

MEETING OF THE GENERAL STUDIES ROUNDTABLE -- PHASE II

October 20, 2006

The General Studies (GS) Roundtable met from 2:30-4:00 on October 20, 2006. Participants had submitted individual drafts of a revised GS model prior to the meeting.

OPENING THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS

As we move forward, we must keep in mind: Is this possible to do?

(Ex: team-teaching, issues of load, student evaluations) While we must not create constraints for ourselves, the group must be mindful of the realities that the final proposal must accommodate.

Q: Is 30 hrs. [a figure presented for consideration near the end of the 10/6 meeting] a “magic number” that the group is bound to?

A: No. This number represents the likely necessity of an adjustment in total hours of the GS program should it no longer be possible to “off-load” GS courses into the major.

It is necessary to define such terms as “core curriculum,” which could have a very specific meaning according to whomever uses it.

The 2001 GS Academic Program Review could provide useful information over making an entire GS program workable. This review is available on the GS web site.

Jeanne Butler distributed results of a 2005 survey administered to faculty and students over UNK’s General Studies program. [Participants should review these surveys before the 11/10 meeting.] Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement might also be useful.

Q: How do we deliver GS courses and how do we structure the program? Students should know they’re in a GS course. Priority: What do students need?

Participants moved into groups to discuss the individual models and to identify the most desirable features of each.

<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>	<u>Group 3</u>	<u>Group 4</u>
Sonja Kropp	Aaron Dimock	Mark Hartman	Mary Rittenhouse
Rick Miller	Daryl Kelley	Verne Volpe	Gregory Brown
Don Envick	Sylvia Asay	Jeanne Stolzer	Mary Barton
Nita Unruh	Lynne Jackowiak	Ed Walker	

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUPS / PARTING THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS

What degree of mathematical competency should graduates possess?

Should all students be held to testable standards of minimum competence?

The California State University—Monterey Bay web site describes a Mathematics Communication course that we might want to look at.

Participants endorsed the idea of building on skills vertically; the GS program might extend beyond the first two years.

One possibility is a capstone course that integrates knowledge across several disciplines. This course would bring together a variety of majors to discuss real-world interdisciplinary, intercultural problems.

Given the limited ability of first-year students to synthesize information, the GS program might include more First-Year type courses to acclimate students into the academic culture.

Participants reiterated the importance of having students read and respond to primary sources.

The relationship between student and instructor will be especially important in the types of GS courses the group is envisioning.

COMMUNICATION

College and GSC representatives met briefly to discuss how this information might be shared with their respective constituencies.

Next meeting: Friday, November 10. We will continue to discuss the models and attempt a synthesis of the most desirable features of each.