

General Education Meeting
August 31, 2015
Minutes

Members Present: Jeremy Tost, Mark Smith, Aubrey Fowler, Jane Kinney, Byron Brown, Gayle Taylor, Lai Orenduff

Guest: Michael Black

- Core Assessments (scheduled by semester by Office of Institutional Effectiveness)
 1. Overall: faculty are taking assessment tools and their specific learning objectives seriously.*

- Core meeting, August 11, 2015: Nearly 40 faculty attended this meeting and creative ways of dealing with Core classes were discussed. One of these new projects was the Core Pilot, headed by Gardner Rogers. This is a 2-part course (4 credits) in Area B. The first course of this pilot program explains the rationale and value of the Core classes and the second course is the capstone course that is interdisciplinary, team-taught, problem- and project-based with lots of assessments. It is starting fall, 2016.

- CPR Outside Review: Aside from some notable strengths mentioned like our engaged faculty, items that are scheduled for more discussion are Core coherence and administrative management. To fulfill our student mission to provide the best education for our students, the Core classes should provide our students with life-long learning skills. Our Core classes, as perceived by the student body, are just a list of courses that need to be taken for graduation. Dr. Fowler: our Core classes do not talk to each other.
 1. The questions of enrollment problems and quality Core content were raised. A tendency to conflate the two issues warranted a separation and clarification of the two issues.
 2. One question requires discussion on how to improve the Core. Do we adopt new marketing techniques or do we deal with the current philosophy of what the Core is supposed to be? Research to follow to continue the discussion.
 3. The second problem of low enrollment will be tabled for now as Office of Enrollment and Management continues to work on the issue.
 4. Arguments for restructuring the Core as a means of improvement were presented. One view is to restructure our current structure to make it more relevant for our students.
 5. A second approach argued for working within the current Core structure and USG constraints. New signs of creative teaching approaches are occurring within the current structure. Gardner Rogers, Susan Wehling, and Tim Henkel are teaching their Core classes with new approaches. Gardner Roger's Pilot Core will be monitored as an example of working within the current structure.

6. All members emphasized the need for flexibility and a more practical application in Core content.
7. Adoption of new Strategic Action Steps will take place at next meeting.
8. Research: look at Core programs at other institutions.

Next meeting: September 28th, Nevins 1060, at 1:30PM.

*Notes not from the meeting:

2. BIOL 1108K: This was the 1st assessment for BIOL 1108. They did not reach their targeted level of proficiency. Because of the possible disconnect, they will look to see if the problem is in the assessment tool or the content that is not covered by faculty. They plan to collect more data before making any changes.
3. ASTR 1121: This was a small assessment group of 25 students. Faculty used a pre-test that was later embedded in the final exam. A test during the final lab required a mastery of spreadsheet programs, database management and manipulation of numerical data. Findings will be used to make any needed corrections in either the instrument or the content.
4. INDS 4000: Even though the majority of the students met the course objectives, the instructor saw a growing concern in the student recruitment process: the program has become a refuge for students who did not meet their GPA requirements in their previous programs. INDS 4000 requires an interest in grappling with abstract theoretical concepts, and this is difficult for many of the students to do well at this if they did not have a pre-existing interest in these theoretical concepts.