 English – Literature and Writing II – More Write

Potential Courses: English 151 and other writing courses as proposed

1 Science – Bench Lab Science Lecture with Lab Credit out of Common Core Credits – teach them how Science works and the scientific method.

Potential Courses: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Integrated Science, Geology, Space Science, Environmental Science, Computer Technology and others.

1 Math – Applied and Theoretical Math – can include Statistics and Quantitative Methods – teach them logic, how to solve problems and apply rules, to count and analyze and other methods of analysis

Potential Courses: Math for Liberal Arts, Finite Mathematics, College Algebra & Trigonometry, Statistics, Calculus I, Calculus II, Quantitative Methods and others as proposed.

Flex Core: 18 Credits

5 Areas to be Covered – with 6 Classes
A) World Cultures and Global Issues – AKA – Who Lives Here on Earth with Us?
Content in this area should enhance students understanding of the broader world and should prepare them to understand the complexity of modern geopolitics. The topics should include International Organizations (World Health Organization, United Nations, OECD, IMF, etc.), Governmental Structures (EU, NAFTA, OPEC, The Arab League, The African Union, etc.), economic crisis, social unrest, terrorism, public bailouts, political corruption and economic development.

Possible Courses:
POL 100   ECO 101   HST 213   HST 225   INT 100
HST 203   HST 208   AFA 265   ECO 252   POL 264
POL 261   POL 240   ECO 213   ECO214   ECO 240

B) U.S. Experience in its Diversity – AKA – The Real America
Given the broad interest in numerous reality TV shows (The Jersey Shore, Real Housewives, Fear Factor, etc.), it is clear that students in their free time are fascinated with human behavior and odd group dynamics. Structure these courses to explore groups and areas in the United States. Teach them to become true intelligent observers of social issues and groups as opposed to just gawkers. Also show them how to explore various topics of social class and diversity – including social equity and discrimination and also the tools for understanding and managing these issues.

Possible Courses:
POL 235   POL 221   POL 222   POL 231   GEG 100
PHL 101   ECO 101   ECO214   SLS 235   FNC 240

C) Creative Expression – AKA - What is Artistic Creativity?
Teach the students how to appreciate the creative process and creative output. The focus here is on the outcomes of the creative process. After this experience, the student should be able to critique art, literature, music and other culture forms and be able to identify world cultures. They should understand and appreciate various cultural norms. The focus here is the appreciation of culture from a historical perspective.

Possible Courses:
MUS 108   ART 200   ART 201   MUS 105
MUS 108   MUS 110   MUS 120   MUS 239
History of Jazz, History of Art to the Renaissance, History of Art After the Renaissance,

D) Individual and Society – AKA – Is This Fact or Opinion?
Critical Thinking and topics in public policy. The modern political and social arena is populated by groups of sharply divided and entrenched political and
social divisions. Be it abortion rights, taxation policy, urban planning, science and technology – a modern society needs a population that is qualified to analyze and critique various opinions in an analytical way – searching for falsehoods, inconsistent logic, demigods and charlatans. To do this in a highly managed environment, one needs sharp critical thinking abilities and training.

Possible Courses:
ECO 101  SOC 100  PSY 100  SOC 230  SOC 220
WMS 238  SOC 202  SOC 220  ANT 201  PSY 288

E) Scientific World – AKA Mythbusters for Students
3 Credit – Science & Technology for the 21st Century – a large format (200-300 seat) lecture and presentation course of current topical issues in Science. This could include topics such as cloning, hydrofracking, the disaster at Fukushima, the physics of space flight, how cell phones work and other topics. The intent is to provide an understanding and appreciation of how scientific advances occur and their impact on our society. The course should be technology enabled and have numerous content components delivered via web, apps or other newer technologies.

Possible Courses: Any Science Content offered in a lecture format with technology enhancement for a general audience – key focus on teaching science issues to non-scientists.

College Option Credits

1 Credit – Science Lab

3 Credits – Critical Thinking Course

This course is targeted to confront the students with contemporary social issues and encourage their analysis and critical thinking skills.

3 Credits – Communications and Public Speaking (BS Students)

or

3 Credits – Foreign Language (BA Students)

3 Credits – Major Capstone Course – Specialized capstone course designed to provide synthesis of major topic and to build multidisciplinary knowledge of their chosen field
areas. These courses will draw together the various areas of study in a major and provide
the student with an overarching understanding of their field.

2 Credits – Major Reflective Tutorial – Students are provided a recitation type
environment where they can write, discuss and comment on broad issues of interest that
affect their majors and the world in general. This course will provide a chance to
synthesize information and share common experiences with their peers.

Teaching Goals:

Course content proposed for the 42 Credit Common Core and College Option should be
proposed with the overall goal of employing full time faculty in 40% of the teaching
content. Wagner College teaches the vast bulk of their freshman program content with
full time members of their faculty. Wagner College staff members believe that by
engaging the students early in their academic careers, they facilitate the transition to the
college mode of inquiry at an accelerated rate.

Overall Goals:

Any course content should serve to broaden the educational experiences of our students,
who in general come from the local region and need a broad exposure to world issues.

References:

Peters, Jonathan R. and Sterns, Donald E. (2003) "Bringing Educational Relevancy to the
First-Year College Experience by Bearing Witness to Social Problems," *The Journal of