

## General Education Steering Committee

Executive Board Room

November 18, 2010

9:00 am

Present: Andrew Ryder, Katie Kresser, Bruce Congdon, Elaine Scott, Bob Drovdaahl, Michelle Beauclair, Steve Layman, Mike Hamilton, Kathleen Braden, Doug Downing, Cindy Price

Summary minutes:

### Looking at WE courses

Progress

UD – is UD appropriate for the content of the course? Any conflicts with majors?

Possibility: WK: 1/2000 while WE: 2/3000

Pre-req – will be important if we want science courses in the mix

- Should it be particular courses or a certain number of courses?
- However, if math is involved a certain level of competence would be necessary
- Faculty would be able to identify pre-req for a WE course

### Distinctives (requirements)

**Clear relevance** – needs to be goal related

- Do we need to say these courses are “different” as opposed to have particular attributes? If we make them “different” kinds of classes, then we create significant difficulties

**Interdisciplinary** – from a scholarly perspective this has different meaning as opposed to providing students the ability to see a subject matter from different perspectives; being intentional and explicit about connections between disciplines

- Should the category be “making connections” – at the heart at the liberal arts
- Ease faculty concern by encouraging courses that enable “connections” rather making it a mandate for the category

*Vote:* Drop interdisciplinary as a requirement for the category - passed

**Active/Service learning** – Active ties into “engaged” that “knowing more” doesn’t; can we think of active as having more than an immediate “political” impact; could it include a constructed problem-solving experience; If we believe the connections students want to make through this category can best be made by using active learning then we need to find a way to articulate these expectations more clearly to the faculty.

- Concern that courses become too focused on “volunteer” work or “action” work without the necessary knowledge
- Concern courses become too focused on “work” and not enough on learning
- How do we intentionally create a curriculum that intellectually prepares students for “engagement”/“advocacy” in the world once they leave college?
- How do find curricular ways to bring together knowledge in the WK category to the WE category?
- Ideas: experiential, problem solving; will need to demonstrate that part of the grade will be dependent on this kind of activity;
- Still vague – needs greater specificity; we know we want more than lecture, but what is it that we want that we can articulate
- The question: what is the goal for this category? It seems we know that many of these ideas are good examples of what could be done in this category, but the question is defining the “nature” of these courses.
- Does class size change at this level?
  - Could be important to keep it distinctive
  - Could help with persistence
- There is nothing that asks students to intentionally reflect on their own learning. Why is that so difficult? Why would it be so difficult to include intentional reflection in a WE course?

### **Categories (simple)**

Science/quant                      and                      Arts/humanities

- This division is supported
- Social Sciences will decide where they go