

**General Education Task Force
December 5, 2006**

Announcements:

There will be a workshop tomorrow at 8am in the Calloway Peak room of the PSU. The agenda has been sent out.

Since Sammye will not be able to attend, she posed a question to be considered: Is Quantitative Reasoning going to be called Quantitative Reasoning? Should we define?

Greg: Literacy may be different from discipline to discipline.

Sue: We may not be able to get to this matter tomorrow. We will discuss at some point though.

Dave: In regard to the cluster models, are they outcomes based or inquiry based? It is his assumption that both are outcome based, but would like to discuss tomorrow.

Sue: Yes, we will be addressing this issue tomorrow.

Dr. Keefe spoke with Greg Reck, Chair of the Anthropology department. He has no real problems with the GETF's work. The department is making changes anyway. Also, there is already a capstone in place.

The English department submitted a proposal for a literature requirement. They did a very good job of integrating the goals and outcomes throughout their document. (The current literature requirement is met mostly by the English department.)

Reports:

Assessment Committee: Tina Hogan(Ann and Elaine are also on the committee.)

The preliminary expectations are as follows:

- (1) Direct evidence of learning will be utilized for general education assessment whenever possible.
- (2) Appropriate resources will have to be found to support assessment.
- (3) It will not be necessary to assess every student.
- (4) It will not be necessary to assess every outcome every year.
- (5) Implementation of general education assessment will develop in tandem with the development of new courses and programs.
- (6) GenEd assessment will be completed by departments on a rotating schedule.
- (7) The anonymity of students and instructors will be ensured in the assessment process.
- (8) General expectations for developmental levels of student achievement of general education learning outcomes will be proposed by the GETF, but the initial assessments of the general education program will focus on the learning outcomes associated with critical thinking and communication.
- (9) Rubrics for interpreting achievement will be developed on a program by program, course by course, and assignment by assignment basis.
- (10) A variety of assessment methods will be utilized.

Laurie: In regard to #1, where will we get direct evidence of service learning? Will the directing faculty member have a skewed perception of their student's achievement? Is this an issue of objective vs. subjective?

Dave: Even writing is subjective. The teacher only knows the student writing in the context of one course.

Georgia: In ENG 0900, teachers look at the other student's portfolios.

Sammye: Are we looking outside ASU for assessment? Perhaps another university or an agency?

Tina: SACS does assess.

Dave: We can do this. We are moving toward electronic access to everything, so it should be relatively easy. Also, #6 depends upon the model we choose.

Tina: Some schools choose departments according to what goal is being assessed.

Georgia then presented the WAC program guidelines. (Chris Anson, a WAC expert from NC State, will speak on 2.23.2007)

It is recommended there be a vertical writing model. Students are encouraged to reflect on past work. E-portfolios are an option. Some schools get students to compile portfolios with a checklist, which is a drawback. At these schools, however, there are only two opportunities for reflection. Even though it would be more labor intensive, students need more opportunities to reflect upon their work. Also, a WAC clearinghouse would be available as a resource.

Sue: In regard to this ongoing assessment, when and where would this take place?

Georgia: In some schools, advisors are also portfolio advisors. The WAC program can assess writing, of course.

Dave: Departmental advisors?

Georgia: Academic advisors. We can get someone to hold a workshop for us to fully understand the responsibilities.

Mike: Are there similar resources for non-writing? Our students don't concentrate on writing. They focus on their final project and that's it.

Georgia: This program focuses on self reflection. But we must begin from the first year in order to collect artifacts to put in the portfolio.

Dave: We need to distinguish between portfolios as a pedagogical tool and as a tool for program assessment.

Georgia: Successful schools like them attached to career development. For example: Mike's department could do one that is career driven. Then they can do a portfolio presentation within their major.

Dave: We need to have a workshop to integrate this into a larger application.

Georgia: As far as WAC and information literacy, we are thinking of a one hour information literacy paired with the three hour ENG 1000.

Tim: How do we impose this on top of what we already do now? Should we imagine it without the current structure? We should have a totally different set of expectations and divorce ourselves from how it is now. Imagine the general education five years from now.

Sue: Especially because we are developing a more developmental model.

Alexandra: Given the work that our committee has done (the developmental levels of the new model), all of this fits better than you may think.

Georgia: Although portfolio work seems labor intensive, they are actually less work. The portfolio letter actually tells you a lot because you are already familiar with the student. Therefore, the student engagement is really what you are looking for.

Ray: What about program assessment in regard to the capstone course? Does the student pass if they don't do a good job on their portfolio?

Georgia: That would put a lot of pressure on the WAC department if we determined if the student graduates or not.

Sue: If all student writing from all four years goes into the portfolio, doesn't this require a lot of work to go through?

Georgia: Everything is not included in the portfolio, just best work.

Dave: We cannot dictate that all departments use portfolios.

Carter: The question is, how do we build a sense of assessment among faculty? They wonder, if they assess the student and the student gives feedback about the class, why is any further assessment needed? What if we have people outside of the discipline involved in the assessment process?

Alexandra: We also need to address developmental levels. What will this look like? Will there be some sort of summative exercise? A capstone?

We need to focus on developmental outcomes.

Sue: We may not be able to develop portfolios in every department. We need to look at the general education program assessment. When looking at developmental levels, we can recommend program assessment at certain points that ensures this data collection.

Georgia: We don't want to create checklist, but best work would be good.

Sue: We could allow students to select work to illustrate developmental stages of some learning outcomes.

Getting back to the assessment issue: Tina

NC State does not do a campus wide assessment of general education. They do a departmental version. They find it too cumbersome to assess everything. Unless they are included in a course, standardized tests are difficult to require.

Sue: In the general education organization, does the gened office handle assessment? Or is there an ongoing staff?

Tina: In some cases, the faculty senate oversees the process. In some cases, there is another administrative structure.

Dave: Having all assessment in one office is great. It is separated now.

Tim: At Bowling Green, the administration for gened is in one committee. Assessment is handled out of the provost's office. Even though different mechanisms handle curriculum and assessment, all courses are embedded with a tool for assessment. They also reward the faculty for doing a good job of assessment.

Sue: If they are not all in one office, would there not be a disconnect? The assessment might not be used to change things.

Sammye: Do we have a baseline to begin with? Can we compare our current gened with the proposed curriculum?

Also, will we have rubrics for levels? For each goal or outcome?

Sue: So, for example, if writing is a skill, it touches on four learning outcomes in goal #2. Then should the developmental sequence be on the overall achievement of multiple learning outcomes?

Dave: We are in danger if we narrowly define each learning outcome and the proficiency in each. We need to look at the broader picture: writing, oral communication, etc.

Ann: We should look at the course, then the learning outcomes.

Ivan: The school of business already has to work very hard every year when assessing the program for accreditation. If there is much more work required to assess gened, the faculty may not want to be a part of it. They are overloaded as it is.

Carter: Are there not things in the current program that address out goals and outcomes?

Ivan: Yes, probably, but it would still be added pressure to require additional assessment.