

GESC

October 5, 2009

1:30 – 3:00

Present: Bob Drovdaahl, Doug Downing, Katie Kresser, Ben McFarland, Kathleen Braden, Michelle Beauclair, Cindy Price

Agenda

- Opening prayer
- Focus on criteria
 - Review Faculty Responses
 - Key questions
- Faculty emails to the GESC
- Next week?

Emails from faculty

Interpersonal (Seely)

Wellness as part of the EC (Atwell-Scrivner)

Skill emphasis (Amorose)

What makes a course an obvious CE course (EC = 40 credits; Common Curriculum = 35)?

- Emphasize written and/or oral communication as a skill
- Require at least two pages of written text?
- W courses?

EC courses should not have prerequisites

- If it has prereqs, it is not EC
- Upper-division?

Ways of knowing

- Courses introduce ways of knowing that allow student to be a thinking citizen
- All criteria apply to each course? Structure of a course? Structure of EC?
- Written/oral communication, critical thinking, cultural diversity, group interaction, reading comprehension

How do students think about a topic as opposed to how much information they have on a topic?

House/CE metaphor:

- *Foundation* – Core Curriculum (values, fundamentals)
- *Front door* – USEM
- *Framing* – EC (where students form their thinking about the world)
- *Furnishings* – major (who you are and how you live your life)

Conversation of understanding EC before discussing skills and criteria

- What is the framework?
 - What courses would *not* provide framework?
- Students can choose, but exposure to different methods of inquiry – how the course is taught may be different
- Could it end up collapsing to the major?
- Use exploratory rather than introductory
 - Introductory draws in majors
 - What will students need in two years for their major?
 - Introductory implies a follow-up
- How will a course affect how a student thinks about the world five years after graduation?

First issue in EC is content driven

- Two-tiered EC
 - core of four courses that constitute major areas/content areas/ways of knowing
 - three/four secondary courses (i.e., Tourism in Geography)
- EC becomes an exploration of the discipline and how that discipline helps the student
 - explore beyond by applying it to a human issue
- Operationally cannot create an interdisciplinary EC.
- Problem centered rather than disciplinary centered

Teaching courses differently...?

- Faculty who want to be in the EC may slightly tweak a course vs completely reinventing it
 - Readily achievable reform of EC
- Overarching communication tool to help students see connections
 - Students don't usually make connections between disciplines

Encourage faculty communication

- Structure faculty development to accomplish EC goals
- Build connections and learn more
- Defend how a course will impact student thinking in the future, even if they don't become a major
- Contextualization and translation (from an expert to non expert)
 - i.e., teaching a course as a scientist
 - lay out the basics
 - cannot understand everything until you have more information

Does it change how you teach the course when you have to articulate/express how and why you will teach the course (art example – how drawing changes the way how you see the world)?

- Not so broad that any class can count
- Adjuncts teaching would have to articulate as well

Key questions

- Must have relevance and applicability when student leaves.
- How do we require the discipline to affect student thinking (even if they don't become a major)?
- How does it contribute to the notion of being an engaged citizen?
- How will we make sure the changes made really make a difference?

Discussion about the possibility of working backwards by going through a list of courses

- A course gets into structure when it exhibits "this."
 - What is "this?"
- How were categories created?
 - Fuzziness of categories
 - Categories instead of a letter

Discussion of an image needed to better understand EC

- For students and faculty

General Education

- Cut back on number of gen ed requirements?
- Students have the opportunity to take more electives?

Adjourned at 2:50 pm

jks