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crossing the boundaries of traditional curricular content. visions, lessons learned and strategies.

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Dr. Ramon Puras (stand-in)

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Abstract

Based on the liberal arts and science vision, modern undergraduate curricula increasingly adopt interdisciplinary and thematic approaches, by drawing from and integrating insights from two or more academic disciplines in order to develop a wider understanding of problems that are too complex or too wide-ranging to be dealt with using the knowledge and methodology of just one discipline. This interdisciplinary approach is also motivated by the belief that an education that encompasses different disciplinary perspectives is the best foundation for a broad academic orientation and an independent and critical way of thinking.

However, lessons learned indicate that any interdisciplinary approach also requires a solid grounding in the different disciplines, as a substantial depth of knowledge is required for successful interdisciplinary debate and for adequate preparation for studies at graduate level. A true interdisciplinary approach requires more than simply offering students a wide range of discipline-based courses from which they can choose, as this does not address the integration of insights from different disciplines.

This integration of disciplinary perspectives represents an important aspect of the curriculum at Amsterdam University College (AUC). The strategy applied when putting them into practice will be illustrated in the presentation.