Building Connections

A Model for Liberal Learning at
the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

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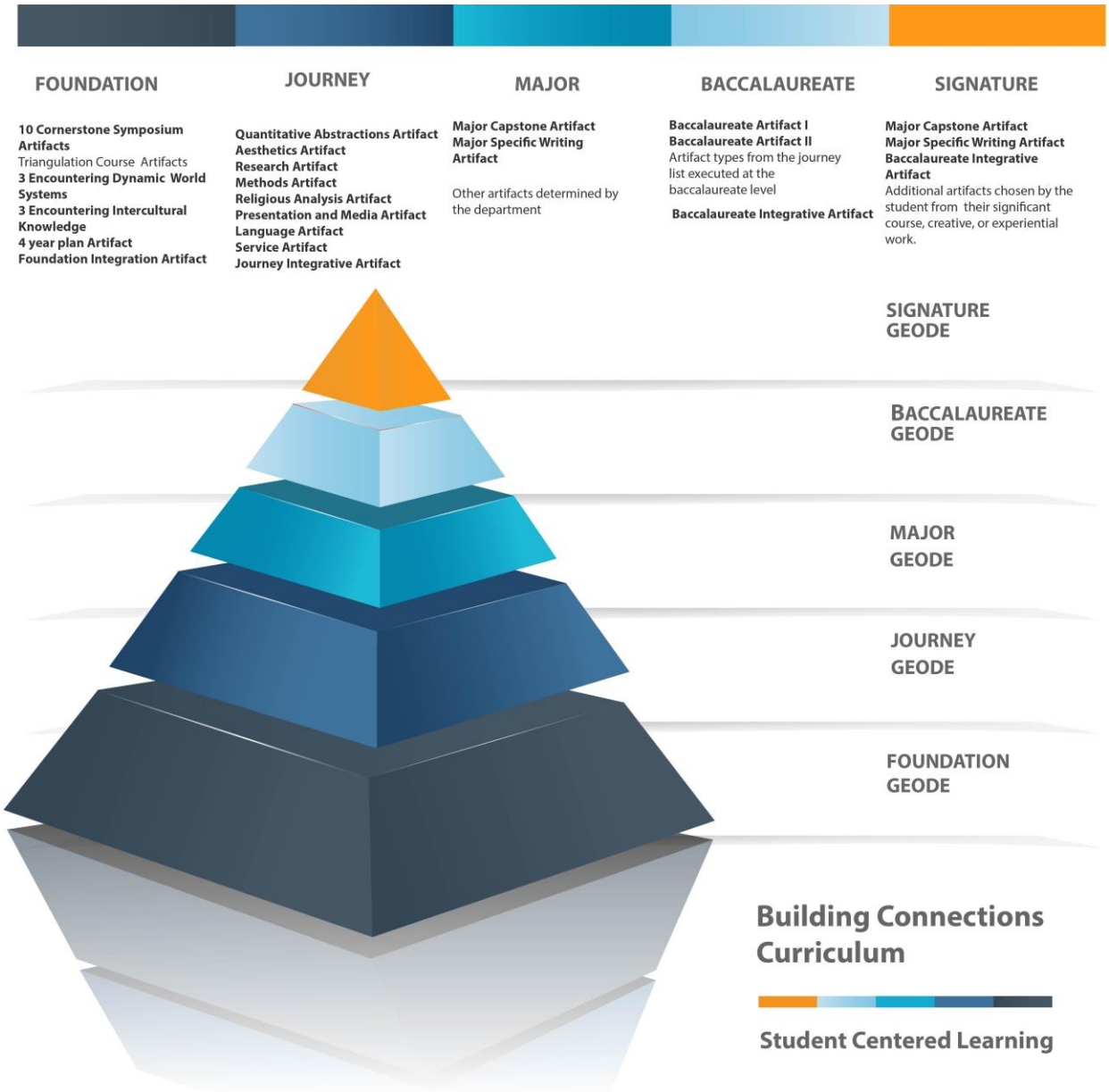
1. Executive Summary and Overarching Philosophy

Building Connections is a student-centered curriculum that highlights and supports interdisciplinary connections. It focuses first on the learning outcomes proposed by the CCVC and approved by the JFS: students satisfy the requirements of this curriculum by *demonstrating* that they have met the learning outcomes. How do students demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes? By creating *artifacts*, individual works that faculty can evaluate using established rubrics for those outcomes. How do students keep track of these artifacts? By placing them in a portfolio that is accessible by the student and the institution. How students complete their portfolios? By taking courses and consulting with faculty advisors to guide them through the four-year process.

This curriculum works by insisting that students think about what they are trying to achieve with an education from CSB|SJU. Student must build connections between each part of their education; in the service of this, students will also build connections between their education and their life.

1.1. Building Connections: a Visualization



1.2. Description of the Model

At the core of this model is the *portfolio*. The portfolio is a collection of student-created artifacts and is divided into five subsections called *geodes* (*general education outcome demonstration elements*). Each geode has an associated set of required artifacts, and each artifact is associated with several learning outcomes. Artifacts may take many forms, such as written works, presentations, performances, creative works, or collaborative projects. When the instructor who is supervising the artifact is satisfied that the artifact meets the required learning outcomes, the student is permitted to place it in the geode. Students' coursework supports the creation of the artifacts.

The CCVC learning outcomes are scaffolded into three levels. In our model, the *foundation level* includes the beginner outcomes, the *journey level* includes the intermediate outcomes, and the *baccalaureate level* includes the advanced outcomes. Each level of learning has a set of artifacts the student produces that demonstrate their comprehension of the learning outcomes. Artifacts are designed around the learning outcome categories and are distinct for each component of the portfolio. Once a student has completed all the levels of learning they complete a signature component that contains artifacts from throughout their work at CSB|SJU, including significant works from the student's major geode. The artifacts in this portfolio will speak to the breadth of each student's liberal learning experience and will provide an opportunity for others to see their work.

Building Connections becomes increasing self-directed for students as they progress through the learning outcomes, made possible through careful scaffolding and faculty support. In the first year, students will have four required courses that guide them through the creation of foundation level artifact and the construction of the Foundation Geode. In the second year, the students will choose the courses they want to take that will support their efforts to build the Journey and Major Geodes, and they will complete this process in the third year. In their final year, students will be working even more independently to construct the Baccalaureate Geode. The student's work will culminate in a metacognition paper that highlights the connection of the student's major and the Building Connections Curriculum to liberal learning and in the completion of their own Signature Geode.

Building Connections honors faculty autonomy, while encouraging increased collaboration among faculty members across disciplines. There is enormous flexibility for majors to connect their courses to the liberal learning curriculum, and faculty members will have freedom to adapt the required artifacts to the needs of their teaching. The only requirements this curriculum places on the major are that it include discipline-specific writing and a capstone project suitable to the major.

1.3. Building Connections Curriculum: Reflection on the Mission

The Building Connections Curriculum supports the *Academic Commitments to the Mission*. The curriculum incorporates significant work from all aspects of the student's college career that supports the holistic development of the student. The artifacts that students produce for the portfolio are varied and will support student's individual strengths and their developing skills while providing critical reflection work that addresses the connections between the learning outcomes of the curriculum, the liberal arts, their major, and the world. Our students will have an awareness of liberal learning and the ability to express the impacts of their education with attention to the common good and gender identity.

1.4. Building Connections Curriculum: Reflections on Making Connections

Making connections and student's awareness of those connections is the core component of this curriculum. The foundation level courses demonstrate to students how disciplines in the liberal arts are connected to their own lives and to the world around them. As students enter their second and third years, they are able to choose courses from across all disciplines to complete the required artifacts. In the final year, students will complete three artifacts at the baccalaureate level, one of which can come from their major. In all levels of the curriculum the students produce an integration artifact that requires them to reflect on the connections between liberal learning, their major and the experiential experiences the encounter.

2. Building Connections Incorporates the Process Principles for the Making Connections Curriculum Project

When we began work on the Building Connections Curriculum model, we took nothing as given except the learning outcomes developed by the CCVC and endorsed by the JFS. As much as possible we worked from the outcomes to the model: What do we want students to learn? How can students demonstrate that they have learned what we hope and expect they will? How can we help students demonstrate their learning? What curriculum structures will shepherd students through a process that leads them to demonstrate that learning? The entire process of constructing this model has been focused on student learning.

Throughout the process, we have made frequent reference to research on student learning and general education at the baccalaureate level. We have consulted colleagues at CSB|SJU and other institutions to broaden the points of view represented by the model. We have also studied general education curricula at other institutions to help us determine best practices. The sources we have used are included in the Bibliography (Section 8), which is annotated to indicate how our model made use of these sources.

The Building Connections Curriculum is almost completely new. It represents a new way of looking at general education at CSB|SJU for students, faculty, and staff alike. It not only moves away from the cafeteria model, but moves away from the course-based model as well. It takes seriously the idea that what students learn is more important than what courses they take and that the value of their academic work is not in grades, but in how it contributes to our dynamic world with its many diverse cultures, expanding the common good.

3. Building Connections Incorporates the Design Principles for Liberal Learning

The Model follows the prescribed set of Design Principles:

3.1. Make high-impact practices purposeful and integrative.

We have sought to include as many of the high-impact practices, set out by Dr. George Kuh, as possible. Many of these practices are integrated at different levels throughout our model to ensure students are getting multiple, repeated opportunities. Incorporating these practices throughout the curriculum ensures access for all students to experience these critical learning tools.

- *Learning communities:* We have structured the Foundation Level components of the curriculum as learning communities of 72 students, each comprising 4 sections of Cornerstone Symposium (18 students each), three sections of Encountering Dynamic World Systems and/or Encountering Intercultural Knowledge (24 students each), and two sections of Foundation Community (36 students from two CS sections each). We anticipate having about 13 such learning communities every year.

- *First-year experience*: We include a full-year course called Cornerstone Symposium that succeeds FYS and is to be integrated with a Foundation Community component. We expect that the Foundation Community will be integrated with the First Year Experience, which is under separate development.

- *Common intellectual experiences*: The Cornerstone Symposium will incorporate a significant amount of common content including the Catholic Benedictine tradition, gender identity, the common good, and the understanding of liberal learning. This content is intended to create a common experience that addresses learning goals in a consistent manner and that matches our mission. Significant space remains for instructors to incorporate their own content and assignments.

- *Writing-intensive courses*: All of the geodes require multiple written artifacts; we anticipate that most courses that support Building Connections will have a significant writing component. We also include oral and non-verbal communication in each of the geodes.

- *Collaborative projects*: Collaborative work is included in those geodes that include the Teamwork learning outcomes.

- *Undergraduate research* is not required by the model, but can be a useful contribution to a student's Portfolio, particularly at the baccalaureate level. We anticipate that undergraduate research will continue at its current level or higher in the new curriculum.

- *Diversity and global learning* are integral to the model. The journey-level geode includes requirements for artifacts demonstrating engagement with the diversity of the U.S. and with global cultures.

- *Service learning, community-based learning*: We are including the requirement of an experiential learning artifact in the portfolio that draws from service learning and/or community-based learning; students may use service learning/community-based learning apart from a course to accomplish this, but they must connect it to academic learning.

- *Internships*: Internships are not required in the model, but artifacts created as part of for-credit internships may be used to demonstrate learning outcomes, particularly at the baccalaureate level. We anticipate that the new model will encourage students to do internships at or above the current rate.

- *Capstone Projects*: There will continue to be a requirement for a capstone project in the major; however, there will be much greater freedom for programs to determine the nature of their capstone project. There are separate requirements for signature work in the Baccalaureate Geode; in most cases, the major capstone will fulfill much of this requirement.

3.2. Consider alternatives to the distribution model.

This model does not have an explicit distribution requirement. Rather, it requires students to produce artifacts drawing from a wide range of modes of thinking. We believe this will encourage students to choose courses from a variety of disciplines suitable for their own academic programs of study. This model is designed to be highly student driven and also gives faculty members more autonomy within their work and teaching. It encourages both students and faculty members to connect their work with multiple disciplines.

3.3. Follow the learning outcomes endorsed by the JFS.

The model is based on the learning outcomes approved by the JFA. We have made a few changes in terminology, made a minor revision to one of the outcomes, and added three outcomes: media literacy, Catholic Benedictine tradition, and gender identity. These changes are described more fully in Appendix D.

3.4. Focus on connections.

This model includes a strong focus on building connections. The foundation level begins a multidisciplinary thinking in the Cornerstone Symposium and the triangulation courses; both students and instructors make connections among varying approaches to subject matter. The artifacts required at the journey level draw on work done at the foundation level as well as encouraging students to connect work at this level. At the baccalaureate level, students are required to produce work that highlights thinking from across the dimensions of the curriculum

while continuing to draw on earlier work. Metacognitive artifacts in each geode require students to critically reflect on the connections they have built.

3.5. Consider equity in curricular design

Achieving equity in curriculum design is difficult in the abstract as students bring a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and resources to college. This model strives to achieve equity by respecting these differences and by making it possible for all students to demonstrate the learning outcomes for the curriculum in ways that draw on their own strengths to optimize their learning. In addition, the high-impact practices of the foundation level courses offer holistic interventions to all students in the first-year, while the 2-credit liberal learning seminars offer focused advising and academic support from faculty to students at the journey and baccalaureate levels.

3.6. Establish an assessment plan

The assessment of the Building Connections curriculum is facilitated by the existence of the e-portfolio. Artifacts in each geode demonstrate learning outcomes, as measured by common rubrics that can also be used for assessment. Privacy will be carefully preserved, as student names should be removed from specific artifacts that are used for program assessment, just as they are now in examples such as the FYS research essay assessment.

3.7. Re-brand general education at CSB|SJU

No significant re-branding of general education at CSB|SJU has occurred in well over thirty years. As mentioned above, the Building Connections Curriculum is a major departure from the current Common Curriculum and insists that students take ownership of their education. We believe that this model will differentiate CSB|SJU from competing liberal arts colleges and offer a cutting-edge education that will attract motivated students.

3.8. Ensure students can graduate in four years

We present several four-year programs for students in various majors below.

4. Presentation of the Model

This section presents the details of the Building Connections Curriculum Model. The first section describes how we have organized the learning outcomes; the second describes the learning levels that support scaffolding of the curriculum; the third section describes the artifacts that students must produce to demonstrate they have met the learning outcomes; section four describes the supporting coursework; finally, there are sample 4-year plans for selected majors in section five.

4.1. The Learning Outcomes

Building Connections is designed to flow from the approved learning outcomes for liberal learning at Saint John's University and the College of Saint Benedict. These outcomes are presented in five general categories or dimensions: Think (6 outcomes), Communicate (8), Dynamic World Systems (2), Intercultural Knowledge (2), and Common Good (2).

In this model, we retain the think and communicate dimensions as top level categories, but we combine the remaining dimensions into a group that we refer to as life dimensions, because these dimensions address the human experience of living in this world, while the think and communicate dimensions address student skills.

We have also made a few revisions to the outcomes, which are described in Appendix D.

4.2. The Learning Levels

The learning outcomes each have three different levels of mastery called the foundation level, the journey level, and the baccalaureate level. The learning outcomes created by the CCVC originally called these levels beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The artifacts that students will be creating are divided into these three levels as well, corresponding to the learning outcomes at those levels. This provides a scaffold for students as they progress through their college education. Students also get the opportunity to revisit skills and build upon prior knowledge, making vertical connections in their education.

4.2.1. The Foundation Level

The foundation artifacts will typically be produced in a student's first year. The foundation artifacts and the supporting courses for those artifacts are strongly structured to assist students in their transition into college as well as their transition into our curriculum.

4.2.2. The Journey Level

The journey artifacts will typically be produced in a student's second and third years. These artifacts give students the opportunity to explore their liberal education, encouraging students to take supporting courses that align with their

interests and goals. We envision a straightforward transition from many of our current courses into the supporting courses for this level. We also envision and encourage faculty to be creative with their courses at this level and hope that in the future many new courses arise in this level that bridge different disciplines.

4.2.3. The Baccalaureate Level

The baccalaureate artifacts will typically be produced in a student's final year. These artifacts will be similar to, but more advanced than the artifacts at the journey level, which will invite students to pursue a few of their interests at a much deeper level.

4.3. The Geodes

Students demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes at each level by creating specified artifacts and putting them into their portfolio. Since students will produce a substantial number of artifacts, we believe it will be helpful to organize the portfolio into sections that we refer to as *geodes*. Completion of geodes marks important milestones in student progress through the Building Connections Curriculum.

4.3.1. Foundation Geode

The Foundation Geode contains the artifacts that a student produces to demonstrate foundation level learning outcomes. The total number of artifacts is 14; all artifacts can be created in the required learning community courses that a student takes in their first year. Transfer students have a pathway that can be completed in one semester.

Foundation Artifacts Supported by Cornerstone Symposium (two-semester course sequence)

Writing Artifacts

A selection of short written works in multiple genres comprises a large portion of the artifacts. Students must include four to five essays comprising 3500-5000 words in all. Of these, one essay must be at least 1250 words and draw on insights from the Catholic Benedictine tradition and the student's own faith tradition, and a second essay of at least 1250 words must include accurate and consistent citation of sources. The essays demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Communicate: written communication, reading. For the research essay, information literacy
- Common Good: both (for the Catholic Benedictine tradition essay)

Collaborative Artifact

A project demonstrating the ability to collaborate with classmates. The topic and mode of creation are to be determined by individual faculty. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Communicate: teamwork, discussion

Presentation Artifact

A group or solo presentation (typically recorded) that includes written elements, such as a script or an outline. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Communicate: oral and nonverbal, media literacy

Foundation Artifacts Supported by the Foundation Triangulation: Encountering Dynamic World Systems Course

Review Artifact
A review on a scientific investigation done by an expert. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: inquiry and analysis

Quantitative Analysis Artifact
A quantitative analysis of some aspect of a large data set. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: abstract modeling
- Communicate: quantitative literacy

Multidisciplinary Report Artifact
A written report synthesizing the multidisciplinary views on the topic. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence and methods
- Dynamic World Systems: both

Foundation Artifacts Supported by the Foundation Triangulation: Encountering Intercultural Knowledge Course

Reflection Artifact
A written report/reflection based on discussion of a performance, artifact, image, or exhibit. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcome:

- Communicate: nonverbal literacy

Identity Artifact
A critical reflection on the individual's cultural identity and the factors (including gender) that shape their self-conception, culture, and worldview. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Intercultural Knowledge: cultural self-awareness
- Gender identity

Multiple Perspectives Artifact
A presentation or paper that presents multiple perspectives on the topic of the Encountering Intercultural Knowledge course, demonstrating the following learning outcomes:

- Think: multiple perspectives

- Communicate: oral and nonverbal communication

Interactions Artifact

A project that incorporates the methods, and evidence used by experts to either a.) Answer a specific question or b.) Design a project that uses interactions among groups as a starting point. The artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: evaluation
- Intercultural Knowledge: interactions among groups

Foundation Artifacts Supported by the Foundation Seminar Course

Metacognition Artifact

A critical reflection on how all the artifacts placed in this geode enable the student to meet the foundation level learning outcomes. This artifact reflects on all foundation level outcomes and demonstrates metacognition.

A Four-Year Plan

Additional Considerations about the Foundation Geode

While we anticipate that a First-Year Experience component will be part of the required coursework, that aspect of the curriculum is under separate development. A modest number of artifacts, such as a 4-year plan, could be completed in an additional FYE/FYX course.

4.3.2. Journey Geode

The Journey Geode contains the artifacts that a student produces to demonstrate journey level learning outcomes. Students begin work on this geode when they have completed most of the work for the Foundation Geode, typically in the second and third year of study. This geode requires the following nine artifacts; all learning outcomes are at the journey level.

Journey Artifact 1: Quantitative Abstraction

A work demonstrating ability to use quantitative methods to analyze large data sets, to compare the analysis to an appropriate abstract model, and to interpret the results of that analysis demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, inquiry & analysis, abstract modeling
- Communicate: quantitative literacy, written communication, oral and nonverbal communication
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

The artifact will include both a written report suitable for the project and an oral presentation of the student's findings.

Journey Artifact 2: Aesthetics

A work demonstrating the ability to interpret images, performances, or other aesthetic artifacts and to analyze how they use various media to communicate with their audience

OR

A creative work or body of works along with a critical reflection paper that describes how the creative process draws on appropriate media and the student's learning outside the process

Either option will demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: evaluation, multiple perspectives
- Communicate: nonverbal literacy, media literacy, written communication, oral and nonverbal communication (required for the creative option only)
- Life dimensions: at least two learning outcomes

Journey Artifact 3: Research

A work demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate and engage with appropriate scholarship, synthesizing ideas from multiple sources in the service of a research question.

- Think: evidence & methods, inquiry & analysis, multiple perspectives
- Communicate: written communication, information literacy, reading

- Life dimensions: at least two learning outcomes

Journey Artifact 4: Methods

A work demonstrating ability to conduct an experiment or study, this artifact should also include interpretation and analysis of the implications of the results, demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, inquiry & analysis, evaluation
- Communicate: written communication, information literacy, quantitative literacy
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

Journey Artifact 5: Religious Analysis

A work demonstrating the ability to bring a religious perspective to the analysis of a problem or issue and to engage other perspectives, demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, multiple perspectives;
- Communicate: reading, information literacy
- Life dimensions: at least two outcomes

Journey Artifact 6: Presentation and Media

A presentation of a work by the student, appropriately contextualized and tailored for a given audience, including an appropriate use of media to assist in the delivery of the message, accompanied by a critical reflection on the effectiveness of the presentation and its use of media, demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: metacognition
- Communicate: written communication, oral and nonverbal communication, teamwork, media literacy
- Life dimensions: at least two outcomes

World Language Artifact

A work demonstrating the ability to use and analyze sources in a language other than English at the required world language level or above. If both the instructor and student are fluent, the work may be primarily or even exclusively in the other language. If the instructor is not fluent in the language, the student will be required to provide outside evidence that their use of the language is appropriate. This work may be incorporated into one of the above journey artifacts with the instructor's prior permission.

- Think: multiple perspectives, others as appropriate

- Communicate: written communication
- Life dimensions: at least two outcomes including at least one intercultural knowledge outcome.

Service and Community-Based Learning Artifact

A report or other appropriate work arising from a service learning project or experiential learning program (such as clinical work, student-teaching experience, an internship, or a community-based research project), which will typically focus on intercultural perspectives and/or interactions among groups; the project or program may be either curricular or co-curricular, but the artifact will be evaluated by a faculty member.

- Think: evaluation, multiple perspectives
- Communicate: written communication, teamwork
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

Journey Metacognition Artifact

A critical reflection on how the artifacts placed in this geode enable the student to meet the journey level learning outcomes. This artifact reflects on all journey level outcomes and demonstrates metacognition.

Additional Considerations about the Journey Geode

- Each of the artifacts must demonstrate the specified learning outcomes including the minimum life dimension outcomes; when appropriate, the artifacts should demonstrate three or even more life dimension outcomes. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the artifacts in this geode demonstrate all eight life-dimension outcomes.
- At least three of the artifacts must be primarily in written form and be evaluated for demonstration of the written communication outcome.
- At least two of the artifacts must include a substantial oral or nonverbal communication component to demonstrate the oral and nonverbal communication learning outcome
- Collectively, the artifacts must draw on modes of analysis from at least four different disciplines

4.3.3. Baccalaureate Geode

The Baccalaureate Geode contains the artifacts that a student produces to demonstrate baccalaureate level learning outcomes. Students begin work on this geode when they have completed most of the work for the Journey Geode, typically in the fourth year of study. Together, the artifacts for this geode must demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- Think: multiple perspectives, metacognition, and at least two more learning outcomes at the baccalaureate level
- Communicate: written communication, oral and nonverbal communication, reading, and at least three more learning outcomes at the baccalaureate level
- Life dimensions: at least four learning outcomes at the baccalaureate level, including at least one common good outcome and at least one outcome with an emphasis on ethics.

This geode requires at least *two* of the following six artifacts; all learning outcomes are at the baccalaureate level. With the instructor's permission, the student may use the corresponding journey artifact as a basis for either of these artifacts. Majors may incorporate one of these artifacts. However, either the two baccalaureate artifacts must be grounded in different disciplines or at least one of them must be multidisciplinary.

Baccalaureate Artifact 1: Quantitative Abstraction

A work demonstrating ability to construct an abstract model of a system, to use quantitative methods to analyze sets of data from that system, to compare the analysis to the abstract model, and to interpret the results of that analysis demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, inquiry & analysis, abstract modeling
- Communicate: quantitative literacy, written communication, oral and nonverbal communication
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

The artifact will include both a written report suitable for the project and an oral presentation of the student's findings.

Baccalaureate Artifact 2: Aesthetics

A work demonstrating the ability to interpret images, performances, or other aesthetic artifacts and to analyze how they use various media to communicate with their audience drawing on appropriate methods of critical analysis

OR

A significant creative work or body of works along with a critical reflection paper that describes how the creative process draws on appropriate media and the student's learning outside the process

Either option will demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: evaluation, multiple perspectives
- Communicate: nonverbal literacy, media literacy, written communication, oral and nonverbal communication (required for the creative option only)
- Life dimensions: at least two learning outcomes

Baccalaureate Artifact 3: Research

Baccalaureate Artifact 4: Methods

A work demonstrating ability to design and conduct an experiment or study, including interpretation and analysis of the implications of the results and demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, inquiry & analysis, evaluation
- Communicate: written communication, information literacy, quantitative literacy
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

Baccalaureate Artifact 5: Religious Analysis

A work demonstrating the ability to apply and evaluate religious perspectives to the analysis of a problem or issue and to evaluate and engage other perspectives, demonstrating the following outcomes:

- Think: evidence & methods, multiple perspectives;
- Communicate: reading, information literacy
- Life dimensions: at least two outcomes

Baccalaureate Artifact 6: Presentation and Media

A presentation of the work of the student appropriately contextualized and tailored for a given audience. Included should be an appropriate use of media to assist in the delivery of the message. Part of the artifact is a critical reflection of the presentation and media use and its effectiveness. This artifact should demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Think: metacognition
- Communicate: written communication, oral and nonverbal communication, teamwork, media literacy
- Life dimensions: at least one learning outcome

Baccalaureate Integrative Artifact

In addition to the above six artifacts, a baccalaureate integrative artifact is required: an essay of 1000-2000 words on a topic of the student's choice that integrates critical thinking drawn from across the student's academic experience at CSB|SJU including both the Building Connections Curriculum and the major and demonstrating metacognition.

4.3.4. Major Geode

The portfolio contains a geode for each major a student completes; there may also be geodes for minors. Each program decides the contents of its geode. The Building Connections Curriculum makes only the following two requirements of a major geode:

- A major geode must contain discipline-specific writing evaluated for the written communication outcome either at the journey level or at the baccalaureate level
- A major geode must contain a capstone project or work. The nature of the capstone is in the purview of the program, but it must demonstrate some of the baccalaureate level think and communicate outcomes. If it demonstrates the baccalaureate level written communication outcome, it may also serve as the discipline-specific writing artifact; a program may, however, prefer to keep the two artifacts separate. Programs are encouraged to design the capstone so that it also serves as one of the baccalaureate artifacts.

4.3.5. Signature Geode

The Signature Geode is the student's own geode, and it is the one they will take with them when they graduate. They should place the artifacts they are most proud of in this geode. Typically, they will include the artifacts from the Baccalaureate Geode and the Major Geode, but they may include or exclude any artifacts from their portfolio that they wish.

4.4. Coursework Supporting the Curriculum

4.4.1. Foundation Level Courses

Students complete the Foundation Geode by creating the needed artifacts in the learning community courses below.

Students are placed in a learning community of approximately 72 students for their first year of college. Each of the yearlong learning communities is comprised of students from the following courses: four sections of Cornerstone Symposium (18 students per section), and three sections of Triangulations courses (24 students). We anticipate a third course to be part of the learning community that will comprise the First-Year Experience component; this component is being studied and designed in a separate process. Students complete the Foundation Geode by creating the needed artifacts in the learning community courses. Approximately 13 learning communities will be formed each year, including two honors learning communities.

Cornerstone Symposium

Cornerstone Symposium is a required full-year course (four credits each semester) taken during the first year. In the fall semester, students work across other sections and read a series of common texts, including excerpts from *The Rule of Saint Benedict* and other texts determined in advance by each set of four Cornerstone Symposium 100/101 faculty members leading the learning community. Students develop and improve their ability to read carefully and think critically about what they read, learn to write more effectively, increase their information literacy as they conduct basic library searches, and develop the discussion and communication skills necessary for successful college work. These skills are demonstrated in the creation of artifacts for the foundation geode.

The spring semester offers considerably more independence in disciplinary content and assignments, although students continue to develop the same intellectual skills based on the learning outcomes of the Foundation Geode. Longer projects are completed in the spring, which incorporate research, media literacy and oral presentation skills. Through a wide variety of assignments and projects, students actively shape their development as reader, thinker, listener, writer, speaker, and researcher. The Cornerstone Symposium professor serves as faculty advisor for each student in the section. Students stay in the same learning community both semesters and typically stay in the same Cornerstone Symposium section. These features help develop a sense of community and continuity.

This course will be offered for A-F grading only. Sections will include honors as well as a one-semester transfer section. Transfer students are encouraged to save their work created in prior college courses for potential revision and inclusion as one artifact in their Foundation Geode. Note: the transfer course is not available for students whose transferred courses that were completed prior to high school graduation.

Foundation Triangulation: Encountering Dynamic World Systems

This course will be taught by a team comprised of faculty from three disciplines united around a dynamic world systems theme. Every Encountering Dynamic World Systems triangulation course will include two social and/or natural science disciplines and one humanities or creative (fine arts or creative writing) discipline. Faculty will teach in a learning community that includes three sections of the triangulation course. By rotating teaching assignments across the three sections every five weeks, each faculty member will teach in all sections during the semester.

Foundation Triangulation: Encountering Intercultural Knowledge

This course will be taught by a team comprised of faculty from three disciplines united around an intercultural knowledge theme. Every Encountering Intercultural Knowledge triangulation course will include a creative discipline (fine arts or creative writing), a social or natural science, and a humanities discipline. Faculty will teach in a learning community that includes three sections of the triangulation course. By rotating teaching assignments across the three sections every five weeks, each faculty member will teach in all sections during the semester.

Foundation Seminar

This course will be determined by the First-Year Experience project.

4.4.2. Journey Level Coursework

Students complete the Journey Geode by submitting the needed artifacts, and so the only required courses are the Journey Seminar courses, which are described later in this section.

Coursework supporting the six journey artifacts

Most students at the journey level are not ready to complete journey artifacts independently, so we provide three alternatives for doing this work. Each of the six journey artifacts must be grounded in at least 4 credits of course work for a total of 24 credits.

- Students may complete up to three of the journey artifacts through a 4-credit independent learning projects designed to complete the selected artifact.
- Majors and minors are encouraged include work that completes up to two of the journey artifacts.
- Students may complete any of the journey artifacts regular courses that include the selected artifact. We expect that most of these courses will be existing courses that the program designates to produce a specified artifact. In the case of the Aesthetics Journey Artifact, programs that offer studio or performance are courses should provide support for students to produce this artifact in the last course of a 4-credit sequence.

Coursework supporting the world language artifact

The language courses that are at the required level for graduation should include completion of this artifact as part of the course requirements. Students who satisfy the world language requirement before enrolling or at another institution may complete the artifact in the next level language course or by a 2-credit independent learning project. Students may also seek permission to combine this artifact with a journey artifact in a course taught by an instructor fluent in the student's non-English language. Student's whose primary language is a language not taught at CSB|SJU will be allowed to make special arrangements to complete this artifact.

Coursework supporting the service learning and community-based learning artifact

Students may complete this artifact by taking a regular course that incorporates service learning or other community-based experiential learning or by completing a 1-credit independent learning project course designed to complete this artifact.

Journey Seminar

Students will take two 0-credit to 2-credit journey seminar courses, generally in the fall of their second year and in the spring of their third year. This course will be taught by faculty with assistance from other members of the CSB|SJU community, including members of the monastic communities, academic advising staff, library staff, career services staff, experiential learning staff, as well as others.

The first journey seminar course, *Journey Seminar 1*, will serve to advise students in the planning and completion of their journey geode, which will include reviewing and refining four-year academic plans, discussions and readings about the liberal arts, reviewing and refining four-year service plans, and conversations about their academic interests. Students will also begin preparing plans for life after graduation.

The second journey seminar course, *Journey Seminar 2*, will guide students in completing the journey geode as well as preparing them for the baccalaureate geode. This course includes the required journey metacognition artifact. Students will work with faculty assistance on a critical reflection paper about their own journey level learning and their work in the major. The reflection will explain how the pieces of the student's education come together to make a strong liberal arts education. The students will also work with faculty members as they decide what artifacts they want to complete for their baccalaureate geode. Students will continue to prepare for life after graduation.

4.4.3. Baccalaureate Level Coursework

At the baccalaureate level, students should take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning. The only course requirement for work at this level is the Baccalaureate Seminar.

Coursework supporting the baccalaureate artifacts

Many, if not most, majors will include coursework that produces one of the baccalaureate artifacts. Programs are encouraged to provide other 300-level courses for non-majors that produce a baccalaureate artifact. Students may also use a 4-credit independent learning project to complete a baccalaureate artifact. A student who has a particularly strong integrative project in mind may request permission to combine the two baccalaureate artifacts into a single artifact based in a 4-credit independent learning project or honors thesis.

Baccalaureate Seminar

Students will take one 0-credit to 2-credit baccalaureate seminar course, generally in their final term. This course will be taught by faculty with assistance from other members of the CSB|SJU community, including members of the monastic communities, academic advising staff, library staff, career services staff, experiential learning staff, as well as others. This course will serve as a culmination of the student's baccalaureate geode. This course includes the required baccalaureate metacognition artifact. Students will work with faculty assistance on a critical reflection paper about their own foundation, journey, and baccalaureate education and major work. The reflection will explore how the pieces of the student's education come together to make a strong liberal arts education. Students will also work with faculty to develop lifelong learning goals as well as lifelong service goals.

4.5. Student Plans

4.5.1. Plans for 4-Year Students in Various Majors

The following plans were constructed in consultation with faculty members from the various departments. These are examples that are included to show the feasibility of our model with different majors. We are not experts on all of the courses on campus and did our best to fill in the courses that we think would support the construction of the different artifacts. We also constructed each plan assuming the student would not be bringing in any previous work.

A pre-med student in a biology major

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering IK	Foundation	4	Encountering DWS	Foundation	4
BIOL 101	Major	4	BIOL 201	Major	4
CHEM 125	Major	4	CHEM 250	Major	4
CHEM 201	Major	1	CHEM 202	Major	1
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		18

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
CHEM 251	Major	4	CHEM 255	Methods/DWS	4
CHEM 203	Major	1	CHEM 205	Major	1
PHYS 105	Major	4	PHYS 106	Major	4
MATH 124	QuantAbst/DWS	4	MATH 119	Major	4
HISP 111	Language	4	HISP 112	Language	4
Journey Seminar	Journey	1			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		17

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
BIOL 317	Major	4	BIOL 323	Major	4
BIOL 202	Major	4	SOCI 111	Major	4
PSYC 111	Major	4	COMM 103	MediaPres/CG	4
HISP 211	Language	4	MUSC 150	Aesthetics/IK	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		16

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
PCST 111	Research/IK, CBT	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
BIOL 3xx	Major	4	BIOL 3xx	BaccMethods/DWS	4
BIOL 3xx	Major	4	BIOL 3xx	Major	4
THEO 329E	Religion/CG, Gender	4	BIOL Capstone	Major	2
			HIST 321	BaccResearch/IK	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		16

A global business major

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
ACFN 111	Major	4	ECON 111	Major	4
CHIN 111	Lang	4	MATH 118	QuantAbst/DWS	4
Total Credits		17	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
GBUS 210	Major	4	GBUS 220	Major	4
GBUS 230	Major	4	GBUS 240	Major	4
CHIN 112	Lang	4	CHIN 211	Lang	4
Journey Seminar	Journey	2	HIST 115	Research/IK	4
Total Credits		14	Total Credits		16

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
GBUS 321	MediaPres/DWS	4	GBUS 361	Major	4
GBUS 341	Major	4	GBUS 300	Major	4
CHIN 311		4	Journey Seminar	Journey	2
JAPN 111		4	ART 240F	Aesthetics/IK	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		14

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
JAPN 112		4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
GBUS 339	Major	4	GBUS 397	Major	4
THEO 329E	Religion/CG, Gender	4	GBUS 381	BaccResearch/DWS	4
SOCI 250	Methods/CG, CBT	4	ART 309D	BaccAesthetics/IK	4
			JAPN 211		4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		18

An elementary education major with a math endorsement

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
EDUC 111	Major	4	CHEM 125	Methods/DWS	4
EDUC 150	Major	2	MATH 121	Major	4
Total Credits		15	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
EDUC 215	Major	4	EDUC 318	MediaPres/IK	4
EDUC 310	Major	4	EDUC 313	Major	1
EDUC 212	Major	2	MATH 180	QuantAbst/DWS	4
EDUC 203	Major	4	EDUC 305	Major	1
EDUC 315	Major	2	HISP 111	Language	4
EDUC 151	Major	2	Journey Seminar	Journey	2
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		16

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
EDUC 323	Major	4	EDUC 334	Major	4
EDUC 325	Major	4	EDUC 347	Research/CBT	4
EDUC 333	Major	2	HISP 211	Language	4
HISP 112	Language	4	MATH 119	Major	4
THEO 365	Religion/CG, IK	4	Journey Seminar	Journey	2
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		18

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	1	EDUC 360	Service	16
MATH 124	QuantAbst/DWS	4		BaccMediaPres/CBT	
EDUC 359	Major	1			
EDUC 390	BaccResearch/CG	4			
EDUC 358	Major	4			
ART 108	Aesthetics/IK	4			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		16

A nursing major

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	0	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
BIOL 101	Major	4	BIOL 212	Major	4
PSYC 111	Major	4	CHEM 125	Methods/DWS	4
NRSG 220	Major	2			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
NUTR 125[1]	Major	4	BIOL 326	Major	4
BIOL 325	Major	4	NRSG 201	Major	6
PSYC 360	Major	4	NRSG 211	Major	2
NRSG 240	Major	2	NRSG 255	Major	2
Journey Seminar	Journey	0	MATH 124	QuantAbs/DWS	4
HISP 111	Language	4			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		18

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
NRSG 301	Major	8	NRSG 302	Major	8
NRSG 341	Major	2	NRSG 342	Major	2
NRSG 311	Major	4	THEO 329E	Religion/CG, gender	4
HISP 112	Language	4	Journey Seminar	Journey	0
			HISP 211	Language	4
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		18

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
ETHS 390A	Research/CG, CBT	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
NRSG 303	PresMedia/IK	8	NRSG 395	Service	5
NRSG 343	Major	2	NRSG 356	BaccResearch/CG	4
NRSG 355	BaccMethods/CG, DWS	2			
MUSC 152	Aesthetics/IK	2			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		11

A chemistry major

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering IK	Foundation	4	Encountering DWS	Foundation	4
CHEM 125	Major	4	CHEM 250	Major	4
CHEM 201	Major	1	CHEM 202	Major	1
Total Credits		14	Total Credits		14

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
CHEM 251	Major	4	CHEM 315	Major	4
CHEM 203	Major	1	CHEM 255	Major	4
CHEM 349	Major	1	CHEM 205	Major	1
MATH 119	Major	4	MATH 120	Major	4
Journey Seminar	Journey	2	PHYS 106	Major	4
PHYS 105	Methods/DWS	4			
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		17

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
CHEM 318	Major	4	CHEM 305	Major	4
			Journey Seminar		2
FREN 111	Language	4	FREN 112	Language	4
HIST 333	Research/Gender	4	ART 250	Aesthetics/IK	4
CSCI 130	QuantAbst/DWS	4	THEO 308	Religion/CG	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		18

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
COMM 102	PresMedia/CBT	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
CHEM 348A	Major	2	CHEM 360	Major	2
CHEM 355	Major	2	CHEM 354	Major	2
FREN 211	Language	4	ART 309A	BaccAesthetics/IK	4
PHIL 321	Research/CG	4	COMM 103	BaccPresMedia/CBT	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		14

A political science major

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
POLS 111	Major	4	POLS 121	Major	4
HISP 111	Language	4	HISP 112	Language	4
Total Credits		17	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
POLS 211	PresMedia/Gender	4	POLS 222	Major	4
POLS 221	Major	4	MUSC 150	Aesthetics/IK	4
Journey Seminar 1	Journey	2	MATH 124	QuantAbs/DWS	4
HISP 211	Language	4	ENVR 150	General Interest	4
Total Credits		14	Total Credits		16

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
POLS 331	Major	4	POLS 332	Major	4
SOCI 121	Methods/IK	4	POLS 396 (Summer)	Service	4
ENVR 250	Methods/DWS	4	THEO 349D	Religion/CG	4
THEA 105	General Interest	4	ENVR 275	General Interest	4
			Journey Seminar 2	Journey	2
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		18

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
POLS 333	Major	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
POLS 336	Research/CG, CBT	4	POLS 399	Major	2
ENVR 360	General Interest	4	POLS 363	Major	4
THEA 140	General Interest	4	ENVR 300R	BaccResearch/DWS	4
			THEO 317	BaccReligion/IK, CG	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		16

A theater major with a study abroad

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
THEA 117	Major	4	THEA 113	Major	4
THEA 240	Major	0	THEA 240	Major	0
HISP 111	Language	4	HISP 112	Language	4
Total Credits		17	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
THEA 253	Major	4	THEA 353	Major	4
THEA 327	Major	4	THEA 240	Major	2
THEA 240	Major	1	COMM 103	Minor	4
COMM 102	Minor	4	CSCI 160	QuantAbst/DWS	4
HISP 211	Language	4	Journey Seminar 1	Journey	2
Total Credits		17	Total Credits		16

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
COLG 305	Study Abroad	4	THEA 219	Major	2
SA 375A	Study Abroad	4	THEA 240	Major	2
THEA 370	Aesthetic/Gender	4	COMM 245	PresMedia/IK, CBT	4
THEO 370	Religion/IK, CG	4	NUTR 110	Methods/DWS	4
			Journey Seminar 2	Journey	2
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		14

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
THEA 368	Major	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
THEA 250	Major	2	THEA 332	Major	4
THEA 267	Major	2	THEA 338	Major	4
THEA 331	Research	4	THEA 380	Major	2
COMM 336	Minor	4	THEA 340	Aesthetics	2
THEA 240	Major	2	COMM 350	Minor	4
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		18

A history major with a study abroad

Year 1					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
Cornerstone Symposium 1	Foundation	4	Cornerstone Symposium 2	Foundation	4
Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1	Foundation Seminar	Foundation	1
Encountering DWS	Foundation	4	Encountering IK	Foundation	4
HIST 152	Major	4	HIST 122	Major	4
HISP 111	Language	4	HISP 112	Language	4
Total Credits		17	Total Credits		17

Year 2					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
HIST 200	Major	4	Study Abroad		16
HIST 321	Major	4			
Journey Seminar 1	Journey	2			
HISP 211	Language	4			
ART 108	Aesthetics/IK	4			
Total Credits		18	Total Credits		16

Year 3					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
HIST 322	Research/IK	4	HIST 323	Research/CBT	4
HIST 360	Major	4	CSCI 160	QuantAbst/DWS	4
ART 208	General Interest	4	ART 218	General Interest	4
CHEM 125	Methods/DWS	4	POLS 121	Research/CG	4
			Journey Seminar 2	Journey	2
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		18

Year 4					
Fall	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits	Spring	Geode or Artifact/Dimension	Credits
POLS 347	General Interest	4	Baccalaureate Seminar	Baccalaureate	2
HIST 395	Major	4	ART 309A	BaccAesthetics/IK	4
HIST 333	Research/Gender	4	HIST 399	BaccResearch/IK	4
ART 239	General Interest	4	HIST 397	Major	4
			THEO 317	Religion/CG, IK	4
Total Credits		16	Total Credits		18

4.5.2. Provisions for Transfer Students

Transfer students will take part in an abridged foundation community experience specifically for transfer students, which will include elements of the Cornerstone Symposium, the Foundation Seminar, and the foundation triangulation courses. In these courses, transfer students will convert work they have completed at their previous institution into artifacts they can include in their portfolio as well as creating new artifacts demonstrating learning outcomes they do not have previous work for. This community will offer transfer students the same high-impact experience of the foundation community and introduce the students to the curriculum here at CSB|SJU. This transfer community will take place in a single term and encompass 8 or 9 credit hours.

5. The Advising Plan

Advising is built into the Building Connections Curriculum at all levels of student education. Students will continue to have major advisors and advisors from their cornerstone symposium, but will also have advisors through foundation, journey, and baccalaureate seminars. These advisors will focus on the student's liberal education and assist students in completing their geodes. Along with faculty advisors from the seminar courses, there will be community members around CSB|SJU to assist and advise as well. These community members may include members of the monastic communities, academic advising staff, library staff, career services staff, experiential learning staff, as well as others.

6. The Evaluation Assessment Plan

Evaluation of student work and assessment of program effectiveness are distinct and essential components of any academic program; they are, however, inherently connected, and the Building Connections Curriculum exploits that connection to facilitate assessment. Instructors will use established rubrics to evaluate student artifacts to be included in their e-Portfolios; assessors will use the same rubrics to assess whether the curriculum is achieving desired student learning outcomes. This section of the report both describes how instructors evaluate student work that is part of the Building Connections Curriculum and outlines an assessment plan for the curriculum.

6.1. The Outcome Rubrics

Each of the learning outcomes will have a rubric for each of the three learning levels. The rubrics should be general enough to allow them to be applied to any types of artifacts students might use to demonstrate the associated learning outcome, but specific enough that they can be applied objectively and consistently. Each rubric should have two to four components. For a given outcome, the rubrics at each level should have corresponding components, reflecting the scaffolding of learning.

We recommend a three-point scale that reflects the following general description:

0 This work does not demonstrate this learning outcome component

1 This work attempts to demonstrate this learning outcome component, but does not do so at an acceptable level

2 This work demonstrates this learning outcome component at an acceptable level

3 This work demonstrates this learning outcome component fully

For each component, only whole point scores are allowed. The overall rubric score is the mean (average) of the component scores, rounded to the nearest tenth of a point. An overall rubric score of 2 or above is acceptable for that learning outcome, provided that all the components are at 1 or above.

It is essential that the definition of "acceptable level" be precise in the description of scoring levels 1 and 2 for each component. That is, the rubrics should be designed so that there is a high degree of consistency in assigning a 0, 1, or 2 for each component. The distinction between 2 and 3, on the other hand, may vary significantly among faculty members. The purpose of the 2 and 3 distinction is to allow faculty members to communicate some degree of excellence in acceptable work to the student, and so the variation is to be expected.

6.2. Evaluation of Student Work

When a student submits an artifact in a course or other approved activity, the instructor has full discretion to evaluate it according to the criteria they have established for the course or activity. If the artifact is intended to demonstrate Building Connections learning outcomes, the instructor also uses the rubrics for those learning outcomes at the appropriate level to evaluate the work. The instructor may choose to use the rubric scores as a grade component for the course, but there is no requirement to do so. Instructors do have a responsibility to help students demonstrate learning outcomes attached to their courses.

When a student submits an artifact that has an overall rubric score of 2.0 or higher, with no component under 1.0, the student is deemed to have demonstrated that outcome. Instructors are encouraged to provide opportunity within the course for students to redo or revise work that does not demonstrate all associated learning outcomes. If the instructor does not provide opportunity to revise or redo work within the course, students who submit work that scores 1.5–1.9 on some associated outcomes and at least 1.5 on all will have until the end of the next semester term to redo or revise the work for reevaluation by the instructor. Students who do not meet an outcome under these criteria will need to submit work from another course or approved activity that demonstrates meeting that outcome. When students do work designed to demonstrate outcomes they have already demonstrated, they will receive new evaluation of those outcomes, but they will not lose their credit for previously demonstrating the outcomes.

When a student demonstrates all learning outcomes and submits the required artifacts for a geode, the geode is completed. Ideally, students should complete the Foundation Seminar Geode and the corresponding Foundation dimension geode before starting a Journey-Level geode. It may be necessary to relax that requirement somewhat by letting students start parts of the Journey geode if they've completed the corresponding learning outcomes at the Foundation Level. A completed Signature Geode will contain artifacts demonstrating all required learning outcomes for the Building Connections Curriculum, that is, the specified minimum Baccalaureate-Level outcomes and all remaining outcomes at either the Journey or Baccalaureate level. The Registrar will audit the Signature Geode to determine whether the student has satisfied the requirements of the Building Connections Curriculum.

Rubric scores will not be recorded on the student's transcript or in the Signature Geode, and they will only be accessible to the student and authorized officials of CSB|SJU. They will be recorded with each artifact in the remaining geodes where they may be used for advising and assessment purposes. Each artifact in the Signature Geode will have an indication of the learning outcomes demonstrated by the artifact, including the level (Journey or Baccalaureate) at which each outcome was demonstrated.

6.3. Assessment Plan

The contents of student portfolios provide the data for program assessment. Each year some subset of the learning outcomes will be assessed. Using a random sample of artifacts drawn from student portfolios, assessors will score them using the appropriate rubrics. The following data may be collected:

- For each component of each outcome at each level, the distribution of assessed scores and the percentage at 2.0 or higher
- For each component of each outcome at each level, the distribution of difference between the assessed score and the instructor's score
- For each program contributing a statistically significant sample, aggregate data about the assessed scores for that sample compared to the whole sample and aggregate data about the difference between the assessed and instructor's scores in the sample; this data shall be available to programs for formative review only
- Any of this data may be compared longitudinally

Data from student portfolios may not be used to evaluate faculty performance. However, faculty members undergoing review may be required to provide evidence that they have fulfilled their responsibility to evaluate student work for the Building Connections Curriculum.

We suggest a three-year schedule for assessing the curriculum. Each year one of the three levels—Foundation, Journey, or Baccalaureate—is assessed, with additional longitudinal analysis in the third year of the cycle. We further suggest that the three-year schedule be embedded in a larger nine-year cycle, with one of the three dimensions—Dynamic World Systems, Intercultural Knowledge, or the Common Good—being the focus for every three years

7. Budget and FTE Distribution

The credits of the model break down in the following way:

- *Foundation Level*: Year 1, 16-18 credits from the specific Foundation courses
- *Journey Level*: Years 2-3, 30-34 credits from six 4-credit clusters that enable students to create the journey artifacts and two to four 2-credit journey seminars
- *Baccalaureate level*: Year 4, 10 credits from two 4-credit clusters that enable students to create the baccalaureate artifacts and one 2-credit baccalaureate seminar
- ***Total Credits for the Model***: 58-62 credits (We expect that 8-12 of these credits will come from the major)

Any general curriculum must be fiscally sound, with a sustainable staffing plan for both the short and long term. Members of the Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC), as well as Emily Esch and Barb May as co-chairs of CCVC, are key people that we need to consult with as we develop this component of our model more fully.

Our preliminary expectation is that FTE distribution will be roughly equivalent to that of the current core curriculum, although we would see significant shifts from extant courses offered by disciplines into the Foundation Triangulation courses as well as from First-Year Seminar into Foundation Cornerstone Symposium courses. The Journey Seminar I & II and Baccalaureate Seminar would be the courses that require additional faculty support.

On an administrative level, we anticipate a need for a director or dean of assessment, who would be charged with administering the Journey and Baccalaureate levels of the learning outcomes. The First-Year learning communities are relatively self-contained by comparison since this first year will have a program director similar to the FYS Director position. Additional work from Academic Affairs will be necessary to help sustain and organize staffing patterns for learning communities. Faculty development is an essential component of this curricular model to ensure success of the artifacts.

8. Bibliography

Bass, Randy. “Disrupting Ourselves: The Problem of Learning in Higher Education.” *EDUCAUSE Review*, 47.2 (March/April 2012). 1-14. Bass argues for "porous boundaries" between the classroom and the rest of the college experience for students. We have incorporated various opportunities for students to explore and include artifacts and experiences from across their college life.

Blumenstyk, Goldie. “Liberal-Arts Majors Have Plenty of Job Prospects, if They Have Some Specific Skills, Too.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* June 9, 2016. We have added media literacy to the learning goals; although studying broadly is more important for today's world that requires flexibility in problem solving, modest levels of specific skills can be useful for graduates.

Cofell, Jeanne, Catherine Bohn-Gettler, and Mark Mortrude. Robert Campbell consulted with Jeanne Cofell, Catherine, Bohn-Gettler, and Mark Mortrude, all faculty in the Education Department, in the creation of a 4-year plan for students majoring in education and about the model in general.

Court, Whitney. Robert Campbell consulted with Whitney Court, Assistant Professor of Political Science, in the creation of a 4-year plan for students majoring in political science.

Goodwin, Larry. “Transformational Community.” 2016 Annual Meeting, Association of Benedictine Colleges & Universities. June 2016 address. We have aimed to incorporate Catholic Benedictine tradition across the curriculum.

Kuh, George. *High Impact Educational Practices: What They Are*, *Who Has Access to Them*, *and Why They Matter* (Washington, D.C.: AAC&U, 2008). Kuh's seminal work has guided our design, which incorporates nearly all his high impact practices to varying degrees.

Lyndgaard, Kyhl. “First-Year Seminar: Spring 2016 Survey Results.” This survey was conducted in spring semester 2016 with more than 50 faculty members responding (all of whom had taught FYS at CSB/SJU at least once since 2010).

Mayorga, Irma. Amelia Cheever consulted with Dr. Mayorga of Dartmouth College on issues of equity for student participation in study abroad/study local programs.

Mercedes, Anna. Amelia Cheever consulted with Anna Mercedes, Associate Professor of Theology, on Catholic Benedictine Tradition.

Museus, Samuel D. and Joanna N. Ravello. "Characteristics of Academic Advising That Contribute to Racial and Ethnic Minority Student Success at Predominantly White Institutions." *NACADA Journal,* 30.1 (Spring 2010). 47-58.

Nelson, Sheila. Andrew Holey consulted with Sheila Nelson, Professor of Sociology, on what’s needed to incorporate statistical thinking and quantitative analysis into the curriculum.

Pembleton, Deborah. Robert Campbell consulted with Deborah Pembleton, Assistant Professor of Global Business Leadership, in the creation of a 4-year plan for students majoring in global business leadership.

Piggush, Yvette. Our team consulted with Yvette Piggush, Assistant Professor of English, on Catholic Benedictine tradition. Yvette served as our CBT liaison.

Raigoza, Annette. Robert Campbell consulted with Annette Raigoza, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, in the creation of a 4-year plan for students majoring in chemistry.

Reif, Luann, and Bethany Tollefson. Robert Campbell consulted with Luann Reif and Bethany Tollefson, both faculty in the Nursing department, on how to create a 4-year plan for nursing students in our curriculum.

Rogers, Joe, and Joy Ruis. Amelia Cheever consulted with Joe Rogers and Joy Ruis of the Center for Global Education on how artifacts for geodes would be created by students on study abroad programs.

Smith, Shannon. Robert Campbell consulted with Shannon Smith, faculty member in the history department, in the creation of a 4-year plan for students majoring in history.

Zakaria, Fareed. *In Defense of a Liberal Education*. New York: Norton, 2015. Zakaria's book was a helpful push as we looked to develop a curriculum that was as responsive as possible to the complexities of today's world that students and graduates must navigate.

Some Key Programs:

Luther College, Paideia (signature program, three semesters including a First-Year two-semester sequence). Kyhl Lyndgaard consulted with Rebecca Sullivan, Paideia Program Director.

St. Lawrence University, First-Year Program. Parker Wheatley, as part of a targeted suggestion, solicited input from Cathy Crosby-Currie, who helped design the FYP. The FYP features living and learning communities that include a first-year experience and first-year seminar.

Santa Clara University, Core Curriculum. Yvette Piggush noted the e-portfolio that Santa Clara uses. Pathways and reflective essays are key features.

Alverno College. Their ability-based curriculum and assessment model was consulted.

West Point Military Academy. Their detailed “Documentation of Assessed Work” was used to help construct this bibliography based on their standards for how to document assistance and collaboration.

Appendices

Appendix A. Definitions

Artifact: an individual work that a student creates to demonstrate competency in one or more learning outcomes. Artifacts can take any appropriate form, such as written documents, audio or video recordings of presentations, videos of performances, or images. Completed artifacts, once approved by the appropriate faculty member or members, are entered into geodes at the appropriate learning level.

Baccalaureate Geode: the geode containing artifacts produced at the baccalaureate level.

Baccalaureate Level: the advanced level of the JFA approved learning outcomes, typically completed during the fourth year of study.

Baccalaureate Seminar: the 2-credit course taken in the fourth year with a focus on the metacognition artifact and creating the signature geode.

Cornerstone Symposium: the two semester 8-credit course in the first year that focuses on communication, common good, Catholic Benedictine tradition, and gender identity learning outcomes at the foundation level.

Encountering Dynamic World Systems: the team-taught triangulation course from the perspective of three disciplines with a focus on dynamic world systems at the foundation level.

Encountering Intercultural Knowledge: the team-taught triangulation course from the perspective of three disciplines with a focus on intercultural knowledge at the foundation level.

Foundation Community: the 0-1 credit course taken both semesters of the first year with a focus on metacognition and formation of the four-year plan. This course is closely connected to the First-Year Experience.

Foundation Geode: the geode containing artifacts produced at the foundation level.

Foundation Level: the beginning level of the JFA approved learning outcomes.

Geode: folders in the portfolio that are organized by learning outcome level where the artifacts are housed. Geode stands for General Education Outcome Demonstration Elements. (In geology, a geode is a round rock containing a hollow cavity lined with sparkly crystals. We like to think that the artifacts students put in their portfolio will shine with the brightness of such crystals.)

High Impact Practices: a term the comes from George Kuh (AACU 2008); these are practices that increase student learning through active engagement. These practices include: first year seminars, common intellectual experiences, learning communities,

writing intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity and global learning, community based learning, internships and capstone courses and projects. Research shows that they are highly effective in improving student engagement and retention.

Journey Geode: the geode containing artifacts produced at the journey level.

Journey Level: the intermediate level of the JFA approved learning outcomes.

Journey Seminar: the 2-credit courses taken in the second and third years with a focus on metacognition and revision of student artifacts.

Life Dimensions: the JFA approved learning outcomes that are specific to the natural and human world; these include two dynamic world systems outcomes, two intercultural knowledge outcomes, two common good outcomes, one Catholic Benedictine tradition outcome and one gender identity outcome.

Portfolio: an electronic file that contains the student's scholarly, creative, and experiential work.

Signature Geode: the final repository for student scholarly, creative and experiential work as they embark on their post collegiate journey of career and lifelong learning.

Triangulation Course: a course that is team-taught by three professors and covers the same topic and/or question from the perspective of three disciplines.

Appendix B. World Languages in the CSB|SJU Curriculum

Language is at the heart of human life and is essential to all five dimensions of the Building Connections learning outcomes. That people in different communities use different languages to think and communicate is an important aspect of both intercultural knowledge and dynamic world systems. Ideally, all educated persons would be fluent in more than one human language; practically, we cannot construct a four-year curriculum that would achieve this outcome for most of our students without sacrificing other essential outcomes.

The world language requirement for the Building Connections Curriculum must insure that students can deal intelligently with at least one language other than English. We leave it to the JFS to decide whether to maintain the current requirement or adopt a different requirement.

Appendix C. Study Abroad and Study Local

In the Building Connections Curriculum, study abroad programs will continue to provide students an opportunity to take courses that will contribute to their liberal learning outcomes. For most programs, minor revisions in the existing courses will allow students to create artifacts to submit to the journey level geodes. Students will take three courses supporting the journey level. The fourth course will depend on the particular program. If the program is in a country where English is not the primary language, student will take a language class that may satisfy part of the world language requirement; in programs where English is the primary language, students may complete an internship for the fourth course.

In order for our model to be equitable for all students we are proposing a new set of programs called *Study Local*. Study local programs are an alternative for students who are unable to participate in a semester abroad but who would like to have a high impact learning opportunity that places them in a unique learning environment off campus. Some examples of what a study local program could look like are:

- A program that focuses on the Somali Community in St. Cloud. This study local program might have an immersive language requirement, a Somali cultural course, a Somali arts course, and a Somali history course.
- A program similar to Knox College's *Teaching on the Navajo Reservation* could be an option for Education majors who are interested in a variety of teaching experiences before they graduate.
- A program that focuses on the environment or sustainability, similar to the *Green Oaks Biological Field Station*, could be created in conjunction with the Outdoor University.
- We could participate in a program like the *Chicago Program: Arts, Entrepreneurship, & Social Justic*e of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest.

Having a variety of options that provide accessible high impact learning experiences for our students will provide meaningful opportunities available to all students.

Appendix D: Modifications to the Learning Outcomes

While the Building Connections Curriculum is designed to follow the learning outcomes developed by the CCVC and approved by the JFS, we propose several changes to the outcomes.

First, we have renamed the scaffolding levels as follows:

Original Level Name	**Building Connections Level Name**
Beginner	Foundation
Intermediate	Journey
Advanced	Baccalaureate

We believe that our new names better capture the spirit of the scaffolding levels than the original names. We use these names consistently throughout our report.

We have also revised the marker language and added a new outcome in the Communicate dimension.

Learning Outcomes	***Markers***		
	Foundation	***Journey***	***Baccalaureate***
Quantitative Literacy (Revised)	Students accurately read and draw inferences from quantitative information given in various formats; they recognize obvious sources of error	Students analyze quantitative evidence, understand quantitative arguments, question assumptions, detect fallacies, and evaluate risks from real-world data. Students display a healthy level of skepticism about quantitative findings.	Students pose insightful questions about quantitative information and use appropriate methods of analysis to seek answers to those questions; they evaluate those results understanding the limitations of quantitative methods and use the result to inform decisions
Media Literacy (New)	Students are aware of and can analyze the ways that various media shape human perception.	Students design their own media and can analyze the choices in their design including the impacts of those choices.	Students create their own original media. Students are aware of the methods of distribution including what would be appropriate for their own media.

The revised foundation quantitative literacy marker is more general than the original and moves away from low-level skills; the revised baccalaureate marker focuses more on the application of quantitative analysis than the original; the journey marker is unchanged. We feel that the importance of various media in today's communication needed a stronger focus in the learning outcomes; our outcome emphasizes the way that media shape communication rather than the nature or use of particular media.

Finally, we have added two new Life dimension outcomes:

Learning Outcomes	***Markers***		
	Foundation	***Journey***	***Baccalaureate***
Catholic Benedictine Tradition	Students recognize that the Catholic Benedictine tradition represents a particular worldview, grounded in a notion of the sacred, and they begin to understand how this worldview may be relevant to individual and community life.	Students analyze how the worldview of the Catholic Benedictine tradition, with its understanding of the sacred, exists in dialog with and sometimes challenges their own and others' worldviews.	Students can draw on the strengths of the Catholic Benedictine tradition, as they understand them, in developing their own worldview as they seek to life responsible lives in the human community.
Gender Identity	Students are aware of and can explain ways that their enactments of gender shape their own perception of the world and how gender informs and is informed by race, nationality, and other aspects of how one identifies.	Students analyze how gender identity and sexuality are constructed in human communities and shaped by their particular social location, and how these constructions shape human lives, social structures, and our interactions with one another.	Students evaluate how gender identity and sexuality are embedded in social structures, perpetuating systems of privilege and oppression, and how that knowledge can contribute to opening institutions and social structures to new possibilities of choices.

The Building Connections Curriculum relies heavily on the prescribed learning outcomes for its shape and character. In designing this model, we found it was difficult to give a place to the essential elements of Catholic Benedictine tradition and gender without anchoring them in explicit learning outcomes.

	Geodes:	Foundation												Journey									Baccalaureate (Three including metacognition)						
	\Artifacts Learning\ Outcomes\	Writing Artifacts	Collaborative Artif.	Presentation Artif.	Review Artifact	Quant. Analysis	Multidisciplinary	Reflection Artifact	Identity Artifact	Multiple Perspec.	Interactions	Metacognition	Four-Year Plan	Quant. Abstraction	Aesthetics	Research	Methods	Religious Analysis	Presentation/Media	World Language	Service/Community	Metacognition	Quant. Abstraction	Aesthetics	Research	Methods	Religious Analysis	Presentation/Media	Metacognition
Think	Inquiry and Analysis				F									J		J	J						B		B	B			
Think	Evidence and Methods						F							J		J	J	J					B		B	B	B		
Think	Multiple Perspectives									F					J	J		J		J	J			B	B		B		
Think	Evaluation										F				J		J				J			B		B			
Think	Abstract Modeling					F								J									B						
Think	Metacognition											F							J			J						B	B
Communicate	Written Communication	F												J	J	J	J		J	J	J		B	B	B	B		B	
Communicate	Oral and Nonverbal Communication			F						F				J	J				J				B	B				B	
Communicate	Reading	F														J		J							B		B		
Communicate	Information Literacy	F														J	J	J							B	B	B		
Communicate	Nonverbal Literacy							F							J									B					
Communicate	Quantitative Literacy					F								J			J						B			B			
Communicate	Discussion		F																										
Communicate	Teamwork		F																J		J							B	
Communicate	Media Literacy			F											J				J					B				B	
Life Dimensions	Dynamic World Systems						F																						
Life Dimensions	Intercultural Knowledge								F		F																		
Life Dimensions	Common Good	F												J≥1	J≥2	J≥2	J≥2	J≥2	J≥2	J≥2	J≥1		B≥1	B≥2	B≥2	B≥2	B≥2	B≥2	
Life Dimensions	Gender								F																				
Life Dimensions	Catholic Benedictine Tradition	F																											