

Summary of Alumni Focus Group

2 Committee members attending: David Humphrey, Greg Rhoads

10 Alumni attendees (Year graduated – major)

01- Computer Science	97 – Communication	01 – Music/Accounting
00 – Psychology	82 – Marketing	99 – Education
99 – Philosophy & Religion / Sociology	89 – Accounting	
99 – Criminal Justice	98 – Sports Management	

Main conclusions: Gen ed should emphasize good speaking (most important), writing, and global perspective (require study abroad – it will never be cheaper and financial aid can pay for it). Freshman Seminar (intro to college and Appalachian) should be required. Gen ed classes should be appropriate for today's like and they should make people more rounded.

What was your favorite gen ed class and why?

Philosophy – it was discussion-based, nothing like HS

English – helped with writing skills – Math was good – Didn't like history – boring

History and Political Science – gave a world perspective

Black Literature – the books were fun and the informal discussion-based class was great.

History with a particular professor – It was history applied to everyday life – instructor had many stories relating the history to today's events

Physical Education – especially jogging – it broke up the day and was good practice for life.

Summary: World view is the foundation for general education and general education should apply to a student's everyday life. Good gen ed experience is based more on the faculty member or the class administration rather than content.

What should be the goals/learning outcomes of a good gen ed curriculum?

Oral communications is IMPORTANT (they said this about 15 times during the session).

Need basic financial/budgeting experience (lots of agreement)

Exposure to things students hadn't experienced before (music, theater)

Study abroad (lots of agreement)

Written communication (everyone should take Business Writing)

Be able to form arguments – the person used this to interact with other people in their job

Gen ed should show a person's aptitude – what they are good at and what they aren't

Gen ed should provide an overview of topics so students can find what they like and don't

Gen ed should provide a sense of community (lots of agreement)

Freshman Seminar:

Freshman Seminar was summarized by one member – almost everyone agreed that it should be required. One person didn't take it but wished she did. It allows students to get involved in organizations, provides a family atmosphere – students regularly call each other in the following years. Most felt FS would be a great transition from high school to college and get every student up-to-speed.