



KEAN

# Beyond General Education: A New Core Curriculum for Kean

David S. Birdsell, Ph.D.

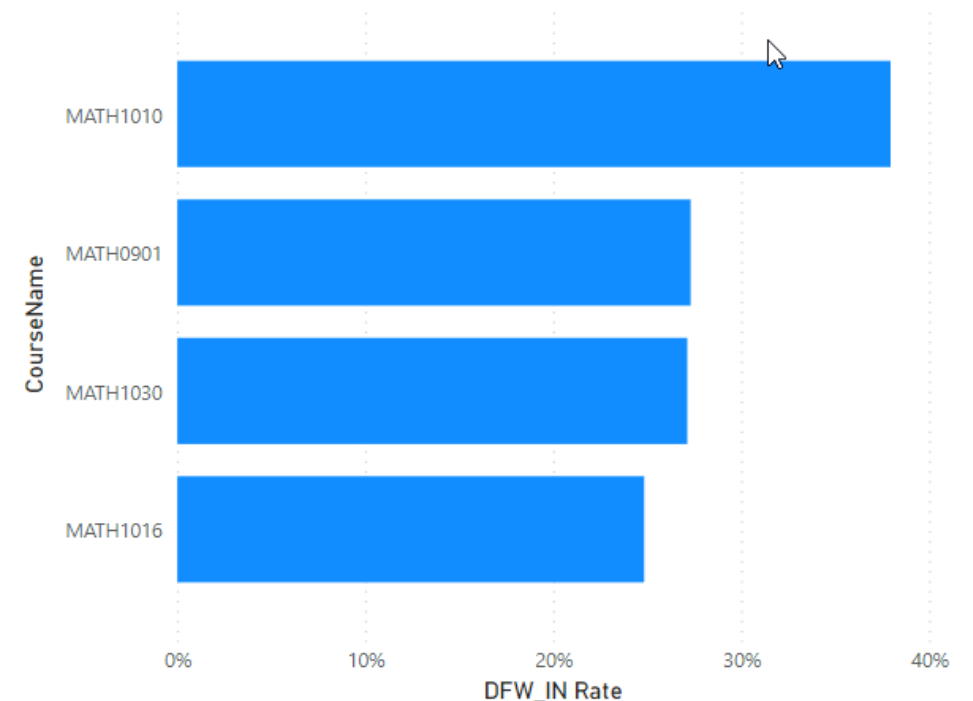
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

December 3, 2022

# Why Replace the GE Curriculum?

- No genuine, shared core
- Significant DFW rates in many GE courses
  - PSY 1000: 26%
  - ENG 1030: 32%
  - COM 1402: 25%
  - Particular problems in our quantitative series
- Significant loss of students in GE
  - 2018 lost 23% by 2019 and 54% by 2020
  - 2019 lost 30% by 2020 and 59% by 2021
- Portions of GE curriculum required to be taken over for different majors

Grade D F W & Incomplete Rate



# Principles Guiding the Redesign

- Create a genuine, shared core
- Support 4-year graduation with a major and up to two minors
- The same core should feed all majors at Kean\*
- Craft an inquiry-based curriculum
- Start with concrete observations and back into theory
- Derive as much of the curriculum as possible from place and community
- Create multiple points of contact throughout the curriculum: show how courses relate to one another throughout the first year
- Emphasize throughout the values of equity, inclusion, analytical rigor, mutual respect, and sustainability

# Major + Two Minors

Year	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Credits Earned
Freshman	15-shared core	15-shared core	30
Sophomore	15-major exploration	15-major pre-reqs (e.g., calculus) + free electives	30
Junior	15-major + minor	15-major + minor	30
Senior	15-major + minor	15-major + minor	30
		Total	120

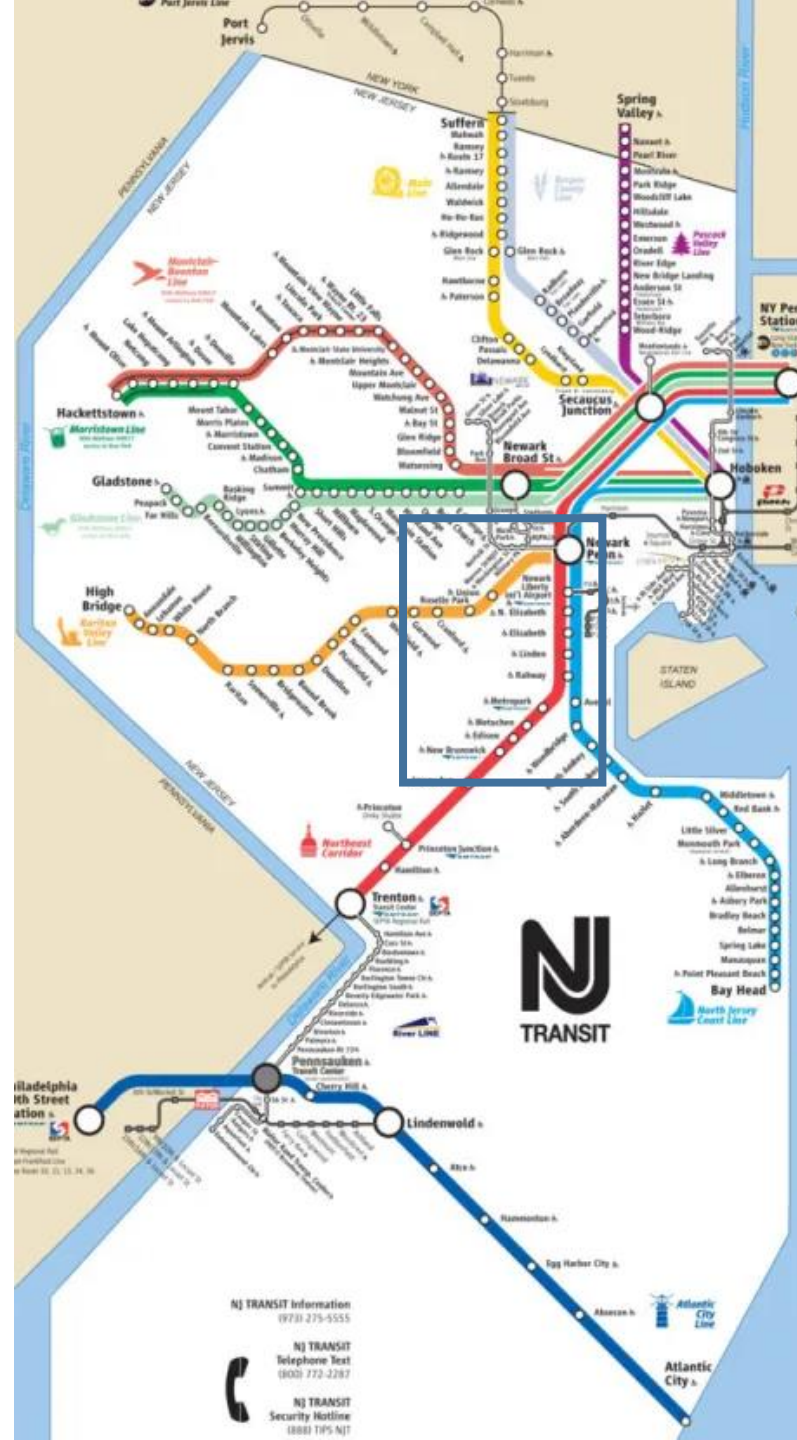
Keanu Kean

Year	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Credits Earned
Freshman	15-shared core	15-shared core	30
Sophomore	15-Tri-state businesses	Pre-calc, Microeconomics, 3 electives	30
Junior	9 major credits, 6 minor credits in urban systems	9 major credits, 6 minor credits in Urban Systems	30
Senior	9 major credits, 6 minor credits in data analytics	9 major credits, 6 minor credits in data analytics	30

# So Where Do We Start? With New Jersey, of Course!

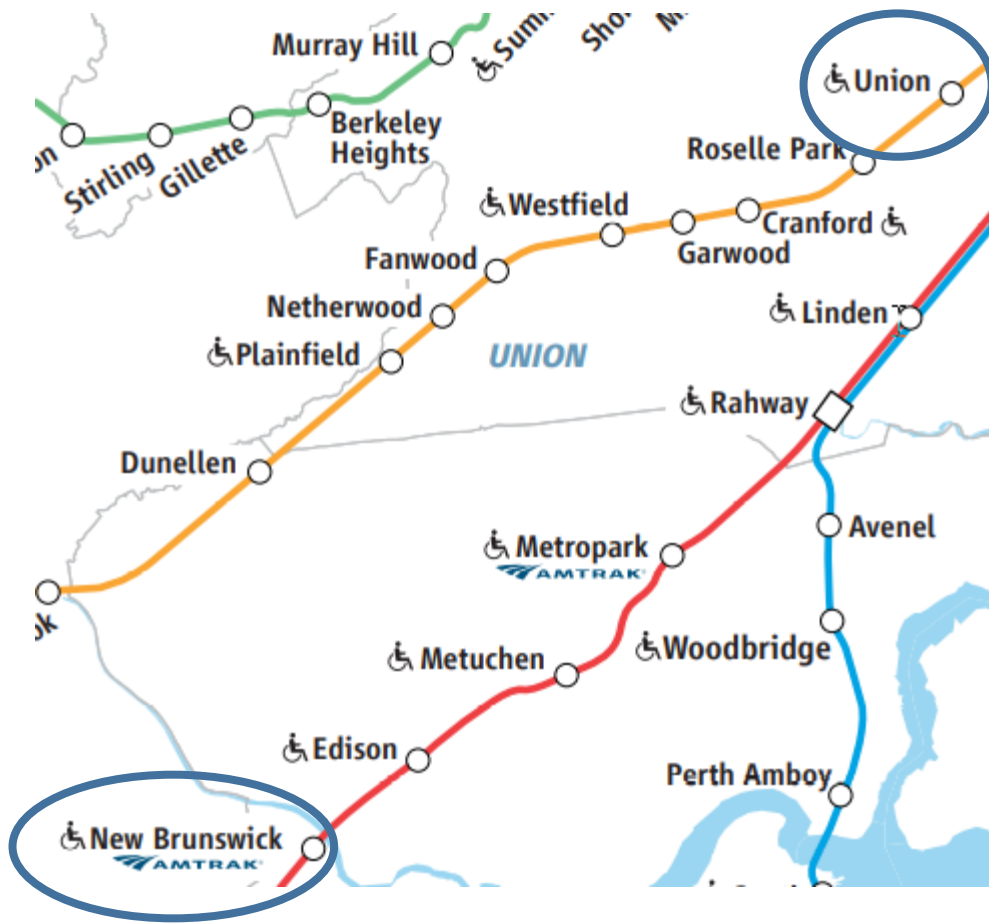
166 rail stations

- Built environment
- Natural environment
- County by county demography
- Living conditions
- Economics, health, education
- History
- Culture



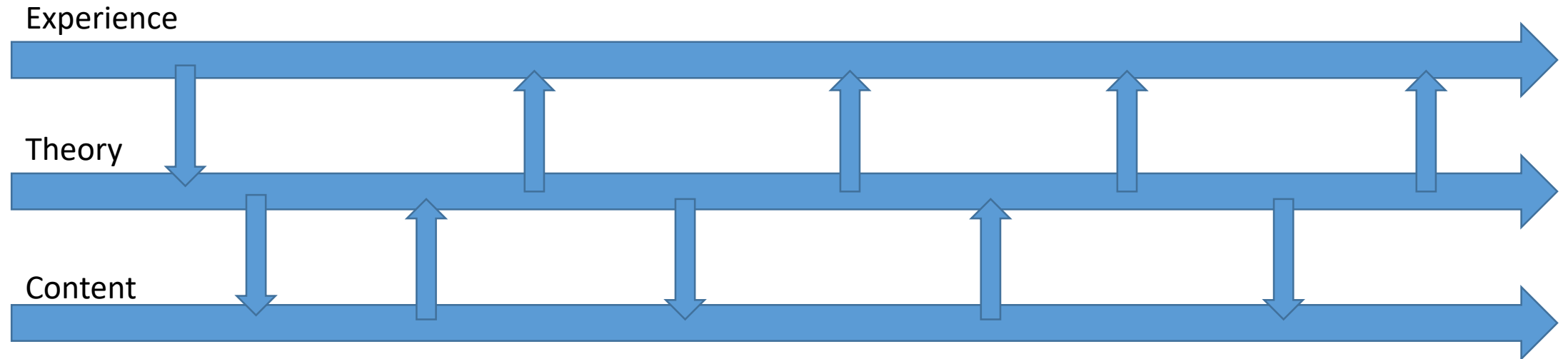
- Sociology/Demography
- History
- Cultural Resources
- Business/Economics
- Wellness/Food/Health
- Water
- Air
- Soil
- Writing
- Speaking
- Quantitative Reasoning

# Take One Side-by-Side Comparison



Feature	Union	Middlesex
Population	575,345	863,162
Pop/Square Mile	5,599	2,791
Minority-owned firms	29%	46%
PCP/100,000	66	95
Superfund Sites	2	18
Food Deserts	4	2
Indigenous Peoples/Dialect	Lenape/ Munsee	Lenape/ Northern Unami- Unalachtigo
River	Elizabeth	Raritan

# Weaving Experience, Theory, and Content

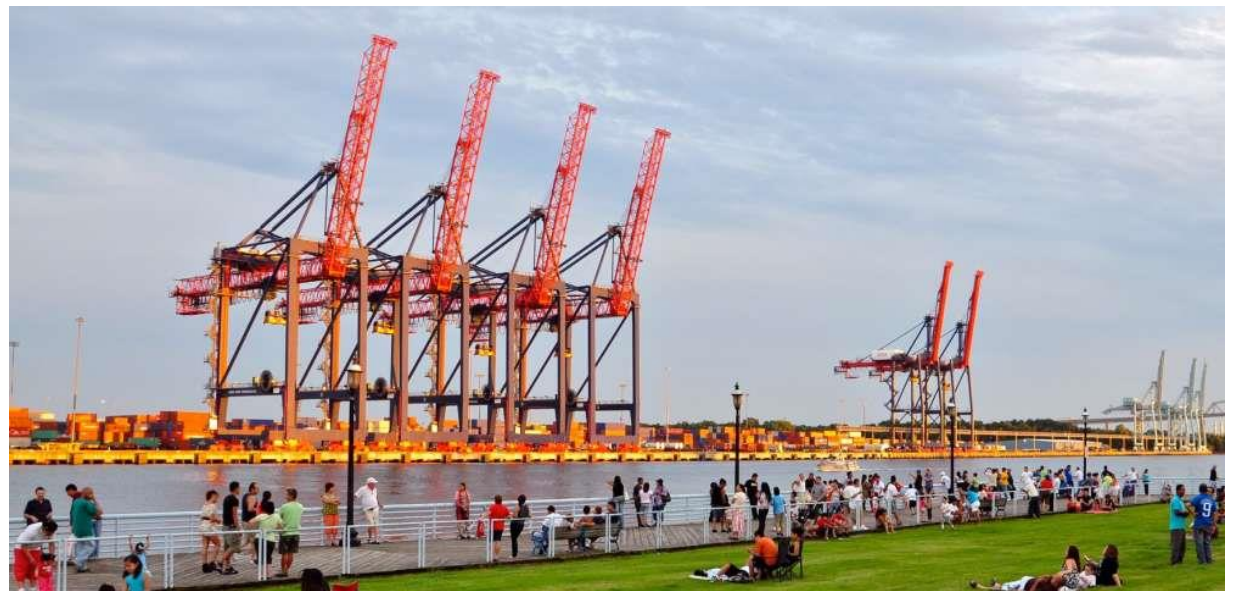
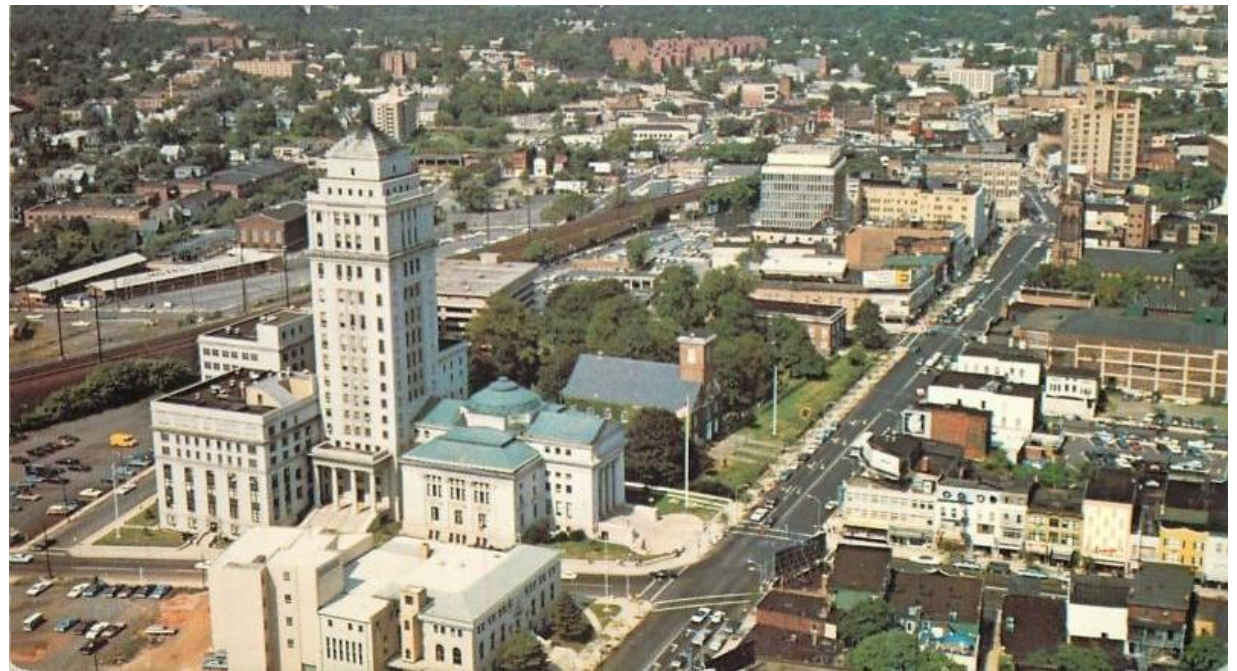


# New Mechanisms and Expectations

- All mathematics oriented toward statistical competency and understanding the underlying algebra
- Conductors to shepherd writing and speaking
- Conductor for quantitative thinking (in discussion)
- All first-year faculty are aware of what everyone else is teaching
- No one, ever, spends time or money on unexpected courses

Bottom line: 1) A fully intentional, fully integrated first year  
2) Powerful major + minor opportunities  
3) A distinctive Kean experience: for everyone







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