Today’s colleges and universities have a responsibility to prepare students to enter and thrive in a complex, multifaceted, globalized society. What curriculum innovations do we need to enact at our institutions to prepare our students for success after graduation?

One increasingly pervasive societal trend is the growing impact of data science on our lives. Every website visit and social media post can be tracked and mined for commercial or political advantage. Personalized DNA testing has created a new trove of genetic data that can be used for tracing our biological ancestry or cracking unsolved crimes. Data science has the potential to reduce inefficiencies, boost economic growth, and create new job opportunities. Yet these advantages must be balanced against the potential costs of sacrificing our privacy in the pursuit of technological advancement. What type of curriculum reform will help our students understand and adapt to the rapid changes in our data-driven world?

Climate change is another contemporary challenge that transcends geographical and disciplinary boundaries. According to a September 2019 survey, more than 7 in 10 teenagers and young adults believe that climate change will cause harm to people in their generation. Frustrated by the slow progress of legislative change, an increasing number of youth are taking action to bring attention to the earth’s changing climate. Yet the same survey reveals a decrease in the number of teenagers who report learning about climate change in school. How can colleges and universities respond to this educational need by providing climate literacy across the curriculum?

These examples illustrate suggest that the curriculum of the future needs to embrace interdisciplinary innovations. Yet our colleges and universities are still based on a 19th century model of academic departments and majors, which determine faculty appointments and the granting of degrees. These departmental constraints often can impede the intellectual flexibility required to address 21st-century concerns. Key educational benefits can arise from enlarging our perspectives. The STEM disciplines are embracing the arts to become STEAM. The literature curriculum has expanded beyond the Western canon to incorporate global perspectives from more diverse authors, together with
insights from cultural studies. What other curriculum changes can we imagine that stretch beyond the traditional disciplines of the academy?

Curriculum innovations are not an end in themselves; their ultimate goal is to help students learn. With advances in neuroscience and psychology, we are gaining greater insight into how students learn and what can be done to make learning “stick.” The new brain science has reinforced what all good teachers know—that meaningful learning happens when students are actively engaged in critical and creative thinking coupled with thoughtful reflection and regular review. This convergence of research and practice provides us with the impetus to reexamine our course curricula and ask ourselves whether our lessons and activities prioritize student learning. What principles and practices of curriculum design can we employ to enable the students in our classes to become independent, life-long learners?

Please join us in New Orleans for an exploration of curriculum innovation. Possible topics are listed below, but we welcome other suggestions that align with the symposium theme. We particularly encourage submissions that illustrate how participation in an FRN – sponsored activity (e.g., a Network Summer or Network Winter Seminar, participation as a scholar in residence, etc.) has influenced your research and teaching.

- Climate change literacy across the curriculum
- Making learning stick
- The benefits of college
- Critical and creative thinking
- Experiential learning
- Data science and data literacy
- Expanding the scope of the literature curriculum
- Combining STEM and the arts to make STEAM.
- Cultivating interdisciplinarity
- Implementing innovation in the curriculum
- Entrepreneurship

**Proposal Submission Guidelines:**

Please submit a one-page abstract (between 300-500 words) of the intended session that outlines the proposal structure, content, and rationale of the session. Abstracts must be submitted by groups of 2-4 presenters per proposal. Proposals submitted by individuals and accepted will be combined with at least one other accepted proposal. Abstracts can be sent as an email attachment to frn@nyu.edu. In the subject line of your email, please indicate “National Symposium 2019 proposal.”

**Proposal Submission Deadline: Monday, April 27, 2020**