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It is important for Valparaiso University students to begin their engineering careers on a positive note. We do that by having all first-year engineering students enroll in GE 100, Exploring Engineering. Although you may know that you want to be an engineer, we don't assume you know what kind of engineer you want to be! So, you are admitted into the College of Engineering first, and a particular department when you start your second semester.

GE 100 is a one-semester course that provides an introduction to the engineering profession using hands-on projects to develop engineering skills. Topics include basic theory for each engineering major, engineering professional issues, computer applications, and academic survival skills. Teamwork is emphasized.

Students work in teams on hands-on projects in a recitation (i.e., laboratory) setting. These are small sections with a faculty mentor

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and two student mentors guiding the projects. The projects can



include:

- Lectures on tensile and compressive forces, energy transfer (i.e., thermodynamics), circuit design and logic, and problem-solving techniques.
- Recitation on material strength and bridge design, developing and racing a steam-powered vehicle, designing an entrance security system, and building and programming a LEGO<sup>®</sup> Robotics vehicle.

At the end of this course, students will see a positive and substantial improvement



in their ability to

- Describe engineering, including aspects such as problem solving and ethics

- Identify and describe the engineering disciplines (i.e., civil, computer, electrical, and mechanical)
- Choose a major or devise a plan to choose a major
- Discuss various options within engineering, both as an undergraduate (e.g., co-op, study abroad, etc.) and as a graduate (e.g., careers)
- Understand basic principles in civil, computer, electrical, and mechanical engineering
- Work in a team environment
- Identify with their new engineering “family,” including both faculty and students