**Inspired Teaching and Learning Portfolio**

**Annual Report/update 2019-20**

Here are the definitions our portfolio is using for Inspired Teaching and Learning:

**I. Key Definitions:**

*Inspired Teaching* - Inspired teaching is the act of teaching students about a subject that the teacher is passionate about in such a way that students find a special connection to that subject.  The act of teaching takes many different forms and the same is true for inspired teaching, i.e. There is no one way to accomplish inspired teaching.  New techniques and technologies may be used to aid in the teaching process but ultimately the act of teaching is the direct connection between an instructor and the student.  The difficulty of inspired teaching is that it requires an understanding of the unique nature of students and requires an instructor to embrace differences as well as the commonalities in students and their learning styles.

A few of the characteristics or attributes of Inspired Teaching at the University of Utah may include:

1. Teaching that directly and regularly engages students in their own learning.
2. Teaching that is regularly examined and reflected on by self and peers.
3. Teaching that reflects a constant cycle of innovation.

*Inspired Learning* - Inspired learning is learning that inspires an individual to embrace subjects, make them their own and connect them in meaningful ways to their broader university learning experience.  Inspired learning can occur in conjunction with classroom teaching (inspired or not) but also can happen in many different environments such as student travel, internships, community engagement, etc.  Inspired learning requires a level of vulnerability, which in turns requires trust in partners or processes.  An inspired learner must embrace risk taking, a creative process, collaboration and a sense of serendipity.

At the University of Utah …

1. Inspired Learning is what happens when students take charge of their own learning processes and outcomes.
2. Inspired learning has happened when students are able to design their own transformational moments or experiences.

**II. Summary of Activities for 2019-20**

In the Inspired Teaching area, we have done 120 trainings with faculty through CTLE. These have been attended by 1580 people. The previous year included working on trainings for 315 people. This is an increase from previous years. CTLE believes that this increase is due, in large part, to the fact that they are holding them online, which gives more flexible access to more people.

We have done some thinking about the Inspired Learning side of our portfolio. We had originally intended to show Inspired Learning in students who use electronic portfolios because one common use of them is to engage students in metacognition about their learning.

However, the management of electronic portfolios has moved away from Undergraduate Studies to Teaching and Learning Technologies, and it is unclear whether there is an effort underway that would engage a meaningful number of students in portfolios.

Instead, we have shifted our thinking about Inspired Learning to focus on the General Education experience. General Education is a huge opportunity for students to author part of their own educational journey. Even though General Education is sometimes considered the “major that all students have in common,” the truth is that virtually every student’s General Education experience is as unique as the student.

Some students come to us as transfer students who have met their Lower Division General Education requirements in their original college or university. These students still have the opportunity to select courses from our Upper Division Gen Ed (Bachelor Degree) requirements that meet their needs or help them explore their interests.

Other students come to us fresh from high school with no General Education courses and have the opportunity to take as many as 36 credits on their way to fulfilling Lower and Upper Division General Education requirements. While some of those credits will inevitably be courses that are also required for majors, those courses also meet the goals of General Education. This is a significant opportunity for students to make individual choices about the learning outcomes they want to develop.

The Office of General Education has recently re-imagined the General Education program in ways that inspire students to think individually about the kinds of skills and outcomes they want to accomplish through their General Education and Bachelor Degree Requirements course-taking: to be more active in creating their own learning.

This has been done by constructing new Gen Ed learning outcomes out of a unique interpretation of the University’s Learning Framework, which represents the big goals that the University wants all students to accomplish before they graduate: *Knowledge and Skills, Community, Transformation, and Impact*. The new Gen Ed learning outcomes are the intersections of those four big goals:

**Collaborate Effectively** (Community and Knowledge and Skills)

**Reason and Act Ethically** (Community and Transformation)

**Persist in Solving Complex Problems** (Knowledge and Skills and Impact)

**Respond Creatively** (Transformation and Impact).

When faculty apply for designations for General Education courses they are now being asked to select one of these outcomes that they believe students in their course will accomplish. When students select their General Education and Bachelor Degree Requirement courses, they will do so from lists organized by GE Learning Outcomes.

In this way, students can complete their Gen Ed requirements and at the same time decide how they want to accomplish the outcomes of Gen Ed. They can choose, for example, to complete one of their two required Humanities courses by taking one that will help them *respond creatively*, or they can meet their Science requirement, in part, by taking a course that will help them *reason and act ethically.* Academic advisers will be available to help students in making these decisions.

The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) makes decisions about which courses will carry which designations by reviewing the learning outcomes selected by the faculty member submitting the course for approval or renewal. Additionally, the GECC has, since 2014 been conducting learning outcome assessment in these courses. These reports can be seen here: <https://ugs.utah.edu/learning-outcomes-assessment/completedReports.php> This year the GECC will be receiving a report from the Mathematics Department on lower division courses that meet the QA requirement. We will also receive a report from the Writing and Rhetoric Studies Department on the lower division WR requirement.

The Inspired Teaching and Learning Portfolio group has the potential to touch every student and faculty member on campus. As such, we will continue to explore ways to enhance our connections with faculty and students, broaden our support and perfect our assessment practices.