General Education: What Have We Been Learning, Where Are We Going?

August 19, 2011
History of General Education

• 1970s
  • General College Program
    • skills, content, interdisciplinary goals

• Late 1990s
  • Reinvigorated GCP devised

• 2000
  • SUNY Board of Trustees mandate
    • results in CCC
Casualties of SUNY Mandate

- Faculty morale
- Sense of ownership
- Push toward innovation
CCC Idea Fest, 2007

Discussions were held around five topics:

1. Assessment of General Education
2. What Should a SUNY Fredonia Graduate Look Like?
3. How Does the CCC Fit into What a SUNY Fredonia Graduate Should Look Like?
4. What is Being Done in CCC Courses Now?
5. Future Ideas
• Much enthusiasm for rethinking General Education
  – questions about integration with SUNY
• New flexibility in SUNY mandate
  – only requires 30 credits in General Education
  – there is some choice in courses for students
• Middle States self-study
  – General Education is not working optimally on campus

The Past Two Years
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<th>Members</th>
<th>Co-Chairs</th>
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<td>Michele Bernatz</td>
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<td>Nancy Boynton</td>
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<td>Patricia Corron</td>
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<td>Linda Liedke</td>
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<td>Mary Beth Sievens</td>
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<td>Ivani Vassoler-Froelich</td>
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<td>Cindy Bird*</td>
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<td>Juan De Urda</td>
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<td>Kerrie Wilkes</td>
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* Co-Chairs
Recommendations of Ad-Hoc Review Committee

1. Require more than SUNY’s model of 30 credits in General Education, in terms of structure and number of credits

2. Consider grouping courses into themes

3. Permit more time for campus discussions regarding significant changes to the General Education program

4. Make changes that would meet the goal of improving students’ writing skills
What Should a SUNY Fredonia Graduate Know and Be Able To Do?
Data Collected by Ad-Hoc Review Committee

- Write clearly
- Think clearly and creativity
- Communicate orally effectively
- Information literacy
- Scientific and mathematical literacy
- Read critically
- Have interdisciplinary knowledge
- Awareness of and respect for global diversity
- Social consciousness
General Education and Assessment 3.0

Association of American Colleges & Universities
Next-Level Practices Now Network for Academic Renewal Conference
March 3-5, 2011
Chicago, Illinois

Attendees from SUNY Fredonia:
Cindy Bird
Marissa Cope
Steve Fabian
Jackie Swansinger
General Education and Assessment 3.0

• General impression of the AAC&U General Education and Assessment conference

• Hurdles
  – Time
  – Funding

• Main points
  – faculty engagement
  – "working in reverse"
  – faculty ownership
Promoting Pedagogical Approaches to Robust Learning in Undergraduate STEM

Mountain View College in Collaboration with Project Kaleidoscope
Texas, Dallas, April 7-9, 2011

Attendees from SUNY Fredonia:
Patricia S. Astry
Reneta P. Barneva
Scott B. Ferguson
Matthew A. Fountain
Holly Lawson
General Learning Principle

Tell me, I’ll forget.
Show me, I’ll remember.
Involve me, I’ll understand.
Collaborative Learning

Ways students are learning:
• Competitively
• Individualistically
• Cooperatively

Research shows that students learn more if they learn together.

Outcomes:
• Academic success
• Increased quality of relationships
• Positive attitude towards college experience
• Greater psychological adjustment

Groups: The best number is three.
Collaborative Learning

Workshop: Find the number of all triangles in the figure below. **All** group members should be able to explain the solution.

“I felt support from the team members.”
“I noticed that I am learning from them.”
Student-Centered Active Learning Environment for Undergraduate Programs (SCALE-UP)

• A pedagogy in which there is no separate lab class and most lectures are class-wide discussions.
• Students make observations and work on engaging problems.
• The benefit is that the students gain a deeper understanding through hands-on activities.
Just in Time Teaching

• This pedagogy focuses on improving of student learning using brief questions at the end of the class.
• The student answers are processed, but not graded.
• The teacher develops classroom activities addressing the learning gaps revealed in the student responses.
• This technique increases the class teaching effectiveness.
Inverted Classroom

• Intentionally turns the relationship of the classroom and homework upside down.

• Students watch lectures at home, then work on problem sets in class, where the teacher can assist them one on one.
Taking Small Steps Forward

• Learning environment can change in a better way with small efforts:
  – rearranging the classroom or the area in front of the office,
  – adding some plants to the environment,
  – posting samples of student work.
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
Academic Affairs Summer Meeting
Portland, Oregon
July 27-31, 2011

Attendees from SUNY Fredonia:
Andy Cullison
Lisa Melohusky
Dick Reddy
Anna Thibodeau
Dale Tuggy

Purpose:
to focus on course re-design, with emphasis on blended/hybrid instruction (part on-line & part face-to-face)
Blended Courses

- Current campus initiatives to test course redesign and blended instruction models, in an effort to better meet the learning needs and instructional preferences of our 21st century students

Timeline

- July 28-30: AASCU Conference
- Aug 11: Faculty PD Workshop
  - all 20 seats filled, with a wait-list established
- Aug 15: 5th T&L Conference
  - some presentations piggy-backed on Aug 11 workshop
- Aug 23: Blended Learning Webinar
- Sept-Dec: Departmental on-line instruction group meets (weekly?)
- Sept-May: PDC workshops
- Sep-Dec: SLN 201 On-line PD program
- Fall 2012: Blended courses launched
• The challenges higher education faces and the urgency to address them effectively

• A model for moving toward being "learning centered"--the Jacksonville State University initiative

• General education and preparing our students for their personal futures, the future of the U.S., and the future of the world
Summer Institute on General Education and Assessment

American Association of Colleges and Universities
San José, California
June 4-8, 2011

Attendees from SUNY Fredonia:
Roger Byrne
Virginia Horvath
Dave Kinkela
Jan McVicker
Andrea Zevenbergen
student centered learning
100,000,000,000 neurons
Networked Knowledge
The neuron model

- Singular
- Isolated
- Packed with learning potential
- One class is only 2.5 percent of a student’s classroom experience

Networks of Learning

Gen Ed/Majors

High Impact Practices
(First Year Experience, Learning Communities, Service Learning, Undergraduate Research)

Curricular/Co-curricular
Academic/Student Affairs
Building Networks of Learning with Intentionality
Lessons from the Summer Institute

- Baccalaureate learning outcomes and working backwards
- Awareness of national conversation
- Clarification of learning-centered focus
- Linking of practices in meaningful ways
- Insights on innovative assessment strategies
Team Vision for General Education
June 2011

The vision for general education at SUNY Fredonia is embedded in a broader vision of baccalaureate learning, based on essential learning outcomes and developed with intentionality across majors and divisions and with a commitment to integrated learning and meaningful assessment.
Team Goal Statement

By fall of 2016, members of the campus community of SUNY Fredonia will have collaborated to create a learning-focused campus. Our shared commitment to essential learning outcomes (i.e., baccalaureate goals) will be evident in a distinctive, coherent general education program, integrated learning in majors and co-curricular programs, support for faculty inquiry, and infused assessment practices that measure and inform our continued commitment to student learning.
1. Establish baccalaureate goals
2. Place assessment at the forefront of the process
Team Recommendations

1. Identify key stakeholders (e.g., Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, General Education Committee, FACE Center, business and community leaders, students)

2. Charge a Task Force to engage the campus in a discussion of possible baccalaureate outcomes for the campus

3. Establish a draft set of baccalaureate outcomes and invite the campus to refine and approve them by December 2011