

9.12.14 Agenda: Prototyping a Liberal Learning Program: 3:30 LC100

The purpose of this meeting is to generate ideas for a process or set of processes that allow us to make changes in the structure of our curriculum in less than decade. In addition to process concerns, we will discuss "trial balloons" the Liberal Education Committee would like face-to-face feedback on. Our purpose in this meeting is to generate new ideas and build involvement around common concerns as a preliminary step before the LE Committee formulates specific proposals. Since we will be talking about processes for making curriculum changes and trial balloons rather than proposing specific changes or outcomes at this meeting, we will adapt the typical agenda as follows. (Our meeting on 9/19 will consist of reports from committees such as RTP, CRAL, etc. The Liberal Education Committee can have time to report on the results of the survey at that meeting)

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of the Agenda

III. What things can we agree about GE and Liberal Education? 10 – 15 minutes.

A. Name change: The name "General Education Program" is dated. Substitute Liberal Education??? Liberal Learning Program

B. A capstone course in the major involving students in speaking and writing about the content in their majors is a good idea.

C. A "diversity" requirement, even though it is not required by the Board of Trustees (BOT) minimum requirements is consistent with our mission statement and our history.

D. We lack processes for making transformative changes rather than incremental changes in our GE requirements.

E. Additional areas of agreement. ??????

IV. Buzz group discussions around 6 issues. (20 – 30 minutes) A buzz group is a smaller group of 5 – 10 people, discussing different pieces of the whole puzzle. After smaller group discussions, the whole body convenes to hear the reports from each subgroup.

Process Concerns

A. Group 1: Organizing: When it comes to GE, everyone has a piece of the puzzle. We have 67 people (not including vacancies and students) currently meeting regularly for hours dealing with different pieces of "the Beast".

What should the relationship be between our current Curriculum Committee (16 members), GE Board (12 members), Liberal Education Committee (11 members), Academic Affairs Committee (12 current members), and Appeals/Standing Committee (16 members)? How can we coordinate GE among these

groups? How might we revision the GE curriculum revision process? What should the role of Dean's offices be in this process?

B. Group 2: Making Connections

How can we encourage horizontal connections between GE and Department majors? How can GE courses contribute to majors? How can we encourage lateral connections across GE courses in different categories? How do we make Liberal Learning run across and through a 4 year education?

C. Group 3: Assessing How often should we assess our General Education Program as a program rather than as a collection of individual courses? Every three years? Four years? 10 years? Never? Departments go through program review roughly every 5 years. What time period should we use for looking at GE as a program? What assortment of assessment mechanisms that we currently use could we productively use to assess the program as a whole? (ie. Course-based, SEIs, student and departmental surveys?)

Outcome Trial Balloons

D. Group 4: Naming: What should we call the program? Liberal Education, Liberal Learning, General Education or "The Beast"? What are the pros/cons of each of these names?

E. Group 5: Creating options/flexibility: To what extent can we build flexibility into the local New Paltz additional requirements? What will be the impact on transfer students of the additional courses we require? How will waivers work? How can we create "two-phers", courses that fulfill maybe a Composition II course learning objectives along with a content category such as "World". How might we create "interdisciplinary" courses that might fulfill two categories. What would a basket of just Liberal Arts courses look like?

F. Group 6: Balancing depth & breath: What should the total number of required credits be? What might the consequences be of requiring 9 additional credits compared to other schools? What role could a Liberal Education seminar play if viewed as a way of allowing students to tailor requirements to their interest? What would

V. Summary of suggestions for things we can do from the buzz groups.

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