Principles for Undergraduate Grand Challenge Courses: U of M-Twin Cities

a) Grand Challenge Courses (GCCs) should bring an interdisciplinary focus to a topic related to grand challenge teaching and research. Some existing challenge courses have been developed around water, immigration, food, and reconciliation.

b) GCCs will be taught by our very best faculty and instructional staff who are recognized for their scholarship on the topic and their teaching excellence. The possibility of including outside experts (such as visiting faculty) in the GCCs is particularly exciting.

c) All types of partnerships will be encouraged, including undergraduate and graduate and/or professional colleges. One of the advantages for undergraduate students at R1 universities is exposure to the expertise that resides at the professional level.

d) GCCs will promote “active” learning in the classroom (although not necessarily use active learning classrooms).

e) GCCs will be taught by at least two faculty from different units (preferably different colleges) in order to provide multiple perspectives on a topic.

f) A modest stipend will be offered for GCC course development.

g) GCCs will be offered under a unique identifier (course designator) that belongs to the Provost’s office (i.e., not to any one college). That designator will be GCC.

h) Tuition attributed to GCC courses via enrollments under this designator will be distributed to the collegiate academic units at the end of each academic term.

i) GCC courses will be offered at the 3xxx and/or 5xxx level.

j) GCC courses will count as an “honors experience” for students in the University Honors Program.

k) GCC courses will typically be expected to be developed and taught in such a manner that they can fulfill one of the undergraduate Liberal Education Theme requirements (Civic Life and Ethics, Diversity and Social Justice, Environment, Global Perspectives, Technology and Society).

l) After the initial development of a GCC course, it is expected that the course will be offered again in future academic years.