

General Education Subgroup Meeting

December 1, 2010, 9:30-11:00, Regionalist Room, Kansas Union

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Subgroup Members Present:

Amy Devitt, Lisa Friis, Bob Goldstein, Craig Huneke, Julie Kaarbo, Paul Koch, Yoonmi Nam, Ron Ragan, Dena Register, Michael Wade Smith, Lisa Wolf-Wendel, Ann Cudd (Co-coordinator), Chris Haufler (Co-coordinator), Sarah Crawford-Parker (staff)

Subgroup Members Absent:

Alex Rippberger (in class)

Agenda:

1. EEE workgroup updates—Chris Haufler and Ann Cudd (5 min)
 - Formation of Graduate Education Synergy subgroup (interested participants please contact Chris Haufler)
 - Anticipated development of campus-wide Strategic Initiatives that will integrate across disciplines and involve both research and educational goals

2. Review of committee charges and discussion of goals—Chris Haufler (5 min)

Goal: KU will strengthen its teaching and mentoring to position all students for lifelong learning, leadership, and success.

Characteristics:

- *Quality advising and mentoring will draw on advising resources and best practices across campus, empowering students to make informed decisions about their learning opportunities.*
 - *Experiences will connect students to KU intellectually and emotionally.*
 - *Innovative curricula, experiential learning (e.g., research, study abroad), and redesigned courses will enrich the educational experience.*
 - *Renewed University General Education requirements will be based on goals that enable success and lifelong learning.*
3. Survey of AAU General Education research (60 min)
 - Review summary of surveys, discuss implications
 - Report from individuals on “bright spots” from review of other institutions
 4. Discussion of how to proceed (20 min)
 - What does a contemporary General Education system look like – what are the primary components that should be considered for incorporation?

Discussion Questions:

Reporting on General Education programs at AAU institutions—

- Do the General Education Requirements apply uniformly to all students or are they housed in one College or School?

- How many hours are included in the Gen Ed requirements?
- Are there "goals" attached to the Gen Ed requirements?
 - If so, are those goals explicitly tied to a set of courses?
 - Who decides what courses are associated with what goals? A University Committee?
- Are first year seminars/courses part of General Education?
 - If so, what is the format of these? Topical? Free form?
 - Who teaches them?
 - Are they required or optional?
- Is "experiential" or "engaged" learning (research, study abroad, service learning) a component of Gen Ed?
- What plan for assessment of General Education is in place at "your" institutions? How do these institutions determine whether their students have attained General Education Goals?
- Any other insights or observations that may be interesting or potentially relevant to our discussion?

What lessons can we learn from the book *Revising General Education—And Avoiding the Potholes: A Guide for Curricular Change*?

Discussion Outcomes:

The group reported out on General Education requirements from AAU schools. 19/30 institutions have university-wide requirements. Those institutions who have recently revised General Education requirements have mostly made them apply uniformly to all students. Required credit hours in General Education ranged from 6-55. Mode seems to be for General Education programs in the upper 30s for credit hours. Two-thirds of the schools have goals attached to courses. Three institutions had required first-year seminars integrated with General Education. Several had pre-semester experiences for incoming freshmen. Most programs have assessment in place for General Education courses. General Education programs at the University of Nebraska, Indiana University, and University of Oregon looked particularly interesting and worth exploring further.

The group discussed the process by which General Education change will take place. Some members of the subgroup recommended forming a University Curriculum Committee. The group articulated a need to have strong support from the Provost and Chancellor and to increment in change. Points of tension that were mentioned included the professional schools having full course schedules already, and the College having much invested in the current system. Other recommendations generated in the discussion were to consider ways to make requirements special to the institution and to improve retention. What should all students get from the experience of being at KU? The subgroup was also encouraged to think carefully about the accreditation requirements already placed on professional schools. We need to integrate General Education requirements with what professional schools have and need.

Next Steps:

- Review data from departmental discussions of General Education goals.
- The group will look at George Kuh's work on engagement.

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- Next meeting—Wednesday, December 15th, 9:30-11:00 a.m., Regionalist Room of the Kansas Union.