Oregon State University

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Faculty Senate Nominations and Awards Committee
Faculty Senate Office
Oregon State University

March 21, 2023

Dear Members of the Faculty Senate Nominations and Awards Committee,

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of the Baccalaureate Core Reform Committee for the Student Learning and Success Teamwork Award.

As you are aware from the nomination letter, the BCRC was comprised of faculty (both academic and professional) from across OSU, and as such it was a highly interdisciplinary group with members from eight colleges, OSU-Cascades, Ecampus, and several central administrative offices. The committee was deeply engaged, and as I understand from committee members, energized by their work to further student learning and success at OSU.

In what follows I describe the ways in which the BCRC meets (and in some cases, exceeds) the criteria for this award.

1. One of the twenty actions in OSU's *Strategic Plan 4.0: Excellence and Impact* is "Provide distinctive curricula and support innovative pedagogy suited to our mission and vision." And, first among the tactics under that action is "Reform the Baccalaureate Core." This is precisely the work of the BCRC, and they did it will enthusiasm for delivering a modern general education curriculum for OSU students, for easing pathways for transfer students and for overall student learning and success.
2. It is fundamental for academic units to deliver quality academic programming and to support student learning and success. Creating a modern, easy-to-transfer general education program will only bolster those fundamentals. While some specific academic units may lose some student credit hours under the new general education curriculum, I believe the increased retention and graduation rates we hope will result from the new curriculum will ultimately lift up all units.
3. The BCRC worked hard on getting the reform of the general education curriculum right. They referred to NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) competencies and examined literature related to first-year experiences, integrating career competencies and workforce readiness. Ultimately, their work will result in more effective mentoring for students, and I believe more innovations in teaching, by having a general education program with clearly articulated purpose and expected outcomes.
4. The process the BCRC went through was intentional in its engagement with campus stakeholders. I don't recall the exact number, but the committee co-chairs and the

Baccalaureate Core Director held "road shows" to explain the proposed curriculum to campus groups in colleges, central units and even community college partners.

5. A small group of faculty and staff attended an AAC&U seminar on General Education reform in the summer before the BCRC began its work. This group included the Baccalaureate Core Director, one of the co-chairs of the BCRC (though he wasn't appointed as co-chair at that time), and the incoming Faculty President, also a member of the BCRC.

In closing, I see the BCRC as a very strong candidate for this award. Their work was in direct alignment with SP 4.0, it will help with student learning and success, it is modern and includes best practices in undergraduate education, and their committee process was thorough and included a large array of stakeholders. I hope the Awards Committee will give this group serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Alix Gitelman
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Senior Vice Provost