

GESC

September 28, 2009

1:30 – 3:00

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

Agenda

- Debrief on Faculty Retreat 2009
- What direction do we want to go with our committee? Tinkering vs. Radical Revision
- Set GESC agenda for the remainder of fall quarter

Faculty Retreat

Faculty were asked to:

- produce an introductory statement to exploratory curriculum for the catalog, in 150 characters or less.
- differentiate a GE course versus a non-GE course

Ideas and themes from Faculty Retreat feedback are compiled on handout (“Guiding Principles for Exploratory Curriculum Revision”)

Statements from faculty feedback are very similar to the UPEC statement (2005, 2006) and the Intercollege Commission statement (per Debbie Crouch)

Themes from Faculty Retreat fit closely with UPEC goals

Language/attitudes - “If you do this, you don’t have to do GE...”

Is there anything the honor program accomplishes that could reform change for GE?

Thermometer Reading – how close do we want to get to “radical revision?”

Some things we want to keep:

- Small freshman classes (USEM, plus the possibility of another smaller class?)
- Less specified curriculum (U Scholars is all specified)
 - Don’t want to limit choices too much
 - Recommend choice so there are guidelines – more structured but not too rigid

Not becoming too focused on the major

- Students thinking it’s a checklist to get through

Possibility of a student designed exploratory curriculum (with guidance...?) would be more on the “radical” end

Creating connected courses that are problem focused

- Question/answer approach

Connecting freshman and sophomores – allowing depth of thinking

Problem/solution – problem allows you to approach it from different ways of knowing

For example, Wheaton’s Connection Courses:

- i.e., Art and Literature class connected through Darwin
- Big questions that tie the two subjects together, although they’re in different areas/interdisciplinary
- Same question with two different perspectives
- Students have to take “two pairs” or “one three”
- Still have choices about what pairs they would take

Regarding the GE thermometer: some parts we might tinker with, and some will be more radical

- To start, we will steer more towards radical revision

Our next step might be to determine what the goals of the GESC, and examine the themes.

Our Quarter’s Agenda

Based off of Bob’s proposed schedule, here is how the agenda will look for the remainder of fall quarter:

1. Criteria (two weeks?): What criteria will a course need to meet for acceptance in the Exploratory Curriculum (EC)?
2. Skills/competencies: What skills will we focus on in the EC that help students become people of wisdom?
3. Relevance and Coherence (two weeks?): How will our design (HWOD) bring greater relevance and coherence to the EC?
4. Engaged Citizen: HWOD use a problem-solution format to emphasize social responsibility?
5. The Common Curriculum: HWOD improve the Common Curriculum?
6. Interdisciplinary: How will we make the EC experience interdisciplinary?
7. A Special Faculty: HWOD create a strong, supportive faculty around GE?
 - a. What limitations do we have regarding faculty support?
 - b. Define effective support
 - c. Is interdisciplinary sustainable?
 - i. Team taught course vs. tag team
 - ii. Time commitment that comes with co-teaching
8. Liberal Arts: Where will we teach the concept and value of a Christian liberal arts education?

Our committee's focus is on EC, but we're free to look at common curriculum (CC) and make recommendations

- Overlap, connections, disconnections?
- We haven't done a good job of making faculty development a sustainable part of CC
- Faculty have to take their own initiative regarding development as well
- Overall structure (more credits, fewer credits?)
- Is the CC: relevant, coherent, fit with who we are?
 - CC has been a guiding force on faculty hiring
 - Who will pick up CC loads if new hire cannot?
 - How faculty is redistributed will eventually play a role

At the end of fall quarter, we will need to compose a model based off GESC's discussions

- During winter quarter, we will take this out to the schools (and divisions within CAS)

What are the competencies designed to accomplish?

How will we keep faculty apprised of the GESC's progress?

- Send out an email to Facnet with meeting times and topics
- Post meeting minutes to website
- Use feedback mechanism online

Before next week's meeting, please read documents from Faculty Retreat and come with a list of criteria to discuss.

Closing Prayer.

Adjourned at 2:40 pm

jks