

Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Summaries of Comments from Meetings with
Departments (one of a kind ideas in bold)

- **We should have an introductory class where first-year students would shadow a professions they are interested in.**
- Having a second language is crucial.
- Students can be taught to think creatively and visually.
- Service learning should be required.
- Departments and faculty need to be trained to “do” general education.
- Interest in re-thinking GE structure, (GE College?)with more coherent experience
- Strong support for more reading of difficult or primary documents in GE
- Support for first-year experience course focusing on college level thinking
- Lifelong learning (training for your last job)
- How can we teach the communication skills students need (interviewing, teamwork, group interaction, conflict resolution, etc.) more effectively? Should we have upper-division mini-courses?
- **Should we have a unifying theme (or themes) for GE? SUNY Binghamton uses evolutionary theory as unifying theme. Sloan Wilson-- applying evolutionary theory to social problems.**
- **The purpose of GE is to provide and multiply the number of schemas students have in their heads. This allows them to see things better.**
- Large class sizes seem to interfere with engaging students effectively and with developing their skills in writing and critical thinking.
- Thinking like a _____, rather than Introduction to Content seemed like a good idea.
- How about a common reading with workshops on how to incorporate whatever reading that is into a variety of classes? How about bringing “star” presenters to campus and building their speeches into our curriculum?
- How about linked courses with dual enrollments where the classes share assignments? This type of cohort experience for students can be very good. The only potential downside is if one of the linked courses is taught by a graduate student and the other is taught by a regular faculty member. The power imbalance can create problems.
- I want students to be not passive, to be problem-solving and actively engaged. They need intellectual curiosity. How can we promote that?
- How can we encourage students to think in more synthetic ways—sustained, coherent, and integrated?
- Is CULE talking to high school teachers or administrators? Are there patterns of high schools who prepare students better than others? How do we track these and give them feedback?

- **We should have courses in how to think like a biologist, a historian, etc.** These would be courses with content that would be the basis for critical thinking. For example, what are the particular modes of thought and particular methods of a discipline? Courses would not be tied to a specific content.
- Should we have a common reading for all incoming students?
- Should we include symbolic communication—images, graphic, iconography?
- GE is about forcing students outside their comfort zone.
- UNIV 189 should not be just about retention. It could also have content to stimulate students' thinking.
- Having common readings is something we've talked about for years.
- How do we create an introduction to college level thinking in 189?
- Is it possible to go with longer sequences or courses that combine content with skills?
- **How about building GE courses from the ground up rather than certifying existing courses as GE?**
- Thinking big could include having languages required for entrance, but how can we do that without the infrastructure. In many ways a language requirement sends the wrong message. It would really be best if majors required foreign languages because it was what their students need to be successful.
- How do we encourage our students to be questioners and not just passive recipients?
- Personal and Social Responsibility/Cultural and International Perspectives could benefit from linked courses or interdisciplinary courses.
- Should we have a GE "compensation" model in which students study areas to "balance" the concentration in their majors? Could we create tracks, or is this going to be a one size fits all proposition?
- They are quite concerned about how their students struggle with writing (and oral communication). They need more help with helping their students write better.
- GE helps assure that students have a broad, well-rounded experience to compliment the depth gained in the major. Narrow training limits the ability of students to think.
- Students need to understand the importance of GE and it needs to be real to them. (have meaning?)
- Skills developed in GE classes need to be reinforced and advanced in upper division classes.
- GE should encourage students to think beyond the realms of their previous experience.
- GE courses need to be more engaging in their pedagogy (problem-based learning, collaborative learning) and in their content (critical thinking, challenging material).
- **Should we have a course on transferring learning and skills to different settings?**
- GE meets the needs of students (and the university) for a sense of commitment to a broad university education rather than just a major.