

Non-Academic Affairs Units Meeting Summaries

- Challenging courses with high expectations are imperative for learning and growth.
- Employers who hire NDSU graduates or have interns find them generally well prepared academically. On the other hand, they need to improve in a variety of areas: 1) poor communication skills (both written & oral); 2) lack of professional behavior (texting at work, looking at Facebook); 3) short attention spans (need constant engagement); 4) lack of analytical skills or initiative (need too much supervision); 5) lack of people skills, 6) tardiness; and 8) problems with time management.
- Should NDSU have a one-credit transitioning out course? Indiana has one that covers everything from professional behavior to personal finance issues such as leases, credit, retirement, benefit packages, etc.
- Group projects help students learn how to communicate and delegate.
- Inquiry and analysis are key student learning outcomes.
- It would help students if faculty were more explicit about how learning activities are related to future career goals.
- Students need to have course activities more clearly linked to learning outcomes for the class. High expectations will help students learn how to perform at a level that is appropriate for their real world experiences.
- Work-related experience is extremely important to getting a first job. Perhaps NDSU should require all students to do an internship.
- Internships early on would help students get a sense of what a job is like. Would it be possible to do an early capstone? Is there a way to have students get an early feel for a career or major? Early experiences count.
- Could the capstone courses be more rigorous to encourage research skills? Students should have scaffolded work before they get to the capstone courses so that students are prepared for them.
- Students don't see why they need "information literacy," but they need to understand these are skills and knowledge they need for the future.
- The purpose of General Education is to:
 - Introduce a variety of different fields and diverse perspectives outside a major
 - Think critically and develop transferable skills
 - Supplement and compliment courses required by a major
 - Provide a well-rounded education in preparation for global citizenship
 - Support the difference between "education" and "training"
- The types of skills sets, knowledge, or understanding that should be included in General Education:
 - Communication!
 - Both oral and written
 - Literacy
 - Problem Solving/research
 - Collaboration/teamwork
 - Critical thinking/logic
 - Philosophy (rethink fundamental ideas)

- Culture awareness
- Transferable skills
- Contribution of General Education to a students' major:
 - Helps create a well-rounded education/person
 - Complementary to the major
 - A contribution to the breadth of education complementing the depth of knowledge within the major
 - GE sets the standard for all students (what is in common)
 - A view that General Education and Majors are overlapping circles, each supporting the other
 - An expanding view of the world
 - The role of General Education in promoting productive and responsible citizenship:
 - Concern for self and others
 - Relating to the environment
 - Building empathic concern
 - Building a sense of responsibility
 - Ability to self-reflect
 - Employer expectations from graduates and the role of General Education in meeting these expectations:
 - Communication across the curriculum
 - Transferable skills
 - Problem solving
 - Critical thinking
- Critical thinking and problem solving are things NDSU should be engaging students right away. NDSU needs to tie in real life to problem-based learning (community projects). Problem-based learning can help students take ownership of projects. Students learn the most in their practical experiences--applying their knowledge to a real world setting.
- How about a first-year service-learning project? This would promote their cultural competency in addition to being an applied learning.
- The 189 classes should be universal, common to all majors, something that would involve students in campus organizations, help them develop leadership. Might making it a full class get students more involved? The 189 classes need a cultural competency component--knowing oneself and understanding how people interact with others--more experiential knowledge.
- Why are the colleges breaking into different models for UNIV 189? They no longer provide common experiences for all students.
- Can NDSU break down the experience in the large lecture courses--have more interaction with other students, especially in the first six weeks?
- Can NDSU encourage students to be more reflective about what their values are, who they are?
- Faculty should encourage reflection along the way in the courses – beginning in UNIV 189 and continuing through the capstone experience (Why are we doing this? What am I learning? Why am I learning it?)
- NDSU needs to promote student awareness of their (and development of) emotional intelligence.
- Students need to learn how to work in small groups and faculty need to learn how to facilitate group work.

- Can we take a developmental approach to GE, thinking about it as an evolving understanding for students? Introduce Gen Ed throughout the educational experience – using the same concept as was used for vertical writing – structure Gen Ed throughout the curriculum.
- Should NDSU offer fewer courses, but more sections so that this is more intentional and purposeful?
- Students need to be introduced to GE before their first time to register for courses. Could this be done through the information package students get in advance?
- Should service learning be more important? It could build town/gown relations.
- There does not need to be a link between students' majors and GE. It's good to have students interacting with a variety of students, not just students who have the same mindset and way of understanding the world.
- Students don't understand the purpose of General Education and see it as hoops to jump through. NDSU needs to make the implicit explicit. Show students how the outcomes are linked to jobs and careers.
- Faculty need to help students make the link from what they are learning to what they need to know and do in the real world. This would support an integrated, holistic approach which emphasizes integrated and applied learning.
- Should engaging pedagogies be required of all GE courses?
- Large anonymous classes are a problem for GE.
- Could we have a mentoring program to connect first year students with students in their prospective major?
- Should there be a more prescriptive list of common learning outcomes for UNIV 189. Colleges could still be free to decide how to implement them, but there would be more of a common experience.