

MEETING OF THE GENERAL STUDIES ROUNDTABLE – PHASE II

November 10, 2006

The General Studies Roundtable met from 2:30-4:00 on November 10, 2006. At the previous meeting (10/20), members reviewed individual models in small groups.

Opening Thoughts –

Roundtable participants should consult the academic departments regarding “their end of the deal.” How do the departments approach General Studies? [Note: This would be a good “assignment” to work on between meetings.]

Faculty members from Mathematics have voiced support for a Math Communications course. This course would, perhaps, deal more extensively with issues of interpretation than computation.

Academic departments should be consulted if the roundtable considers the creation of a new course or proposes that an existing course become a requirement. Staffing/scheduling issues could make certain alterations unfeasible at this time.

The CFAH met November 9 to review the progress of the roundtable. Again, department chairs and other faculty must be apprised of developments.

The facilitators had compiled a list of questions that might help focus discussion on the issues of structure: Number of hours in the program? A core curriculum model? A distribution model? A combination? A capstone course?

Members decided to begin identifying the sort of model that would best serve our students, considering what a core curriculum might look like (and discussing the definition of “core”), reviewing our present distribution model, and sketching out a core/distribution model.

Participants shared the following questions/observations during the discussion:

We would be well advised to consider the Truman State model, with its Core A and Core B. General Studies courses should not be repetitions of high school courses.

Students appreciate some choice in the courses they take.

What is the place of placement testing in GS? Should students be allowed to “test forward” so they can enroll in a class they will find more challenging?

We must remember that the revised GS program will also serve transfer students.

What is the place of computer skills in the revised GS program?

It is impossible to separate skills from content.

This roundtable session probably generated more questions than answers, but the group did begin its consideration of issues that must be taken into account in an endeavor of this magnitude and importance