

Integration of Student and Faculty Voices in Curriculum Design:

Co-Creation of a Data-Informed Curriculum and Learning Outcomes in the January Term Program



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Institutional Characteristics



January Term - Since AY 1970-71

Overview

- **Purpose:** Foster intellectual curiosity for the purposes of lifelong learning
- **Intense:** 4 weeks, 4 days/week, 2.5 hours/day
- **Focused:** One, full-credit course at a time
- **Innovative & Interdisciplinary:** Faculty develop courses based on research interests, hobbies, passions, etc.
- **Freedom:** Students select from courses that are non-major, non-minor, and non-Core

Sample On-Campus and Travel Courses

Samurais and Japanese Martial Arts



Rwanda Rising: Leadership & Peacemaking



Endangered Australia: Wildlife and Culture

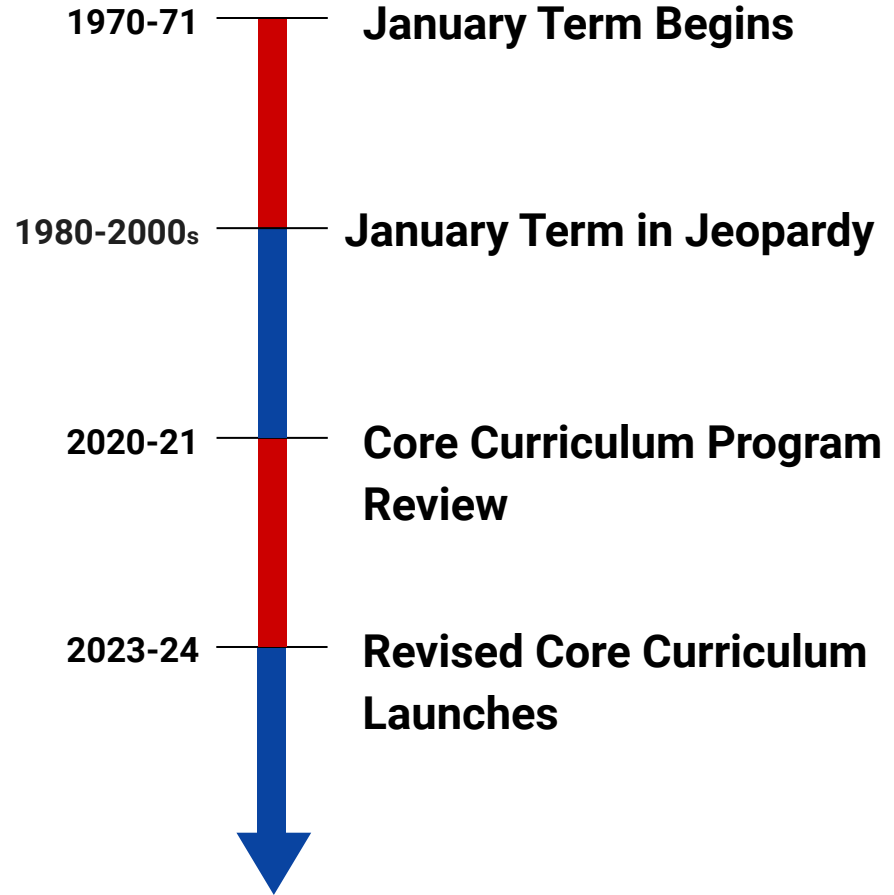


Turning on the Light Bulb: Illuminate, Unleash, and Unlock Your Creativity

Jan Term Program - *Since 1970-71*



Anchor Bay, California, 1976.
Courtesy Saint Mary's College Archives



This Assessment Project

Research Questions

1. What are the **students' challenges** in and **perceived values** of JT courses and how might they **differ** based on their demographics (e.g., race, gender) and academic fields of study?
2. What are the **faculty's** experiences in course design, assessment, and delivery of courses in JT?
3. How do students' **first** JT experiences impact their **expectations** and **motivations** in subsequent JT courses?

Data Points & Methods

Data Points

- JAN 2020
(in-person modality)
- JAN 2023
(primarily in-person modality)

Methods

- Course Enrollment Data: Major, Sex, Race/Ethnicity
 - Race/Ethnicity = IPEDS → Recoded (Hispanic, Asian, White, BIPOC, International)
- Course Grades
- Student Feedback Form: 4 open-ended & select scaled questions
- Focus Group (in 2023): Faculty, Lower-Classman, and Senior Groups

Enrollment & Grades Data - Sample Sizes

FULL-CREDIT JAN TERM COURSES	JAN 2020	JAN 2023
Total Number Offered and Analyzed	99 courses	75 courses
Class Size* (* $N \geq 25$ means co-taught courses.)	M = 22.18, Mode = 24 Range = 7 - 34	M = 23.49, Mode = 23 Range = 8 - 43
Taught by Tenure-Track Faculty	48.48% ($N = 48$ out of 99 courses)	49.33% ($N = 37$ out of 75 courses)
Total Enrollment	2209	1762
Sex	55.63% ($N = 1229$) Female	56.19% ($N = 990$) Female
Race/Ethnicity	42% White 29% Hispanic 11% Asian 7% Two or More 3% Black/AA 2% Hawaiian/PI	38% White (↓) 32% Hispanic (↑) 11% Asian 10% Two or More (↑) 4% Black/AA 1% Hawaiian/PI

Enrollment Trend

Course Themes	2020		2023	
	<i>N</i> = 99 courses	Popularity Trend	<i>N</i> = 75 courses	Popularity Trend
Arts/ Pop Culture	28.28% (<i>N</i> = 28)	Undeclared First-Year	29.33% (<i>N</i> = 22)	Undeclared First-Year; Liberal Arts majors
Literature/History/ Philosophy	20.20% (<i>N</i> = 20)	Liberal Arts majors; Science majors	16% (<i>N</i> = 12)	Liberal Arts majors
Social Justice/ Service	12.12% (<i>N</i> = 12)	Liberal Arts majors; Science majors	16% (<i>N</i> = 12)	Undeclared First-Year
Skills	10.10% (<i>N</i> = 10)	Undeclared First-Year	14.67% (<i>N</i> = 12)	Undeclared First-Year
Business	5.05% (<i>N</i> = 5)	Econ and Business majors	5.33% (<i>N</i> = 4)	Econ and Business majors
STEM	8.08% (<i>N</i> = 8)	Science majors	2.67% (<i>N</i> = 2)	Science majors
Travel	16.16% (<i>N</i> = 16)	Equally popular	16% (<i>N</i> = 12)	Equally popular

Narrative based on Grades

1

The majority of students successfully complete JAN courses, but there are gender and racial/ethnic disparities.

	A range	B range	C range	D range	F
2020	68%	25%	6%	1%	1%

Gender $t(2202) = 6.25, p < .001$
→ Female GPA ($M = 3.64, SD = .58$) > Male GPA ($M = 3.46, SD = .74$)

Race/Ethnicity $F(5, 2151) = 3.73, p < .01$
→ White GPA ($M = 3.61, SD = .61$) > Hispanic ($M = 3.50, SD = .72$) / BIPOC ($M = 3.46, SD = .85$)

2023	74%	19%	4%	1%	2%
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Gender $t(1746) = 2.24, p < .05$
→ Female GPA ($M = 3.65, SD = .71$) > Male GPA ($M = 3.57, SD = .71$)

Race/Ethnicity $F(5, 1706) = 5.55, p < .001$
→ White GPA ($M = 3.70, SD = .61$) > Hispanic ($M = 3.52, SD = .79$) / BIPOC ($M = 3.47, SD = .84$)

Note: No interaction effect between gender and race/ethnicity.

Narrative based on Grades

2

Racial/Ethnic equity gap has increased between 2020 and 2023.

	JAN 2020						JAN 2023					
	A range	B range	C range	D range	F	PROP.	A range	B range	C range	D range	F	PROP.
Asian	11.95%	10.07%	12.30%	10.00%	0.00%	11.36%	11.42%	9.39%	6.67%	8.33%	11.11%	10.84%
Asian x White	3.52%	3.30%	3.28%	0.00%	0.00%	3.40%	5.82%	5.45%	5.33%	0.00%	3.70%	5.62%
White	43.23%	41.21%	32.79%	30.00%	30.00%	42.06%	40.69%	31.21%	25.33%	8.33%	25.93%	37.85%
BIPOC	9.16%	9.52%	10.66%	20.00%	30.00%	9.55%	8.58%	11.22%	21.33%	8.33%	14.81%	8.98%
Hispanic	27.09%	31.14%	35.25%	40.00%	30.00%	28.66%	28.81%	39.09%	40.00%	58.33%	44.44%	31.67%
Intel'	2.79%	3.11%	2.46%	0.00%	0.00%	2.85%	2.68%	1.82%	1.33%	16.67%	0.00%	2.50%



- *At your institution, how have you disaggregated the “2 or more races” category to understand the equity gap?*
- *How have you closed the equity gap?*

Feedback and Focus Groups - Sample Sizes

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM	JAN 2020	JAN 2023
<p align="center">Response Rates* (*No correlation with class size and response rates.)</p>	<p><i>M</i> = 56.2%, Median = 61.3% Range = 0% - 100%</p>	<p><i>M</i> = 56.8%, Median = 69.6% Range = 3.6% - 96.4%</p>
<p>Q1: Helpful Activities and Assignments</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 1294 (58.58%) Word Count = 39,894</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 964 (54.71%) Word Count = 34,363</p>
<p>Q2 Difficulties and Challenges</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 1,279 (57.90%) Word Count = 39,894</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 949 (53.86%) Word Count = 23,042</p>
<p>Q3 Strategies and Resources for Challenges</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 1,213 (54.91%) Word Count = 18,974</p>	<p><i>N</i> Responses = 892 (44.27%) Word Count = 17,611</p>
FOCUS GROUPS	Faculty	Students
<p align="center">Participants <i>N</i> Size</p>	<p>Tenure-Track <i>N</i> = 8 Adjunct <i>N</i> = 12</p>	<p>Lower-Class <i>N</i> = 43 Senior <i>N</i> = 31</p>

Student Feedback Survey: Activities & Assignments

	2020				2023		
THEMES	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*	Race / Ethnicity*	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*
Discussion with Peers	14.63%	-	C > T (Δ 6.78%)	-	14.19%	-	C > T (Δ 8.05%)
Experiential Learning	5.92%	-	-	-	9.28%	-	-
Field Trips	7.23%	-	T > C (Δ 15.09%)	BIPOC > (Δ 21±%)	11.35%	-	T > C (Δ 27.07%)
Journal Entries	10.54%	-	T > C (Δ 9.20%)	-	12.66%	-	T > C (Δ 8.16%)
Presentations	11.67%	-	-	-	13.86%	-	-
Readings	19.60%	-	-	-	8.08%	-	-
Online Forum Posts	2.44%	-	-	-	5.57%	-	-
Videos/Films	12.37%	-	C > T (Δ 21.82%)	-	15.07%	-	C > T (Δ 17.12%)

Note: * Difference > 5% as the benchmark; Themes > 5% of responses within group are shown.

Student Feedback Survey: Difficulties & Challenges

	2020				2023		
THEMES	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*	Race / Ethnicity*	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*
Quizzes, Exams	5.97%	-	-	-	2.47%	-	T > C (Δ 10.98%)
Course Specific Content	21.62%	-	T > C (Δ 11.49%)	-	21.09%	-	-
Discussion	9.68%	-	-	A/H > (Δ x2 \pm)	7.74%	-	-
Staying Engaged	5.70%	-	-	-	4.61%	-	-
Time Management	4.51%	-	-	-	5.11%	-	-
Workload	22.02%	-	-	-	21.09%	-	-
None	16.45%	-	-	-	16.80%	F > M (Δ 8.28%)	-

Note: * Difference > 10% as the benchmark; Themes > 5% of responses within group are shown.

Student Feedback Survey: Strategies & Resources

	2020				2023		
THEMES	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*	Race / Ethnicity*	Total	Gender*	Campus / Travel*
Accountability (-)	6.55%	-	-	-	6.61%	-	-
Comm with Professor (+)	8.08%	-	-	-	8.33%	-	-
Note Taking (+)	5.99%	-	-	-	3.30%	-	-
Peer Resources (+)	7.94%	-	T > C (Δ 12.06%)	-	9.63%	-	C > T (Δ 10.94%)
Readings (-)	17.69%	-	-	-	9.34%	-	
Preparation and Study (-)	14.07%	-	-	-	14.08%	-	C > T (Δ 11.13%)
Time Management (+)	13.09%	-	-	-	28.16%	F > M (Δ 11.12%)	C > T (Δ 26.30%)
None	21.73%	-	-	-	11.10%	-	C > T (Δ 15.55%)

Note: * Difference > 10% as the benchmark; Themes > 5% of responses within group are shown; (-) wish they had done/used (+) things they did.

Student Feedback Survey: Alignment with JT Mission

Jan Term Mission

1. Curiosity
2. Lifelong Learning
3. Innovative and Interdisciplinary

Student Feedback Scaled Questions

1. **Appreciation:** During the term, my appreciation of the course content grew.
2. **Transfer of Knowledge:** I gained knowledge and/or skills in this course that will help me in other courses or in pursuits in my life.
3. **New Knowledge:** This course challenged me to think in new ways.

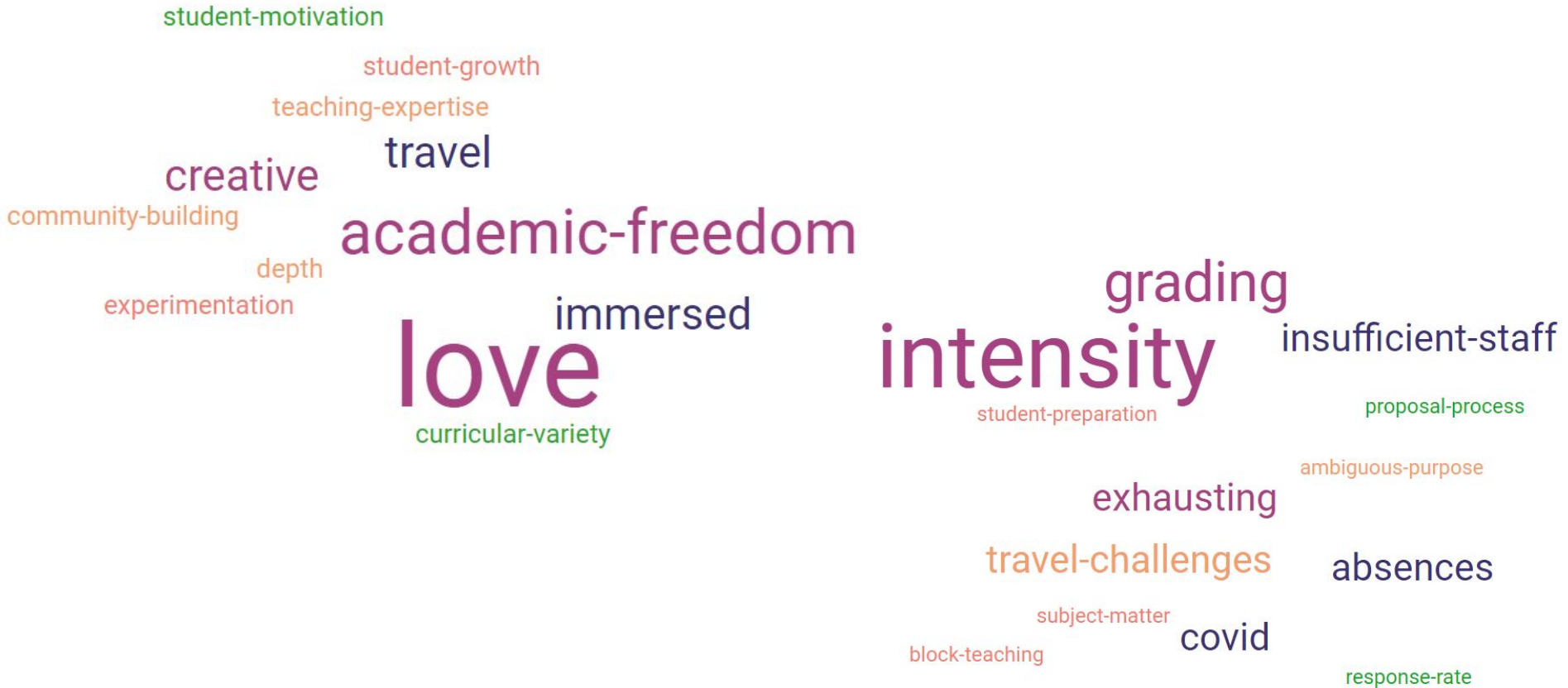
1. Students' evaluation is generally high on all of these items
 - **Appreciation:** $M = 5.42$ ($SD = .50$)
 - **Transfer of Knowledge:** $M = 5.36$ ($SD = .51$)
 - **New Knowledge:** $M = 5.44$ ($SD = .48$)
2. **Travel courses scored significantly higher** on all of these items compared to on-campus Jan Term courses, controlling for the response rates and year taught.

Focus Groups: Students

A word cloud of student feedback. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The largest word is 'non-major' in purple. Other large words include 'experiential', 'immersed', 'challenge-comfort', 'self-exploration', 'best-experience', 'focused', 'intense', 'too-condensed', and 'limited-choice'. Smaller words include 'travel-opportunities', 'less-work', 'mismatched-description', 'lecture-heavy', 'long-class', and 'continuous-learning'. The colors range from purple to orange to green.

experiential immersed
challenge-comfort
travel-opportunities non-major
less-work best-experience
self-exploration focused
mismatched-description
lecture-heavy
long-class
intense
continuous-learning
too-condensed
limited-choice

Focus Groups: Faculty



Takeaways - RQ1

What are the **students' challenges** in and **perceived values** of JT courses and how might they **differ** based on their demographics (e.g., race, gender) and academic fields of study?

- **Program Challenge**

- White students' GPA > Hispanic and BIPOC students' GPAs
- Female students' GPA > Male students' GPA

- **Student Challenges**

- Workload given the intensive timeframe
- Learning the course content within the timeframe & Limited time to process learning
- First-Year Challenge: Limited course choices; No international traveling opportunities

- **Perceived Values**

- Opportunity to take a class outside of the major (including travel) and with new/different students
- Learn with and from passionate faculty
- Bridge between the Fall and Spring semesters
- Space for self-exploration and interest
- Senior Students: Best college experience

Takeaways - RQ2

What are the **faculty's** experiences in course design, assessment, and delivery of courses in JT?

- **Faculty Positives**

- Academic freedom (i.e., professionally and personally rewarding)
- Intensive, block courses allow for innovation and creativity (e.g., travel, field trips, experiential learning)
- Student-growth and community in a short period of time
- Adds curricular variety to a small institution

- **Faculty Challenges**

- Intensive, block courses present unique challenges (e.g., attendance; exhausting; grading)
- Ambiguity about the academic rigor of courses, between faculty and between faculty and students
- Range of student academic preparation
- Low Student Feedback Survey response rates
- Lack of faculty community
- Covid (i.e., all online classes in JT21 and some in JT22; students with Covid)
- Proposal process and timeline
- Insufficient staff support (e.g., travel courses; real-time needs)

Takeaways - RQ3

How do students' **first** JT experiences impact their **expectations** and **motivations** in subsequent JT courses?

- **Positives**

- Increased expectations and excited for future courses based on first experience
- Motivated to explore self-interest and to get into a course that seems fun and engaging
- Motivated knowing that with increasing class-level will get a better chance of getting #1 pick
- Motivated by opportunities to travel

- **Challenges**

- Expectations decreased each year based on poor experiences (including Covid online year)
- Motivation decreased each year based on perceived lack of choices (same classes offered every year)
- Taking the time to research classes and register on-time in order to select a course that really suits interests

Next Steps

Immediate

- Revise learning outcomes
- Create a program-specific attendance policy
- Discuss grades/grading in Jan Term
- Host faculty mixer and community-building activities

Long Term

- Create a campus-wide Jan Term student showcase
- Devise cross-disciplinary enrollment strategy
- Consider a 2-year proposal cycle

Next Assessment

- Conduct annual grade analysis
- Conduct annual enrollment and enrollment trend analysis
- Assess learning outcomes

Q & A

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