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November 30, 2004

Duane Nellis, Provost
Kansas State University
Anderson Hall
CAMPUS

Dear Provost Nellis:

Please find attached the report of the General Education Steering Committee, appointed about a year ago by Provost James Coffman and Faculty Senate President Robert Zabel.

The committee's charge was to obtain ideas and proposals from across the campus about the future of general education at K-State. We were also charged with providing you a list and brief descriptions of possible future schemes for general education here. As we report to you, we are cognizant of the fact that the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association requires that a university's "undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution's mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry."

The attached materials are, then, the fruits of our labor. These include a description of our activities as a committee; summaries of faculty and student surveys; several specific proposals that we received and discussed; and a summary of several possible schemes for general education. (For detailed results from the two surveys, see the committee's website (<http://www.ksu.edu/catl/GenEd/>.)

We held what we felt was a rather successful open forum last April (notes from which are on our website) and have opted to not hold another open forum this semester. If you would like to see another open forum held, our suggestion would be that it combine a look backwards to what we have found in our work as well as a preview of what is to come in the work of our successor committee.


Before closing, I would like to mention the inevitable connection between the ongoing work on general education and the university's increased emphasis on the assessment of student learning. Clearly, general education, in whatever way we implement or deliver it, will need to be formally assessed. Several of the university-wide student learning

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outcomes, as adopted by Faculty Senate, mesh nicely with general education and could be among the items assessed. Our successor committee, then, might well want to think about assessment of general education from the outset of its work. That is, the scheme for general education and the methods for assessment of that scheme should perhaps be developed side by side.

It goes without saying that the committee would be happy to meet with you to discuss our report.

Sincerely yours,



Gerald Reeck

Professor

Chair of General Education Steering Committee

cc: Jackie Spears, Faculty Senate President