Notes from the General Education Advisory Task Force Committee meeting
April 6, 2010, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m., Gillham Park Room, Administrative Center

Attending: Cindy Pemberton, Mary Allen, Kim Bray, Linda Garavalia, Laura Gayle Green, Cheryl Grossman, Jolene Lynn, Lynda Plamann, Tim Timmons, Marilyn Taylor, Wayne Vaught, Paul Cuddy, Deb O’Bannon

Absent: Julie Cheslik

I. Convene Meeting

Cindy Pemberton convened the meeting. The Task Force needs to finalize the language for the 1) Guiding Principles for General Education Revision, 2) Recommendations to the Provost and 3) Notes from faculty discussions. Discussion concerning focus groups is on the agenda for today’s meeting.

Cindy Pemberton updated the membership on the AAC&U General Education meeting in Vermont this summer. Provost Hackett will be unable to attend. There is one additional slot that needs to be filled. The configuration of the group at this juncture is as follows:

- Cindy Pemberton
- Linda Garavalia
- Tom Stroik
- Wayne Vaught
- Lynda Plamann

II. Discussion

The Task Force membership was provided with copies of the Guiding Principles for General Education Revision, and the General Education Rationale prior to today’s meeting. The membership discussed the draft documents during this segment of the meeting.

i. Guiding Principles for General Education Revision – Recommendation

Draft Document for Provost

The Guiding Principles for General Education Revision will be submitted as recommendations to the Provost. This document is to assist in moving the process forward as changes are proposed for the general education program. There remains to be a wider conversation across campus, as the work of this Task Force does not include developing the curriculum. That work will be more inclusive with broad input from faculty.

This document needs a narrative describing the work of the Task Force and should include the context – what was the process, what were the documents reviewed by the Task Force, who met with the Task Force, etc. All of this information will aid in establishing the recommendations that the Task Force believes is critical to the revision of the general education program. A second set of recommendations should focus on the revision process. The membership also decided to include a history of Task Force’s work to include with its report to the Provost.
ACTION:

1. Linda Garavalia and Cheryl Grossman will work together to formulate the history of the Task Force and its work.

2. Tim Timmons and Laura Gayle Green will develop principles for the program and recommendations for process.

Once these documents are complete, a draft of both documents should be sent to the Task Force for input. Drafts of these documents should be sent to Mary Allen prior to the April 20 meeting.

ii. General Education Rationale

The membership agreed to include a statement on general education in the rationale document that helps provide a common understanding as to what general education is at UMKC. This statement will be pulled from the Higher Learning Commission Statement on General Education. We will include a link to the General Education Advisory Task Force page on the Provost’s web site where additional materials can be accessed to review.

The Task Force members made additional suggestions on changes to the documents, and Mary Allen will incorporate those changes and send the revised document to the membership. The revised document can be shared with faculty.

b. Configuration of Focus Groups – Generate Questions, Schedule, Reporting, Focus Group Participants

The Task Force membership discussed various approaches to soliciting feedback from the various constituencies on campus.

For students, it was suggested that:

- We approach student groups in each school;
- Ask Larry Bunce for access to focus groups convened to give input on the Student Success Center;
- Converse with transfer students, those changing majors and freshmen.

The Task Force members were asked to meet with student groups in their academic unit. Participant information regarding where they are in their academic program, and whether they are transfer students should be noted. A series of common questions should be asked in each meeting. Note: Do not include the names of participants on the feedback collected – individuals should remain anonymous.
ACTION:

1. Laura Gayle Green will send to Mary Allen the list of questions created in today’s meeting. These questions will be compiled and forwarded to the membership to use in obtaining feedback.

2. Cindy Pemberton will talk to Larry Bunce about the focus groups for the Student Success Center.

3. Wayne Vaught will send to the Task Force members the comments generated from student input collected by the College relative to the general education curriculum.

For Advisors:

Task Force members should also meet with advisors in their academic units and ask a similar series of questions. This list of questions will also be compiled and sent to the membership.

Some members of the Task Force stated that they will arrange to meet with advisors in their units, as follows:

A& S – Linda Garavalia, Wayne Vaught
Bloch School – Marilyn Taylor
School of Education – Cheryl Grossman
SBS – Lynda Plamann

ACTION: The members should send their notes from meetings with both students and advisors to Mary Allen prior to the end of this month (April). Task Force members were asked to schedule time with students and advisors within the next 2-3 weeks.

c. Schedule of Faculty Meetings

An incomplete schedule of upcoming faculty meetings was shared with the membership. Members were advised to send the dates and times of their respective faculty meeting to Mary Allen to complete the chart. These meetings will afford the membership with an opportunity to talk to their colleagues about the work of this Task Force. This conversation needs to begin, and should be done before the end of the current semester.

The Task Force was advised that a push needs to be made to finalize recommendations to the Provost. The work of this task force must be completed by May 4.

Members will be sent the following documents prior to the meeting on April 20:

Revised General Education Rationale
Questions for Student Groups
Questions for Advisors