Overview

The Be Better initiative is aimed at establishing the University of Iowa as the university that creates leaders who leverage their Strengths, leadership knowledge, and leadership skills to contribute to their communities now and in the future.

What it is: Be Better is an adaptive leadership pathway. Students will begin by taking the StrengthsQuest assessment, which will help them understand the strengths they bring to their UI education. They can then develop their strengths and talents through participating in various academic courses (including courses in the GE curriculum and in the major) and co-curricular experiences (e.g., leadership experiences, alternative spring break, service). Be Better will help students develop the core competencies they need to succeed now and in the future. Be Better competencies are directly linked to outcomes faculty, staff, students, and future employers say matter.

Why it matters: Be Better will provide students with the tools to excel and engage in their learning and development in order to help all University of Iowa students develop core competencies related to education at a Research I, liberal arts institution. One goal for this initiative is to assist students in articulating what they learn at the University of Iowa using an evidence-based common language.

How students benefit:

- Better articulate the value of what is learned from each of their classes, their major(s), and/or co-curricular experiences
- Practice transferring learning across contexts
- Anyone can benefit from this initiative—it is not just for leaders or a specific major
- Increased self-awareness and reflection on learning
- Develop and improve the knowledge and skills employers are seeking from new and recent graduates
- The Be Better initiative is intentionally designed to support each student’s personal pathway and success

Core Competencies – Selected from Dr. Corey Seemiller’s Student Leadership Competencies, which were derived from mapping undergraduate majors and accrediting agency outcomes

- Analysis (Research & Learning category)
- Problem Solving (Research & Learning category)
- Verbal Communication (Communication category)
- Writing (Communication category)
- Diversity (Civic Responsibility category)
- Productive Relationships (Interpersonal Interaction category)
- Collaboration (Interpersonal Interaction category)
- Self-Development (Self-Awareness and Development category)
- Ethics (Personal Behavior category)
- Goals (Strategic Planning category)
- Group Development (Group Dynamics category)

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