

General Education Task Force September 12, 2006

Announcements:

September 13 Forum:

The faculty was notified about the September 13 forum last week. Good attendance is expected. The purpose of the forum, of course, is to gather information that may assist us in any final revisions of the Goals/Outcomes. Also, the response will allow us to see where any resistance may lie (wording, implementation, etc.).

It was announced that the Goals and Outcomes were presented at the last Council of Chairs meeting and they were in support.

Discussion:

Resistance to Goals and Outcomes:

Some further examples of the resistance that exist were presented. Some people think that this is a “done deal” because faculty grants are being presented, in which case there must be a model for the curriculum already, which of course is untrue. It was agreed that the faculty needs to change their mindset to realize that this is a process. Some other items of concern that may surface at tomorrow’s forum are as follows: overemphasis on the Southern Appalachian Region, the mention of sustainability in the Goals and Outcomes, the omission of foreign language from the Goals and Outcomes, individuals as opposed to departments developing courses, the lack of definition of the words “reasonable” as well as “respectful and civil manner” in the Goals and Outcomes.

Some of the faculty seems to think they have been “broad-sided” in a way. It was discussed that we have made great attempts to open up the process of creating the Goals and Outcomes. It is possible that some people are “reading” a model into the Goals and Outcomes, when in fact, a model does not yet exist. Some of the resistance could be out of anticipation of what will happen, not what has already taken place in the development of the existing document.

If some departments feel left out because of the wording of the Goals and Outcomes, this was on purpose. By excluding mention of specific disciplines, we have opened the door for all disciplines. Tomorrow, we need to emphasize what Erskin Bowles, the Provost, and the state would like to see out of our General Education.

Discussion developed about the focus of the Appalachian region in the document. In hindsight, should we mention it less? Do we effectively illustrate that we are emphasizing the global context? This issue will be examined further.

Some of the Sciences are concerned that “relativism” will take objectivity out of the curriculum. It is our duty to share information with fellow faculty members and encourage them to speak at the forum tomorrow. Emphasize that this is an empowering process, hence the grant proposals.

Summer Faculty Grant Proposals:

It was mentioned that there is a perception that we have adopted interdisciplinary methods which attack traditional educational methods. Admittedly, we have opened the door to interdisciplinary methods, but this is what is happening in the rest of the United States. By no means did the

GETF invent this concept. We do need to admit that grants and future models are interdisciplinary based because that is a value that we have chosen to foster more.

Agenda for September 13 Forum:

Handouts will be passed out at the door.

Dr. Keefe will speak about the history of the GETF, the development process of the Goals and Outcomes, and the approval process.

Dave will present the national and state goals.

Greg and Tina will present their report of the Employer and Alumni surveys.

Alexandra will present the Departmental Statement results.

At this point, the floor will be open for comment.

September 15 Forum:

We need to stress the fact that we need participation of faculty in curriculum development. It was asked if the student development community is invited to the forum. They are, but the grants are only for faculty.

The announcement for the September 15 forum was presented and some of the wording was changed a bit. We may need to include “disciplinary” as well as “interdisciplinary” groups to show our support for both.

At this point, the approval process for grant applications was discussed.

Q: The subcommittee discussed there being four people on the approval committee. Do we need more? Do we need to entertain the thought of non-task force members be on the approval board? If so, do they have the background to support our Goal and Outcomes?

A: We need to accept our responsibility as the GETF. We are the ones who have studied this for 18 months. We should form the review committee for grants.

Q: Does the signature page imply a buy-out? Or will the chair of the department fund these test courses?

A: Funding will have to be analyzed on a case-by-case basis following grant approval.

Some wording on the application form needs to be changed. Omit “to what extent” on items 11, 12, and 13.

At the September 15 forum, we will help faculty “find” one another to work on new courses and revise existing ones. Also, we do need to address the input of those faculty that are not awarded a grant proposal, but still want input on the process.