**Direct Reponses to Faculty Questions:**

The committee appreciates the opportunity to answer questions about this proposal. The following questions represent those that were forwarded to or shared with the committee, most of which arose before, during, or after the March 2020 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate. If a member of the University has a concern that is not addressed here, the committee encourages them to share it; any oversight is unintentional.

* Q1: Eighty hours is a lot of hours. Other campuses that have a similar requirement (e.g. NC A&T) require far less. A&T requires a single course with some sort of emphasis on African American culture. While I think folks understand that the UNCP proposal offers flexibility in that it allows for a course or courses and/or attendance at events and/or service in the community, some feel 80 hours may be too much for students who already struggle to graduate on time, who work, etc.
  + The committee appreciates the time demands and commitments that UNCP’s students navigate. Thus, the committee was dedicated to creating a plan that would be flexible and accommodating to the needs and schedules of UNCP students.
  + The proposed 80 hours (prorated based on credit hours upon enrollment at the University) unfolds over the course of eight semesters, which breaks down to ten hours per semester (the equivalent of attending 1 UNCP programming event every three weeks), excluding additional opportunities to complete hours during summer coursework, study abroad, and service.
  + The committee researched various service learning and community service requirements in place at other universities to establish a reasonable requirement. Here is a sample of our findings:
    - NC Central requires 120 hours community service for graduation.
    - University of the Cumberlands requires 40 hours of community service and attendance at lecture events for graduation.
    - Lee University requires 10 hours community service per semester.
    - University of Texas, Dallas requires 100 hours community service for graduation.
    - Jackson State University requires 120 hours community service for graduation.
  + The committee also received the assurance from CCE that 80 hours was well within a reasonable range among such requirements across the country. In fact, 80 hours is actually 20-40 hours less than the average of community/service learning requirements. Furthermore, this proposal offers students multiple ways, apart from service to complete this requirement—this is truly a unique experience we are proposing for UNCP students.
* Q2: Some faculty believe that this is going to be a logistical nightmare, and that no one really knows how it will all work. One person noted that we already have issues with systems/programs/applications on campus not "talking" to one another, and to take someone's word that this will be worked out is a risk.
  + A report from AVC Lois Williams is appended [note—it should be ready early in the week of 4/6] about the functionality of tracking the different options and displaying totals in U-Achieve (the degree audit used for advising). The report results from multiple meetings incorporating Enrollment management, CCE, Student Affairs, DoIT, and representatives of the AIS ad-hoc committee and Faculty Senate. Both Enrollment Management and DoIT have affirmed the necessary connections can be made over the summer and committed to doing so.
* Q3: How might this graduation requirement impact graduation rates? We are already concerned about retention.
  + The committee stands in unity with all faculty in seeking the retention and persistence of all students toward graduation and fulfilling post-graduation lives and careers.
  + This proposal establishes the framework for a unifying campus experience built on high-impact practices (HIP). According to educational research, HIPs foster a greater sense of community among students across campus and lead to improved success rates. For example:
    - In the early 2000s a study “affirmed that historically underserved students benefited significantly from engaging in HIPs, and that participating in multiple HIPs had cumulative, accentuating effects.”[[1]](#footnote-1)
    - According to recent scholarship, programming that foregrounds diversity in the United States, in world cultures, or both—like the ICC— provides opportunities to explore engaged citizenship around the globe with consideration to the affirmation of human rights, freedom, and the sharing of power. It is recommended that such programming be supplemented by experiential learning in the community. Research suggests that implementing such high-impact practices “increase[s] rates of student retention and student engagement.”[[2]](#footnote-2)
    - According to the literature the key to implementing a high-impact learning experience like the ICC is to ensure equitable access. The flexibility built into the ICC proposal allows for access to all UNCP students.
    - The University College has been working to increase such HIPs, and UC Dean Beth Hunter has suggested that service events and programming could be incorporated into welcome week and Freshmen Seminar classes to support this endeavor, supporting experiential learning and helping students plan for this requirement from the start.
* Q4: Another person noted that this may decrease enrollment in some courses (the example was foreign language) because students have to "trade off" course slots to meet their ICC requirement.
  + The committee’s proposal includes options for service and programming in anticipation of this exact concern. The decision to make courses an optional way to satisfy the proposed graduation requirement was made specifically to avoid putting students in the position the question describes. While some students may elect to satisfy the requirement through coursework, some will choose to satisfy the requirement through service and/or programming and will continue to take the courses that best fit their interests, meet their goals, and assist in their timely completion of degree requirements.
  + To further address this concern, the committee anticipates the growth of availability of AIS cross-listed courses that allow students to fulfill requirements within their degree paths or general education interests (such courses already exist in Art, Education, English, History, Religion, Social Work, and Sociology). Such courses would be approved through the current faculty senate curriculum process, ensuring full faculty governance.
* Q5: Yet another noted that voluntary participation in and attendance at events that are not AIS affiliated may decrease because students are being required to attend AIS programming in order to graduate and students have to choose/cannot attend everything (because of time).
  + The committee’s proposal includes options for service and coursework in addition to programming, and students remain free to choose to how and where to invest their time and interests. The list of events included in section III of this report spans two academic years and, in that time period, provides enough opportunity for students to complete 85% of the requirement through programming alone. If students were to complete the requirement solely through programming at an average of 1.67 events/month in a given semester, the committee believes students would still have ample opportunity to attend other events and participate in other opportunities.
  + To further address this concern, faculty and coordinators of campus programming and events that address issues of import to Indigenous peoples are invited to submit proposals to the ICCC to have their events marked as fulfilling the requirement.
  + The committee believes that student engagement in campus events is an important part of a student’s university education and experience. Participating in campus events as a part of the ICC requirement will hopefully encourage students to become more aware, attentive, and engaged in the broader range of events scheduled throughout the academic year.
* Q6: Faculty noticed that “Number of contact hours were derived from the typical lecture course contact time of 150 minutes per week across fifteen weeks of instruction” equals 37.5 hours rather than 40.
  + The committee rounded up to 40 hours for two reasons:
    - To encourage students to participate in all areas of the requirement, not solely coursework.
    - To acknowledge the practical reality that even numbers make for more straightforward math.

1. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/05/01/kuh-and-kinzie-respond-essay-questioning-high-impact-practices-opinion [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips [↑](#footnote-ref-2)