

Reflections: UGE Brainstorming Wednesday, May 15, 2003

Present: Jim Coffman, Linda Alexander, Betsy Cauble, Vicki Clegg, Lynn Ewanow, Marlon Johnston, Nancy Kiefer, Jerry Reeck, Jackie Spears, Betty Stevens, Larry Weaver

Note: This was the final meeting of the UGE Brainstorming Group ... at least, in its current configuration and under the current charge. Provost Coffman joined the group, both to ask questions related to the previous three discussions and to solicit the group's suggestions about appropriate action to take during the 2003-2004 academic year. Since much of the discussion repeated earlier conversations, the following list of ideas is intended only to share emphasized points and recommendations. Again, if others would like to add or correct, please do.

A holistic tie to the student learning outcomes assessment process would seem sensible, practical, and wise. Assessment must include a viable feedback loop intended specifically to improve the “general education” of our undergraduates. Improvements could include changes in curriculum planning, enhancing the professional development of faculty members teaching “general education”, encouraging undergraduates to avail themselves of “general education” opportunities, etc.

Is our current system broken or merely undocumented?

Resources will continue to be an important issue. Some educational experiences and learning outcomes require special environments, e.g. small class sizes, uniquely equipped facilities, etc. All would require sufficient resources to implement effectively ... or to implement at all. Some faculty members will jump at the opportunity to teach these courses IF they are assured of the resources to implement the strategies. Unless the resources are allocated, it may make little or no sense to plan for the learning outcomes.

Common University Definition of General Education: Maybe this would serve as the best concept and label for future discussions?

Steps for 2003-2004

Short Term (as in immediately!)

- **Mend current UGE policies and procedures** to avoid impending implosion or explosion.
- Appoint a working group to draft specific proposals.
- Forward proposals to ICCP and the UGE Council for discussion and approval.
- Forward proposals to Academic Affairs and Faculty Senate, when necessary.
- Inform faculty, advisors, administrators, and students of any changes that may alter actions or attitudes.

Long Term (begin now and continue far into the future)

Assessment

- Formulate the assessment process to evaluate “general education” student learning outcomes (SLOs).
 - Appoint a working group.
 - Consider SLOs that reflect “general education” across the university.
- Use the process to assess students who are currently meeting UGE requirements.
- Phase out UGE if/when assessment results warrant that action.

Professional Development

- Target enhancements and development opportunities for those who teach “general education.”
- Use resources currently available at KSU.
- Find additional resources.
- Institutionalize these efforts. They will always be needed.

Highlight Student Responsibilities for “General Education”

- *Expect* undergraduates to “share responsibility for a successful university experience” (from Undergraduate Catalog; pg.12).
- Inform students of their responsibilities.
- Find ways to counter increasing student disengagement. [Students are increasingly less involved in their own education and place a lower priority on educational activities (classes, studying) than did many who are now faculty members.]
- Promote efforts outside regular course experiences to share the insights and contributions of a discipline to those who aren’t majoring in that discipline.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Clegg, Convener