

EPC Open Meeting on General Education Proposal: Sustainable Community
December 13, 2010
Notes

The meeting began at approximately 4:34pm in the AER with thirteen in attendance including EPC members Professors Easter, Olson, and Stiadle, Chair Dean Miller-Bernal, student representative Alex Schloop, and “guest” Associate Provost Speaker. Over the course of the meeting eighteen community members participated.

Dean Miller-Bernal gave brief background

- grew out of last year’s committee work
- gen ed ought to be part of the college career, not just at the beginning

Rachael Gunderson spoke on Lifelong Wellness

- shared thoughts, having just completed teaching PE 100
- endorsed making it 2 credits
- not enough time in a 1 credit course to go into detail on many topics
- EPC has changed its position on credit for activities since last spring
- faculty noted that students don’t understand lack of connection between credit hours and course difficulty
- tutorial structure losing traction with students
- should *everyone* have 2 credit Wellness? 1 credit option? Depends on what the College hopes to accomplish

Return to overall proposal:

Dean Miller-Bernal synopsized the description on the handout and asked for feedback on the name and the themes.

- 2nd and 3rd ordering? E.g. why service learning in year three?
- 1st year seminar in major fields? Could be versions of existing courses, e.g. made into seminars with writing attention, etc.
- has implications for larger majors
- how does interdisciplinary work for team-teaching interaction?

Themes—common learning objectives but independent courses, like current WLLS 101

Would transition beginning with entering class in fall 2012, so time to develop details.

Incentives to modify or create courses for this model? Workshops? Training?

What does “sustainability” mean?

- community sustained
- what, exactly, is sustained? That there is a community, even though dynamic

- does that really have meaning, then?
- meaningless if we all have different definitions
- most of the group thinks some sense of “community” is central to the sustainability title
- in general, don’t confuse the label with main point of themed seminars

When --Jan. week implemented next year
 --1st year program set for fall 2012
 --seems fast, given other changes already underway

Include aesthetic awareness and literacy

Both traditional courses and themes already occur in our curriculum

“Connections” happen when students make the connections on their own

How do themes and their order fit with what other colleges do? Developmental?

Labels not defined; need to be filled in

Tension between discipline content and things like themes, writing attentive, presentation skills

What’s faculty incentive?

What standards will be imposed? E.g. writing

Objectives for *all* students vs. (or not) individualized attention

Basic numeracy should command same attention as writing and speaking

Resources --how many faculty to staff all these seminars, etc.
 --whittles away at majors
 --morale question

Names --words mean things, so need to define what we actually intend
 --consult student body for reality check of how attractive the names are

Growth needed to sustain this

"Community" relevant because of small size

How does this work vis-à-vis transfers? Is it a Wells requirement or a freshman requirement?

Timing of January week. What about end of year instead? Would become extended senior week

Meeting adjourned at about 6:06pm.