General Education Advisory Task Force Committee meeting  
Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Attending: Kim Bray, Mary Allen, Deb O’Bannon, Jolene Lynn, Laura Gayle Green, Wayne Vaught, Paul Cuddy, Linda Garavalia, Marilyn Taylor, Julie Cheslik

Absent: Cindy Pemberton, Tim Timmons, Lynda Plamann, Cheryl Grossman

Convene Meeting

Kim Bray convened the meeting in Cindy Pemberton’s absence.

Reports

Presentations were made on the following institutions:

   University of Memphis – Marilyn Taylor  
   Lynn University - Jolene Lynn

Discussion

a.  Discussion focused on examples of General Education process (committee members bring examples from institutions reviewed)

Discussion Points:

- The membership was asked in advance of today’s meeting to provide information on the general education process at the institutions they reported on previously.

- The University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC) had extensive information on their process, and the time line from UIC was discussed at today’s meeting.

  o Goals are simple and meaningful, but broad enough that they fit. This is reflected on the time line (attached).

  o UIC brought together a large group (ca. 100 individuals) that included the Directors of the UG studies, Department Heads and Associate Deans. A large group that includes these individuals will make faculty feel included. We need participation in order to be successful. A large group gives feedback to other groups within their schools. Each school at UMKC has a director of undergraduate programs and department head.

  o It was suggested that the Assistant Dean and Director of Student Services at the Bloch School be included in this group, if such a group is established for UMKC’s general education process. This inclusion would bring a breadth of understanding from the student perspective.
For the College, representation could come from the three major disciplines.

External Constituents – at what point should they be involved? It is helpful to hear from employers as we craft general education requirements.

- Temple University incorporated a discussion series open to their university community. This appeared to be elective and was done in a seven part series where faculty was invited to give commentary. Documents were created and presented for feedback. The university also instituted a general education committee to review proposals for courses to be added to the general education curriculum.

- Pittsburgh – this institution did not include information on the general education process, but that it appeared to be done in a traditional manner.

- Any thoughts on how we approach competencies? Requires greater involvement from the faculty.

- Other examples to use? It was mentioned that Cincinnati is still implementing parts of their model, and we are uncertain as to where they are in the process. What has been found with respect to other institutions is that the information on the process is narrow in terms of details, with the exception being UIC.

b. Drafting of strategic plan for spring 2010 at UMKC (focused on moving campus forward regarding issues with General Education in preparation for revision work in next two years)

Discussion Points:

- Convene the larger group and determine the tasks. As with UIC, the larger group was determining hallmarks, modules and assessment. Institute similar process at UMKC? As with the College’s recent experience in developing general education requirements, it would be important to include representation from each unit as part of the large group.

- The General Education Advisory Task Force will need to relay the rationale behind the changes in general education to the large group. Establishing early goals, assessments and competencies will be part of the work of the large group.

- We need to follow up with those members of the General Education Advisory Task Force not present today to find out if they have information relative to processes from the institutions they reported on, as well as reports not presented to date.

- How does the new budget model impact transfer courses from one unit to another and does there need to be a plan up-front regarding general education? We need to work out the revenue component to keep units from competing with each other for general education courses. Will there be a predatory situation with general education? Consider plan to address problem with budget model, at the very least have this in the back of our minds.
• Reviewing proposals for new courses. We have a mechanism in place with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. This is an important link to catch duplication of courses.

• For students, we need to improve their experience, developing a curriculum that is more learning outcome based.

c. Continued review, discussion and development of UMKC rationale for General Education review and revision [bulleted document] (30 minutes)

At this point in the meeting, the committee turned their attention to the document entitled “Bullet Points – re: Discussion of General Education at UMKC”

Bullet Point #1:

• Define “without penalty”. Need further data as to what this means.
• For each bullet, have explanation for why it is there. Helpful to faculty to make those notations.

Bullet Point #2:

• Define “early”. What’s early in a student’s path? Data would help to answer that question. The answer may depend on the degree program. We have a lot of transfer students – are they starting over when they arrive at UMKC or do they know what they want?

Bullet Point #3:

• “Student retention” – get more facts. Helpful to get the figures from the presentation that Jennifer DeHaemers gave to this committee.
• People may be put off by things that sound abstract. How do we give concrete examples as to how to increase student engagement, etc.? “Student engagement” needs to be well defined for faculty and staff.

Bullet Point #7:

Graduation rates:

• How does UMKC compare to other institutions? Where is the graduation rate headed? Do we have exit surveys from students who didn’t graduate from UMKC? How about the graduation rate for students who come to UMKC from institutions where we have articulation agreements – are graduation rates higher for those students?

Collapse remaining bullet points??
Discussion Points:

- What is the difference between Bullet Point #1 and Bullet Point #2?

- A member stated that they liked the idea of students attending a combination of gallery openings and recitals, perhaps 10 times a year. Students could be provided with a punch card to show attendance at such events. UMKC is situated in an urban setting, and we need to articulate this better. What exactly would this look like? What would students sign up to do? Could this be in educational services that integrate academic learning with work outside of the classroom? Have students write about their experience? Could the experience be tied to a course? The urban piece of this is compelling. It was expressed that every student at UMKC should attend a musical, etc. that truly personifies the Kansas City experience. It would be beneficial for students to step outside of what they normally do.

- Suggest that Bullet #1 becomes Bullet #2 – the remaining bullets are operational and reflect how we work. These are ideas to increase student retention.

- External constituents and their involvement in the general education process – every school has a group of external constituents that are committed to UMKC and its mission. Add external constituents to the large group of 100.

NEXT MEETING – February 2, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m., Gillham Park Room

- Finalize plan

- Finalize Bullet Points

- Discuss, identify and develop General Education revision framework recommendations. Develop framework, re: UIC. Line out for Provost.