

Feigenbaum MCLA Leads

Design Thinking Integration Initiative

Prototype Plan
February 27, 2016



Inspired and enabled by the generosity of the Feigenbaum Foundation and spurred by Armand & Donald Feigenbaum's spirit and legacy, the Design Thinking Integration Initiative is intended to promote leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation, excellence in quality, and community development by integrating the Design Thinking methodology into MCLA's core and departmental curricula to develop creative, experiential, and impactful opportunities for MCLA students, faculty, and our community.



Introduction:

As the campus welcomes president Dr. Jaimie Birge, the **Feigenbaum MCLA Leads** is pleased to release the **Design Thinking Integration Initiative** prototype plan. This plan has been developed from the ground upward over the course of several months with the input of students, faculty, staff, and community members. It has also been informed by research, site visits, consultation with the Feigenbaum Foundation, and consideration of other like-initiatives implemented at a wide array of colleges and universities, ranging from Stanford University to Smith College. This Initiative, which began with a generous grant from the Feigenbaum Foundation, will support the development of new programming designed to benefit MCLA’s students, faculty, and community. The Design Thinking Integration Initiative provides a new means of cultivating MCLA students’ expertise, passion, creativity, innovation, and bias toward action within a community context. In doing so, the Initiative will embody and reflect the legacy of Armand & Donald Feigenbaum, while aligning with MCLA’s Institutional mission and values and the aims of a publicly-delivered liberal arts education.

It is important to emphasize that the project ideas summarized in this document were not generated by the project planners, rather they reflect a compiled and curated set of ideas and aspirations that the planners have read, heard, and seen. The thirteen projects (explained in further detail later in this plan), to be delivered over the next two years, include:

- Project 1: Capstone Redesign Pilot
- Project 2: Downtown Innovation Space
- Project 3: Berkshire Hills Internship Project (BHIP) & MCLA Leadership Academy
- Project 4: Keynote Speaker Series and Colloquia
- Project 5: Content Course Integration
- Project 6: Minor Concentration in Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Project 7: Capstone Redesign and Full Implementation
- Project 8: Pop-up Courses
- Project 9: Design Thinking Minor Concentration
- Project 10: Design Thinking Certificate
- Project 11: Venture Creation/Business Plan Competition
- Project 12: Internship and Mentoring
- Project 13: First Year Experience Redesign

Donald and Armand Feigenbaum:

The proposed Design Thinking Integration Initiative within the Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Initiative is reflective of the legacy of Dr. Armand and Donald Feigenbaum not only in name, but in principle and purpose as well. Their company, General Systems, advised corporations and leaders around the globe in order to improve quality, while stimulating innovation. The legacy of the Feigenbaum brothers is emblematic of five principles, which guide the goals and purpose of our proposed programming: innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership, community impact, and excellence in quality. Specifically, Dr. Armand Feigenbaum wrote, *“Quality and Innovation are integral to sustainability,”* and added this can be encouraged by *“making it possible for every man and woman to be an entrepreneur by offering the tools, resources, objectives, and support.”* By embracing such principles, Armand and Donald Feigenbaum achieved international renown while maintaining a deep respect and love for the Berkshires (their home) that manifested in a tangible, positive effect on the economic, cultural, and community development of our region. Most importantly, the Feigenbaums believed that leading both quality and innovation is a group process that relies on a foundational *“belief in people.”*

Project Goals:

This **Design Thinking Integration Initiative** prototype plan reflects the goals of the **Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Initiative** as follows:

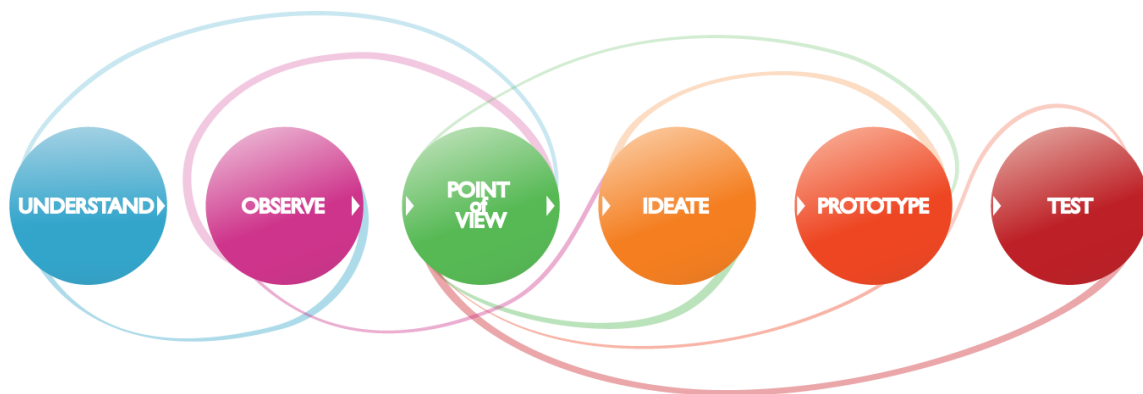
- Represent the **spirit and legacy** of Armand and Donald Feigenbaum with programming that reflects innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership, community impact, and excellence in quality.
- Increase MCLA **student, faculty and staff opportunities** related to innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership experiences. Deliver programming, research, experiences, and partnerships in these areas.
- Advance **MCLA’s position** as a regional leader (thought leader, facilitator, resource, destination, and convener) in innovation, entrepreneurship, and leadership efforts.
- Generate and strengthen **community partnerships** and programs that will impact our region, our economy, and the well-being of the citizens in our county.

Throughout the development of this prototype plan, we have regularly returned to the values and goals that define our college – and those that help us articulate what it means to be liberally educated. What is striking is how the aims of our college and the life’s work of Armand and Donald Feigenbaum intersect in such a complementary manner, with each emphasizing leadership, innovation, access, preparation, diversity, informed and strategic development, teamwork, integrity, communication, trust, and excellence. Recognizing that these prototype projects will employ Design Thinking methodology in an inclusive context—connecting students with professors and the community in deep, meaningful ways—we intend to leverage the Feigenbaum Foundation’s generous contribution in enacting these shared goals and aspirations.

In practice, we expect the **Design Thinking Integration Initiative** will provide new opportunities for cultivating MCLA students' expertise, passion, creativity, innovation, leadership, and bias toward action—deeply reflecting MCLA's liberal arts core values and outcomes, community connections, and high-impact practices. Ultimately, we believe that this Initiative will facilitate collaboration and learning across disciplines, providing immersion in a diverse range of experiences that allow students to explore challenges, develop creative solutions, and engage in integrative processes involving peers, faculty, and community mentors.

Design Thinking:

After much research and input, and hands-on experiences at an October workshop, we recommend that **design thinking** be introduced and strategically scaled in a variety of curricular and co-curricular projects across the college. Design Thinking has, in fact, been directly linked to the Feigenbaum's Total Quality Control ideas in that it *"provides a common language and a teachable methodology that can be (applied) at all levels to learn new ways of thinking and behaving that innovation demands"* (Leitka, 2015). As such, Design Thinking has been adopted by many Fortune 500 companies and leading liberal arts colleges as a process that engages stakeholders in a creative and community-based problem solving process. As Liedtka and Mintzberg (2013) suggested, *"to design is to devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones."* Design Thinking achieves this through a set of processes that encourage full understanding of visible and hidden parameters of a particular problem, and consideration of an, often unanticipated, range of solutions that are explored simultaneously. The goal is to generate solutions that lead to better future states and add value to individuals and community...by simply asking "what if?"



Design Thinking is often explained through a series of domains. The graphic above (from the Stanford d.School) displays the primary domains of the design thinking methodology, emphasizing how each spiral back, intersect, and overlap with others.

Most commonly, design thinking is described and summarized by the following five stages (incorporating the domains noted above):

- **Build Empathy.** Thoroughly learn about your audience through understanding and observation. Ask what is?
- **Define.** Construct multiple points-of-view of people’s needs and insights. Consider, how might we?
- **Ideate.** Creative brainstorming, suspend judgment--all solutions encouraged. Imagine what if?
- **Prototype.** Rough and rapid, build a model that communicates your ideas to others. Fail early/often. Consider, what wows?
- **Test.** Return to user group and test ideas for feedback, modify, repeat. Discover what works!

Ultimately, we believe that the integration of design thinking will facilitate collaboration and learning across disciplines, providing immersion in a diverse range of experiences—allowing students to explore challenges, develop creative solutions, and engage in integrative processes involving peers, faculty, and community mentors. Furthermore, these steps are fully aligned with both MCLA’s mission/values and liberal arts outcomes, and will provide practical and intentional opportunities for application and practice. A graphic displaying how our institutional aspirations align with design thinking is provided below.

Alignment of Institutional Aspirations & Design Thinking

		<u>Design Thinking</u>				
		Build Empathy	Define	Ideate	Prototype	Test
<u>MCLA Mission/Values</u>	<u>Liberal Arts Outcomes</u>					
Civic Engagement	Civic Engagement					
Global Awareness	Ethical Reasoning					
Inclusive Community	Intercultural knowledge & engagement					
Life Long Learning	Skills for Life Long Learning					
Innovation, Experimentation & Creativity	Critical & Creative Thinking					
Discovery & Understanding	Inquiry & Analysis					
Practicality & Application	Applied Learning					

We believe the integration of Design Thinking throughout the college’s core and departmental curricula, in addition to the development of new co-curricular programming, will create a unique basis of institutional distinction, designating MCLA as a destination for an innovative and impactful liberal arts education through which students gain the creative confidence requisite to leading lives of consequence in an ever-evolving, increasingly global society.

Projects:

The following projects in the **Design Thinking Integration Initiative** are intended to elevate students’ academic experiences and professional opportunities by providing mastery experiences and professional mentors; creating closer student-faculty relationships; increasing student and institutional engagement with our community; positively affecting our community in terms of economic, cultural, and community development; and providing faculty with the resources requisite to innovate, lead, and develop creative, meaningful, impactful, and interesting work in the areas in which they are passionate. The Design Thinking Integration Initiative seeks to capture, align, propel, and scale forward in a cohesive theme several of the many extant ideas, initiatives, and aspirations on campus and within our community, and in so doing designate MCLA as a destination for a creative and transformative liberal arts education.

The project planners offer several assertions in advance of the summarized project descriptions:

- **There is good work already happening.** The Feigenbaum MCLA Leads, and its various stakeholders, recognize that this prototype plan reflects many great things already happening on campus. We do not assume that these ideas are new or reflect glaring deficiencies. Rather, this prototype seeks to advance and support those ideas and aspirations that currently exist—and promote new opportunities that capitalize upon our strengths and deepen connections with our community.
- **Build from the ground up.** We believe in the power of constructing these projects from the classroom out, recognizing the need to cultivate excitement and investment through evangelism rather than by imposing an administrative directive.
- **Walk the talk.** The Design Thinking Integration Initiative seeks to remain true to the Design Thinking process, thus it is not intended to be implemented en masse. Instead, projects will be continuously introduced in prototype form, assessed, and then refined.

The following pages detail the projects and their respective timelines.

Design Thinking Integration Initiative

Timeline of Projects

Project 1: Capstone Redesign Pilot – Spring 2016.

In the Spring 2016 semester Professors David Eve and Diane Scott, with the support of Feigenbaum MCLA Leads and consultation from Design Thinking specialist Eugene Korsunskiy, are piloting two Capstone courses that integrate the Design Thinking methodology into project-based learning. These courses—*Creative Economy of the Berkshires* and *Entrepreneurship and Culture*—will allow for an assessment of the efficacy of Design Thinking curricular integration, help develop new methods and applications for Design Thinking at MCLA, as well as allow us to gauge student, faculty, and community engagement with and enthusiasm for the Design Thinking process.

Project 2: Downtown Innovation Space – Spring 2016.

Feigenbaum MCLA Leads proposes to pilot two physical spaces for innovation, collaboration, and community engagement. One will be located within the downtown area of North Adams while the other will be placed in the gallery space on the second floor of Bowman Hall. The first and third Thursday of every month following spring break will be Innovation Thursdays. Each Innovation Thursday, the Downtown Innovation space will be used for Pop-Up discussions about community challenges and Design Thinking workshops aimed at solving the challenges raised. The discussions will include community leaders and stakeholders, while the workshops will be co-facilitated by an MCLA faculty member. Meanwhile, the Bowman Space will be used to introduce the student body to the Design Thinking methodology and receive student input on various experiences. Establishing such spaces will further solidify, and demonstrate to the community, MCLA's position as an anchor institution in Berkshire County and as a leading convener of creative people, thought, and ideas.

IMAGINE...

A cyber-physical space where students, faculty and community members can gather to post, consider, and collectively tackle specific community challenges—generating prototype (accessing Maker spaces) solutions while leveraging shared experiences, expertise, and resources to improve and add value to our community.

Project 3: B-HIP/Leadership Academy – Summer 2016.

The second project of the Design Thinking Integration Initiative involves the application of Design Thinking as an overlay/framework for MCLA's intensive, credit-bearing summer experiences: Berkshire Hills Internship Program (B-HIP), co-facilitated by Professors Lisa Donovan and Diane Scott and Berkshire Cultural Resource Director Jen Crowell; and the MCLA Leadership Academy, led by Professor Dana Rapp. Integrating Design Thinking into the B-HIP and Leadership Academy curricula will allow for further assessment and development of Design Thinking methods as directly applied by students in a community setting. Students in the Leadership Academy will, for example, use the design thinking process to explore school-based challenges in generating prototype solutions that can be tested during fieldwork.

Project 4: Keynote Speaker Series and Colloquia – Academic Year 2016-17.

As a piece of its Design Thinking Integration Initiative, Feigenbaum MCLA Leads proposes that MCLA leverage its demonstrated facility in curating and hosting notable speakers by creating a new lecture series with an emphasis on the Design Thinking methodology so as to foster innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurship in the Berkshire region. The proposed lecture series will host two events annually in the Spring and Fall semesters, with a focus on both nationally recognized and local speakers who are successful innovators and entrepreneurs. Additionally, Feigenbaum MCLA Leads is exploring the potential hosting of a Design Incubation Colloquia, with the support of Visiting Professor, Joshua Ostraff. Held several times a year around New York City, these colloquia offer opportunities for academics and professionals to share research and practice. In doing so, MCLA will further leverage our geography, build excitement around the MCLA Leads Initiative, and solidify the college's position both as an institution that cultivates creativity, spurs innovation, and promotes leadership and as a convener of people, thoughts, and ideas.

IMAGINE...

MCLA serving as a gathering place for design thinking through weekend symposiums, summer institutes and residencies, organizational retreats, and keynote speakers—leveraging our regional environmental backdrop and creative culture reputation.

Project 5: Content Course Integration – Fall 2016.

Integrating Design Thinking throughout several 200-, 300-, and 400-level content courses across the disciplines will serve to develop a theme of Design Thinking at MCLA—across disciplines and throughout a student's college career—as well as create opportunities for mastery experiences and introduce students to professional mentors. Feigenbaum MCLA Leads is currently in the process of recruiting interested professors and providing them with various training platforms to enhance their knowledge of and efficacy with the Design Thinking methodology. Furthermore, Interdisciplinary Studies professor Karen Cardozo has committed integrating the Design Thinking methodology into two courses: *World of Work* and *Introduction to Leadership*. In addition, Dr. Cardozo is currently conducting an ethnographic research project, with support from Feigenbaum MCLA Leads, in which she is using Design Thinking to gain a more empathic understanding of the educational and career outcomes IDST students want from their education. Other faculty members considering the integration of Design Thinking into their content courses include: Michael Birch, Communications; Diane Scott and Lisa Donovan, Arts Management; Joshua Ostraff, Fine and Performing Arts; Dana Rapp, Education; Celia Norcross and Spencer Moser, Student Affairs. Additionally, Feigenbaum MCLA Leads is actively recruiting faculty from other content areas to participate in this initiative.

Project 6: Minor Concentration in Innovation & Entrepreneurship – Fall 2016.

The Minor Concentration in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, currently in development under the leadership of Professor David Eve, will be open to all students, regardless of major concentration. Students enrolled in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Minor will use the Design Thinking methodology to explore potential entrepreneurial opportunities related or unrelated to their major concentration. As with the other projects, at the heart of the Minor Concentration in Innovation and Entrepreneurship is the idea of providing students with mastery experiences and mentors.

Project 7: Capstone Redesign: Full Implementation – Fall 2016.

Following an evaluation of the Capstone pilot courses and an assessment of their challenges, strengths, and further opportunities for improvement, Feigenbaum MCLA Leads will implement its full redesign of Capstone programming in the Fall semester of the 2016 academic year. The redesigned Capstone programming, hereafter referred to as Community Impact Capstone (CIC), will offer five highly interdisciplinary courses per semester that employ the Design Thinking methodology to develop creative solutions to local and regional community challenges. The Capstone Redesign, along with providing students with mastery experiences and mentors, will allow faculty to use their scholarship, passions, and training in Design Thinking in combination with Feigenbaum MCLA Leads resources to do meaningful, impactful work within their discipline and the community.

IMAGINE...

Capstone courses that apply the design thinking processes to deliver interdisciplinary content and applications through problem based pedagogy—for example, students challenged to generate prototypes for increasing summer foot traffic from Mass MOCA to the downtown North Adams businesses.

Project 8: Pop-Up Course – Academic Year 2016-17.

The Leads Initiative proposes that MCLA offer a series of elective, credit-bearing, short-duration experiential workshops open to all students and members of the community throughout the academic year, hereafter referred to as Pop-Up Courses. These courses will be taught by faculty, community members, alumni and students representing government, nonprofits, and private-for-profit companies. Pop-Up Courses will focus on either a particular Design Thinking challenge for which students develop creative solutions using the Design Thinking methodology or impart specific issue-related advice and/or experiences. Optimally, a minimum of two Pop-Up Courses will be offered per semester.

Project 9: Design Thinking Minor Concentration: Fall 2017.

The interdisciplinary nature of the Design Thinking methodology renders it complimentary to the major concentration offerings provided by MCLA. A number of large corporations, such as IBM, Capital One, and InfoSys, have been seeking employees possessing experience with the Design Thinking methodology. Moreover, the Department of Fine and Performing Arts is currently in the process of developing a Design major. Several of the courses proposed in conjunction with the Design major are inherently aligned with the Design Thinking Methodology. By offering a minor concentration in Design Thinking, the college will be able to leverage an extant initiative to create additional value. MCLA students who enroll in the Design Thinking minor will receive upon graduation a credential in a highly desired skill, thus making them stand out among their peers in the job market. To assist with the development of the Design major and its offshoot—the minor concentration in Design Thinking—Feigenbaum MCLA Leads has committed its support to bringing experienced Design professional Linda Reynolds on campus for three days during the summer (2016) to collaborate with FPA professors Joshua Ostraff and Melanie Mowinski in further development the Design major, minor, and certificate programs.

Project 10: Design Thinking Certificate Program – Fall 2017.

The tenth project of the Design Thinking Integration Initiative, nested within the Design Thinking minor, is the creation of the Certificate Program in Design Thinking. Feigenbaum MCLA Leads proposes that MCLA create a nine-credit certificate program in Design Thinking that can be acquired incidentally by undergraduate students as well as offered as a part of MCLA’s Continuing Education programming. The Design Thinking Certificate will comprise four academic elements totaling nine credits. This certificate program is designed to provide MCLA students and professionals working in Berkshire County with opportunities to set themselves apart in the region’s job market, while also building skills that support business innovation and organizational development.

Project 11: Venture Creation/Business Plan Competition – Academic Year 2016-17.

The Venture Creation Competition is an entrepreneurial program through which students will develop business plans for commercial or social ventures with the assistance of faculty and community mentors using the Design Thinking methodology. Students will then present their plans to a panel of judges for a cash prize. The Venture Creation Competition will provide students with a mastery experience and meaningful engagement with faculty and community mentors, and has the potential to feed into several community based economic development initiatives including, for example: North Adams Partnership, Lever, and Berkshire Starts.

Project 12: Internship & Mentoring: Fall 2018.

The Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Initiative proposes, as a part of its Design Thinking Integration Initiative, that MCLA systematize its internship and mentoring processes in order to promote greater student, faculty, and community participation in internships so as to help students connect their liberal arts education to practical experiences and assist them in defining their post-graduation life and career goals. The proposed process will consist of four separate elements: goal setting, professional development, practical experience, and evangelism. To further this project, Feigenbaum MCLA Leads has assembled a team of faculty and staff members to participate in an online Design Thinking course in which their Design Challenge will be to prototype an institutionally systematized internship program. Ultimately, these high-impact experiences can be used as a recruiting tool, to prepare students with resume experiences that employers seek, and to connect our students with our local economy in an effort to improve regional talent retention.

IMAGINE...

A four year internship and mentoring program that all MCLA students participate in— beginning with service learning opportunities in the freshman year and culminating in junior or senior year structured internships with local businesses, non-profits and governmental agencies.

Project 13: First Year Experience Redesign: Fall 2018.

Feigenbaum MCLA Leads proposes that, beginning in the Fall semester of the 2018 academic year, MCLA redesign the First Year Experience, incorporating the Design Thinking methodology into the core of the program. The FYE redesign will consist of the same elements—common reading, author lecture, and peer advising—but with two changes: first, to assign as the common reading books that explain and demonstrate the Design Thinking methodology and its various applications, including, but not limited to, Tim Brown’s *Change by Design* and David and Tom Kelley’s *Creative Confidence*; and second, to require all incoming freshmen to participate in a course in which they will be challenged to design their own college roadmap—aligning courses and experiences with goals. Currently, Professor Karen Cardozo is consulting with Eugene Korsunskiy to replicate the highly successful Stanford *Design Your Life* course. As a freshman course, this will inspire student engagement in college and future planning, supporting current advising and retention efforts.

Impact of the Design Thinking Integration Initiative:

For students:

The **Design Thinking Integration Initiative** will provide new opportunities for cultivating MCLA students’ expertise, passion, creativity, innovation, leadership, and bias toward action within a community context—deeply reflecting MCLA’s liberal arts core values, liberal arts outcomes, and high-impact practices. Research suggests that retention and graduation is improved when “*students are actively and emotionally connected to their college through intensive, mastery (high impact) experiences*”—specifically when students: work on projects; are involved with jobs or internships; apply classroom learning in context; are assigned mentors; and study with professors who make them excited about learning (2014, Gallup). Moreover, these projects will help students prepare for post-college life, as an AACU survey underscores “*employers (95%) prefer to hire college graduates with the skills that enable them to contribute to innovation in the workforce*”, and (92%) report that “*innovation is essential to sustaining organizational success.*” The Design Thinking Integration Initiative prototype projects intentionally integrate these high-impact, high-engagement, readiness strategies that improve students’ emotional connection by involving them in deep and meaningful learning, while building strong connections with faculty and community.

For MCLA, surrounding community and alumni:

MCLA, as a public college, remains committed to providing a high quality, *accessible* liberal arts education to any student aspiring to it. The Feigenbaum MCLA Leads Design Thinking Integration Initiative has the potential to designate MCLA as unique within the public college landscape in its dedication to such ethos as creativity, innovation, leadership, community connections, and entrepreneurship. When combined with the region’s creative and cultural reputation, we believe this Initiative has the potential to uniquely brand our campus, making it a preferred destination for prospective students/families thereby inspiring enrollment. Additionally, we believe this will also have

an effect on the recruitment of high quality faculty who are interested in working in an environment where disciplines are connected, partnerships with community are strong, and students are engaged in liberally minded, creative problem solving as they learn new content and apply it in meaningful ways.

Also, our college operates in a competitive higher educational landscape and in a region that is experiencing rapidly shifting demographic trends (fewer residents who are older and increasingly socioeconomically disadvantaged). This requires that MCLA will continue to partner with and lead cross-sector response and community development. Understanding that many of our students transition directly from graduation to work, we believe the Design Thinking Integration Initiative offers a unique opportunity for engagement within our community providing intensive, context-based experiences that result in mutual benefits (and lasting connections) between our community and students. It is imperative that MCLA play a lead in the regional economy and community, recognizing that our ability to recruit and thrive will be greatly impacted by the perceived economic, cultural, and social health of our region.

Finally, the Design Thinking Integration Initiative will advance new development opportunities through alumni engagement. This will occur through several projects such as pop-up courses (that are participated in and delivered by alumni), as they serve as mentors and hosts for design thinking Capstone and content courses, by accepting and guiding student interns, through the proposed speaker series and colloquia, and as we demonstrate a commitment to one of the most progressive approaches to innovation and organizational development—design thinking.

Conclusion:

The project planners are grateful for the opportunity to meet so many talented and committed individuals both on and off campus throughout the planning phase. We are inspired by your ideas and passion for MCLA and our Berkshire community. This plan has been labeled a prototype plan because it is just that. We anticipate the projects sketched out will likely change, with additional and modifications as we assess experiences, listen and learn, and develop future solutions. The aim of diligent, continuous assessment and refinement is to ensure excellence in the quality of MCLA's academic programming, an effort of which Armand and Donald, leaders in the field of Total Quality Control, would be proud.

The planners will note that this (somewhat) condensed document is supported by a longer plan that includes supporting research, notes, graphic representation, budget, etc. Currently, we are developing an investment plan needed to support design thinking expertise, human resources, space, materials, and incentives (such as fellowships and visiting scholars).

In closing, we are thankful for your consideration and truly encourage any feedback. You are also invited to a second Design Thinking Workshop on April 8, 2016 from 3:00pm to 9:00pm. During this session, Eugene Korsunskiy will provide an overview the design thinking methodology, participants will apply designed thinking to a locally derived mini-problem, and the project planners will provide a brief overview of this Design Thinking Integration Initiative prototype plan. **A formal invitation will be sent shortly.**

We are confident that the integration of Design Thinking throughout the college's core and departmental curricula, in addition to the development of new co-curricular programming, will create a unique basis of institutional distinction, designating MCLA as a destination for an innovative and impactful liberal arts education through which students gain the creative confidence requisite to leading lives of consequence in ever-evolving, increasingly global society.

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