

# CURRENT TRENDS IN LIBERAL EDUCATION

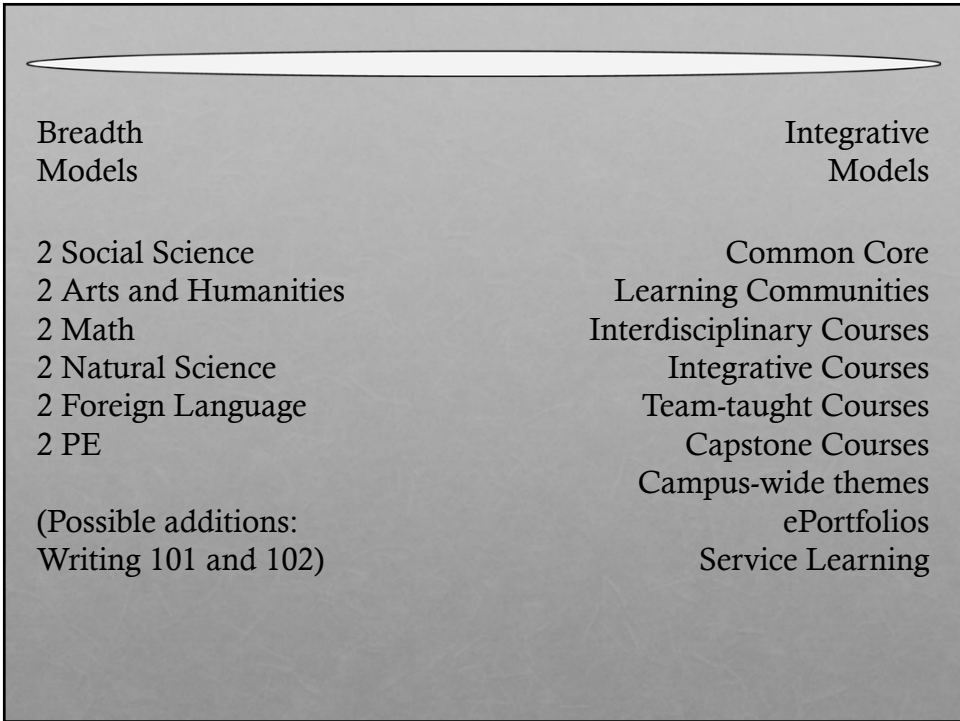
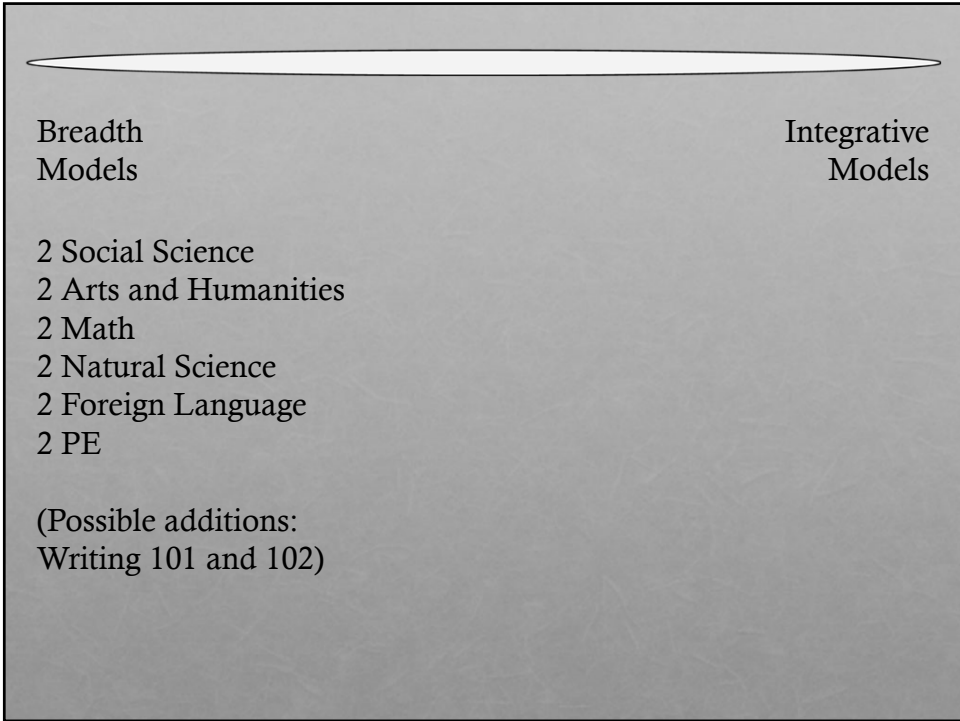
Paul Hanstedt  
Professor of English  
Roanoke College  
@curriculargeek

## PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER:

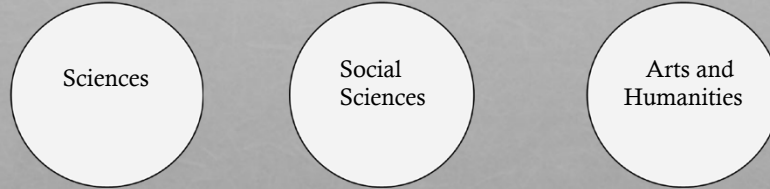
“A program for reforming general education should be designed around each institution’s character, the strengths and interests of its faculty, and the needs of its students.”

--Jerry G. Gaff

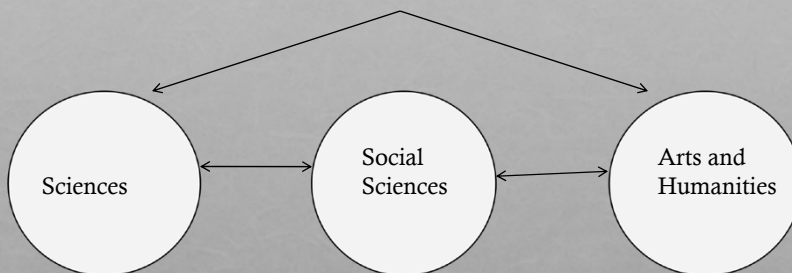
“Avoiding the Potholes: Strategies for Reforming General Education” 1980



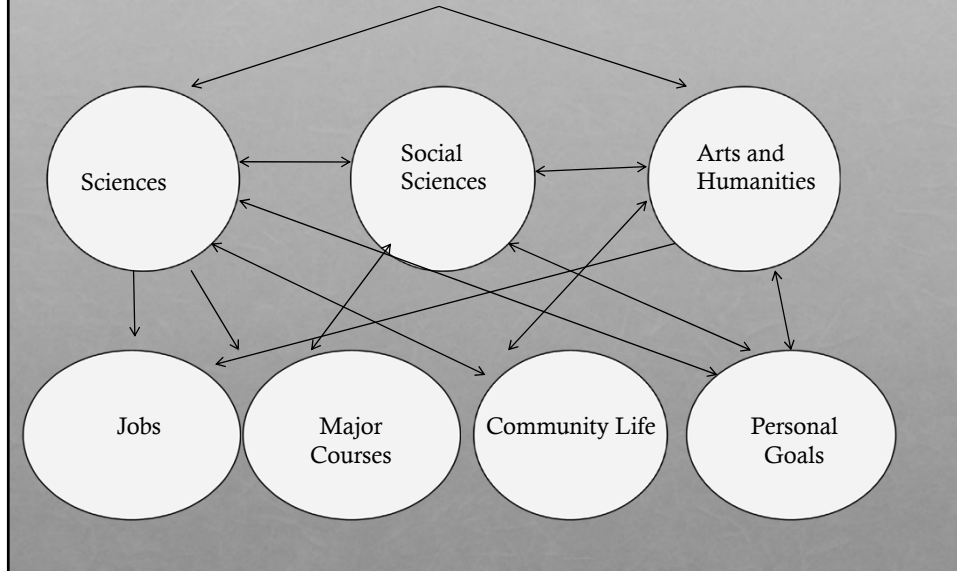
## General Education 1.0



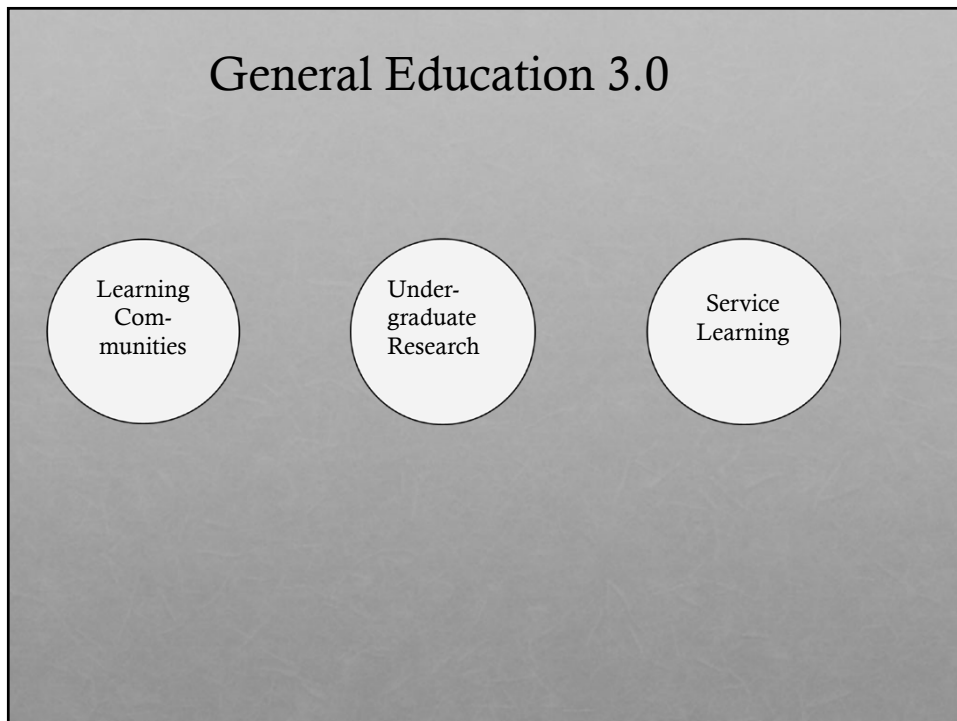
## General Education 2.0

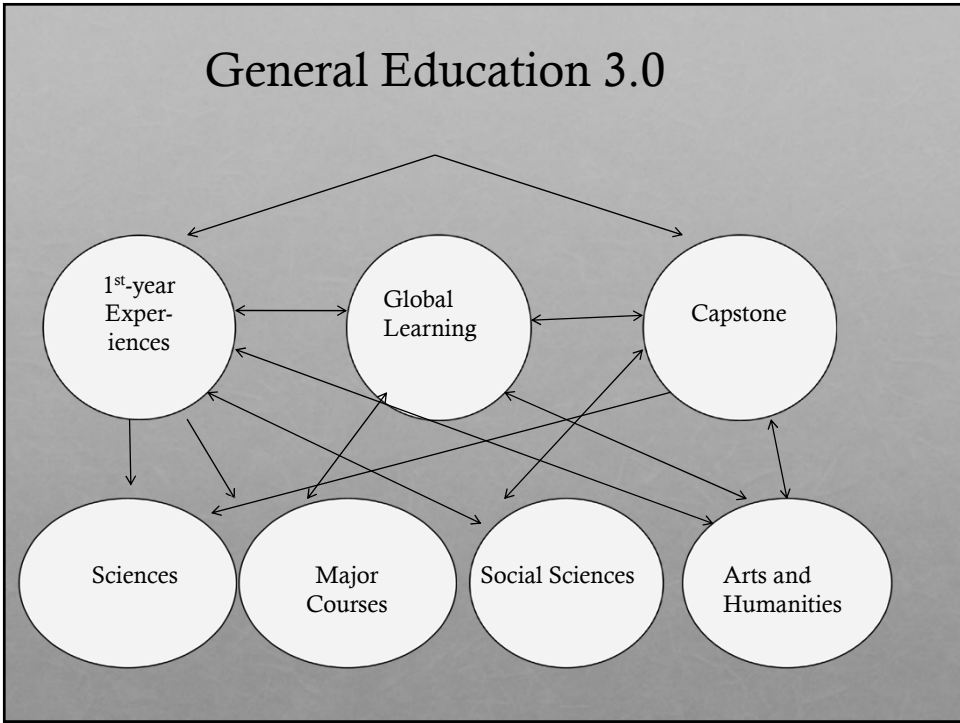
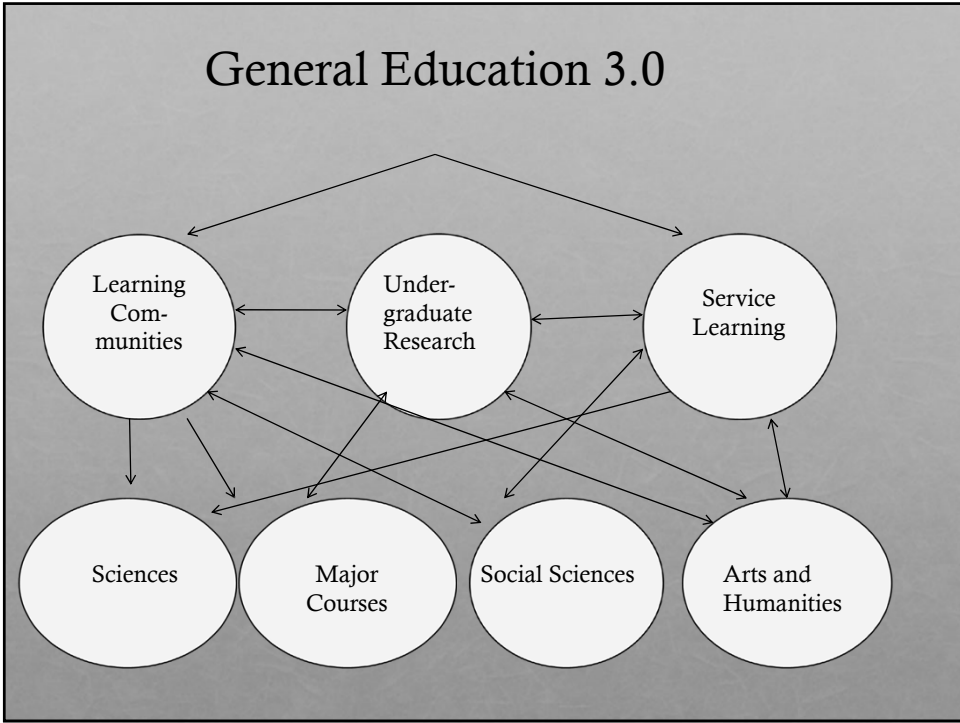


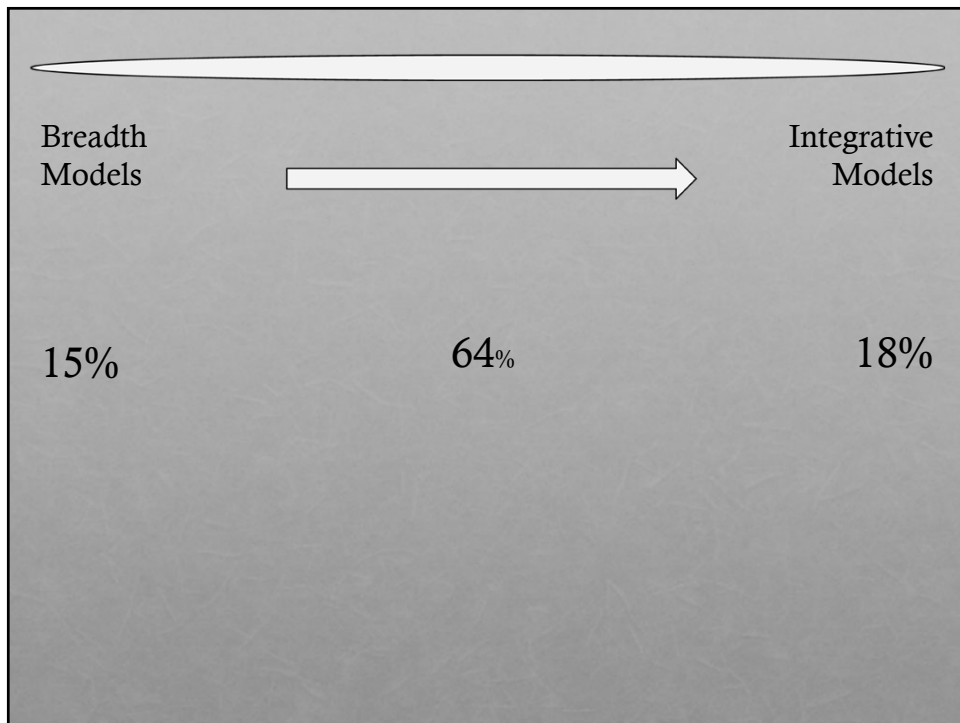
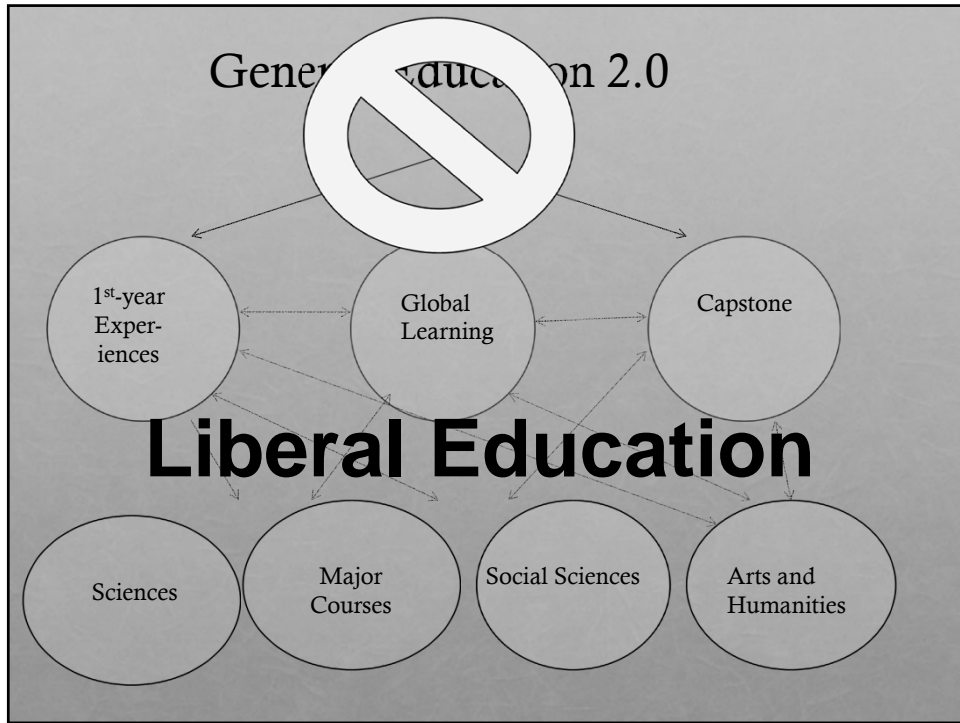
## General Education 2.0



## General Education 3.0







## REASONS FOR THIS SHIFT:

1. Making meaning in a complex world
2. The exponential growth of knowledge in our fields
3. A WICKED world requires WICKED competencies
  - Work
  - Citizenship

## MEANING-FULL EDUCATION



## GROWTH OF KNOWLEDGE IN OUR FIELDS

### English:

- Traditionally: The Canon—Chaucer, Dickens, etc.
- More Recently: Multiethnic/World Literatures
- And also: Critical Theory

## GROWTH OF KNOWLEDGE IN OUR FIELDS

### Psychology:

- Traditionally: Social, Clinical, Developmental, etc.
- More Recently: Evolutionary, Neuroscience, Socio-cultural, Positive
- And also: Industrial Organizational, Environmental, Sports . . .



## THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF THE WORKPLACE

- New challenges
- New technologies
- New markets/new clientele
- New regulations

## CITIZENSHIP

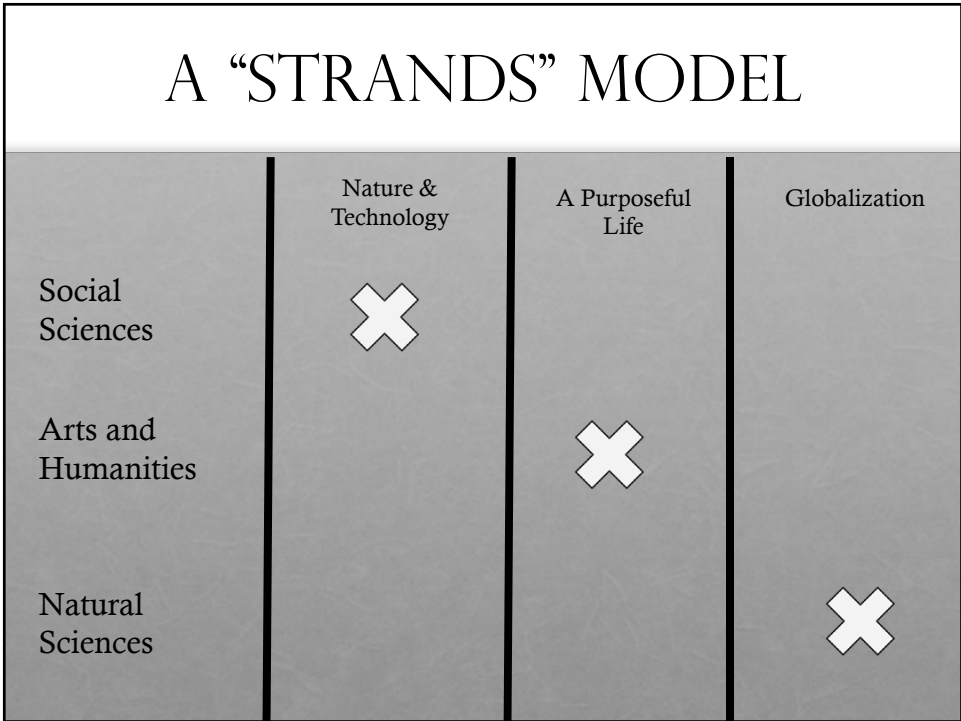
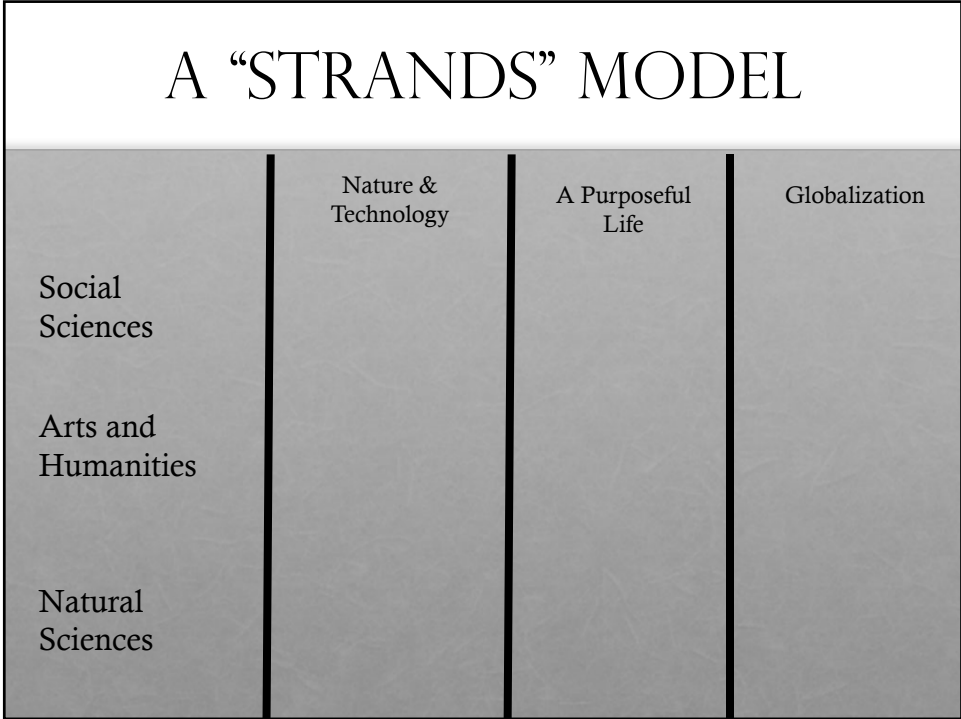
### Wicked Problems

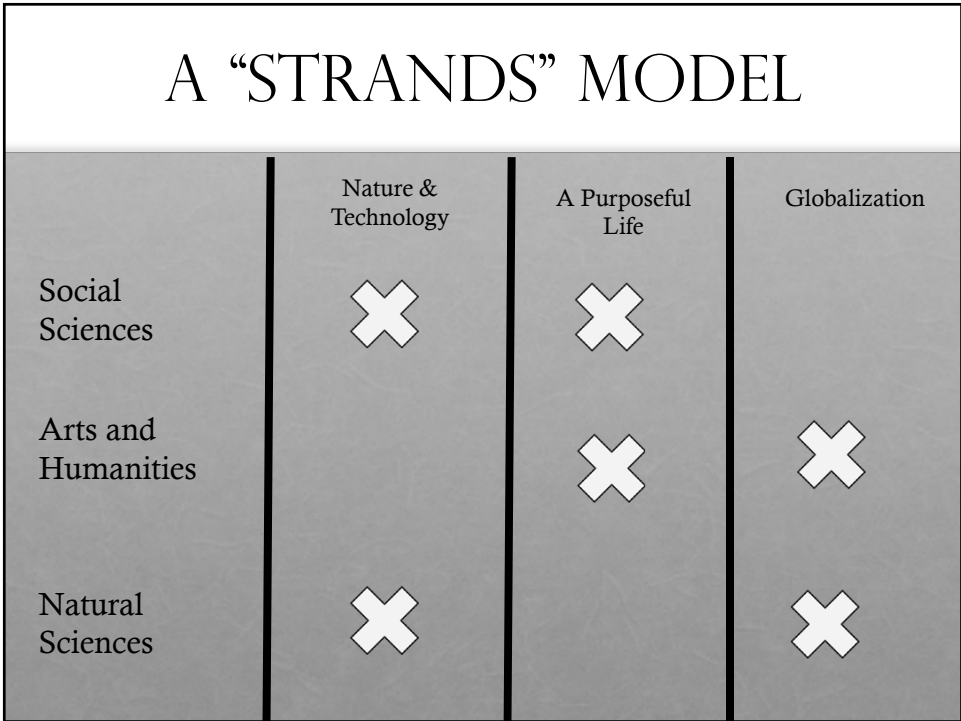
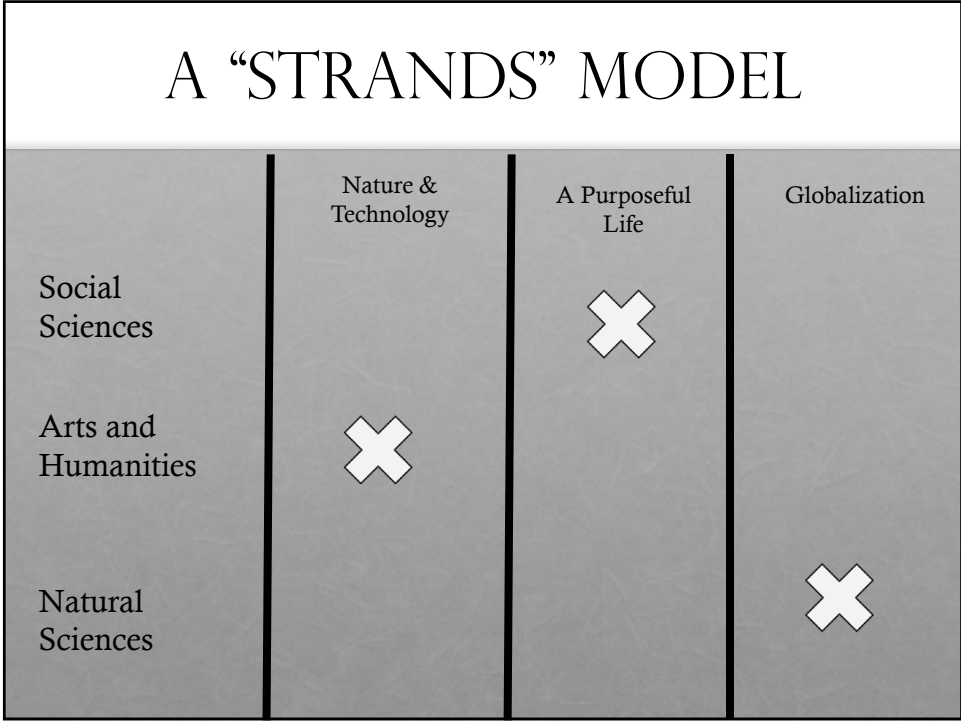
- FBI vs. iPhones
- Immigration
- Terrorism vs. civil liberties
- 2016 Election/Fake News/Current Events

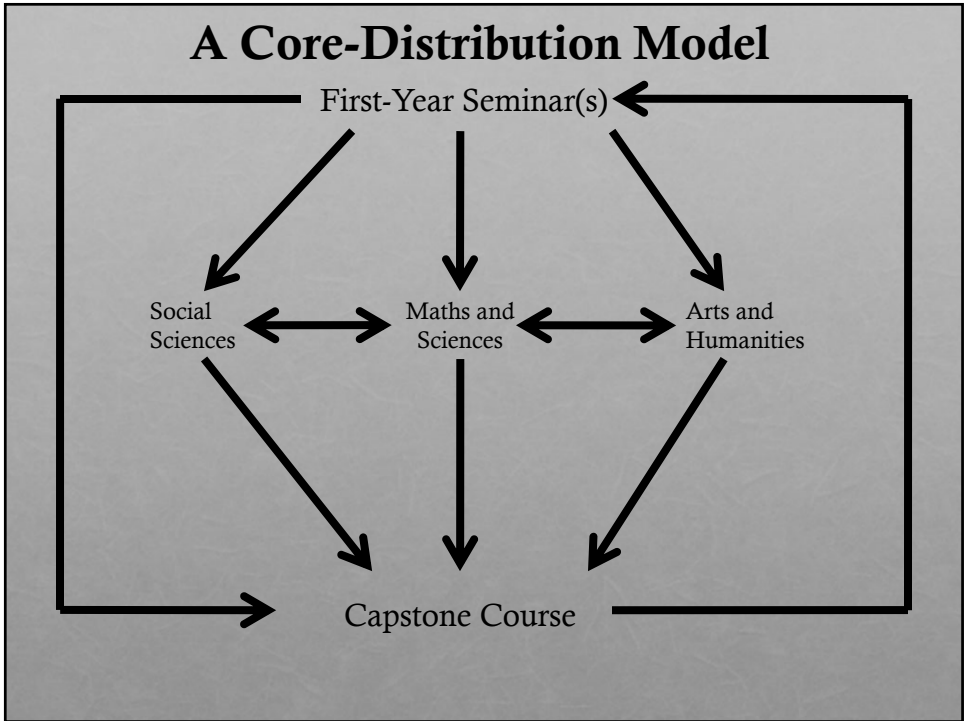
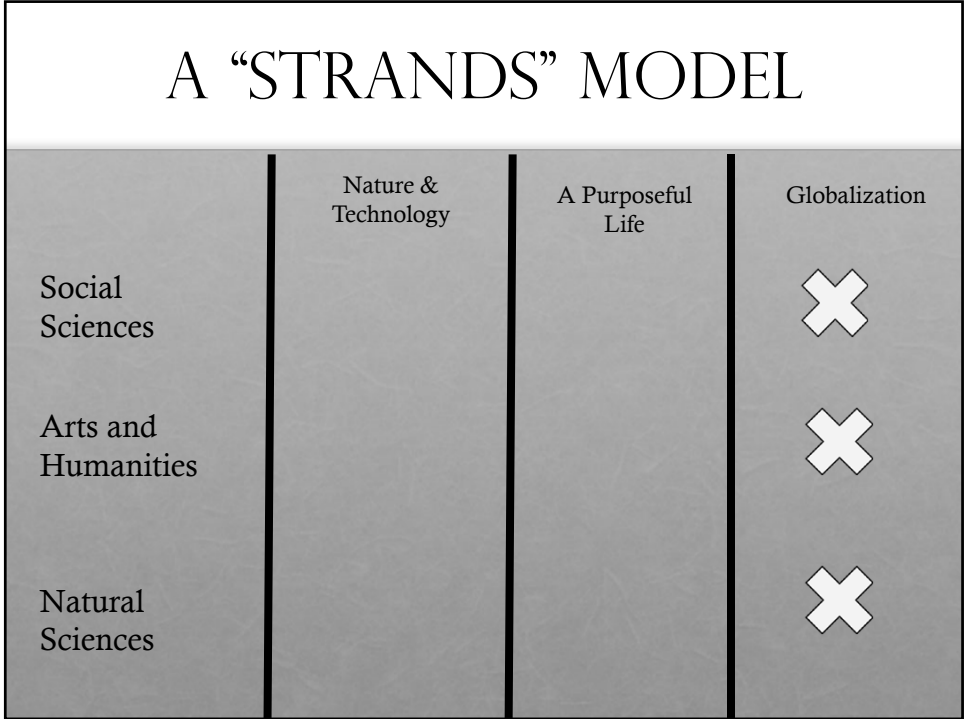
## A BRIEF PAUSE . . .

- Of the four rationales, which do you think is most important to your students?
  - Complexity of their lives
  - Exponential growth of knowledge in our fields
  - Workplace changes
  - Demands of Citizenship
- Questions? Thoughts?

SO WHAT DOES  
INTEGRATIVE LIBERAL  
EDUCATION LOOK LIKE?







## A CORE-ONLY MODEL

Term One	Term Two
The Contemporary Situation	The Modern World
The Roots of Civilization I	The Roots of Civilization II
Humanity in the Universe I	Humanity in the Universe II
Intercultural Studies I	Intercultural Studies II
Capstone I	Capstone II

## WAGNER COLLEGE

- Three learning communities (1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and ? years)
- Learning communities have experiential component
- Distribution requirements overlay learning communities

## WORCESTER POLY

- Initial Qualifying Project
  - Come from external sponsors
  - Interdisciplinary in nature
  - Students work in small groups
  - Often international
  - Counts for three courses
- Major Qualifying Project
  - Small groups
  - Within the major
  - Counts for three courses

## A GENTLE REMINDER:

- These models are merely descriptive. Every institution should begin this conversation by asking: “What kind of graduates do we wish to produce?”
- Once they’ve answered that question, the curriculum should be designed to meet those aspirations.

## THAT SAID . . .

- Take a moment and jot some notes:
  - What models as a whole do you think might work well at Western Oregon? Why do you think so?
  - What bits and pieces of various models interest you? Why?
  - How might some/parts of these models be adapted to fit the particular mission/student population/needs of WOU?

## A FEW KEY IDEAS:

1. GE spread throughout a college curriculum will lead to greater learning and a better chance of integrating the values of the program into life-long learning
2. Very few complex ideas/skills can be taught in a single shot
3. GE courses should not necessarily be “basic”
4. GE courses provide an opportunity for strong pedagogy
5. Spreading the responsibility for GE amongst a greater number of instructors will lead to a stronger program



Final questions or thoughts?

Thank you for your patience!

[hanstedt@roanoke.edu](mailto:hanstedt@roanoke.edu)

[@curriculargeek](#)