Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences (CULE) Minutes for
April 15, 2014, 9:00-10:00, Peace Garden

Present: Cole Davidson, Marion Harris, RaNelle Ingalls, Rajesh Kavasseri, Lisa Nordick, Larry Peterson, Seth Rasmussen, Susan Ray-Degges, Kent Sandstrom, Carolyn Schnell, and Beth Twomey

Recorder: Kelly Hoyt

Unable to attend: Andrew Mara, Cynthia Naughton, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Herbert Snyder, and Kevin Walsh.

1. The minutes from 04/08/14, emailed on 04/14/14, were approved with one suggestion from Lisa that we should remove HNES and replace it with “other departments” on page 3 under the first arrow, the second bullet.

2. We discussed the Faculty Senate meeting on 04/14/14. Amy was unable to attend today's meeting, but sent the following email on Monday after the Senate meeting:
   - “Our revisions passed at the Senate with no serious concern but with one question about the biological diversity bullet. The one thing that came up additionally is that they'd like us to revisit the language of the Tech outcome for something akin to understanding the function of tech (Marion and Cole may be able to fill you in further tomorrow). I thought perhaps that we could mirror one of the natural and physical worlds bullets by adding the language ‘analyze components and dynamics of technology' as a bullet. They also were interested in the possibility of "creating new technology or innovation" under that outcome. My initial thought was that creation might be a stretch in a single course on tech, but there were at least two people interested in this possibility, so it's certainly worth discussion.”
   - Cole explained that Alan Denton was concerned that we removed the word understanding in the Technology bullet.
   - We discussed to what extent it was possible for a general education course to help students understand how technology actually works.
     - Rajesh said it would be difficult or even impossible to teach students all that information.
     - Seth said that the idea of creating new technology or innovation in a GE course (or in most undergraduate courses) is unrealistic.
       - Cole said Amy addressed this in the Faculty Senate meeting and said that it was also unrealistic.
     - Beth suggested “using technology” like learning how to write code. They wouldn’t necessarily be creating technology, but they’d be creating a web page.
     - Marion said she thinks that he was referring to the mechanism of technology at some level and she agreed with that. She doesn’t think that GE is going to teach students everything about that but maybe it’s important for people to have some rudimentary sense of how the mechanisms of technology work.
     - Larry thinks it is important for us to be responsive to the Senate. He suggested adding a bullet such as "analyze components and dynamics of technology."
       - Kent asked what this would look like. He said he would need something to show him what it would look like.
       - Lisa thought we intentionally left technology vague so it would give faculty and different disciplines different options.
- Rajesh said that GPS is technology that almost everybody uses these days, but how does a GPS work? It would be hard for him to “water down” how a GPS works for everyone to understand it.
- Rajesh said that if we mentioned something about how technology has evolved and its application then that might be something we could put in a bullet.
- Lisa suggested putting an “a” before “technology” because then different courses could be referring to a specific technology. She thinks we should be careful how we phrase it so we aren’t unintentionally restrictive.

  - Rajesh moved to add the bullet “analyze how technology evolves and shapes human experience.”
    - Marion seconded the motion. Committee approved unanimously. Motion passed.

3. Larry reorganized the model to make it clearer and cleaner and to capture the structural elements we agreed upon at the last meeting.
   - Lisa asked if we want to leave the word “oral” with applied in the last component of the Communication outcome.
     - Larry agreed, and asked the committee if they agreed that oral should be removed as well. Committee members agreed. Applied communication could be electronic and not just oral.
   - Lisa asked about the Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Problem Solving. The third component Critical Thinking that has no credit listed.
     - Larry explained that Critical Thinking should happen in 3 different areas: 1) First year course; 2) Capstone; and 3) somewhere between those two points. It could happen inside or outside the major. In some majors, critical thinking is used throughout the program so it would be met that way. It might be embedded throughout other areas and would be more like a checkbox that is completed.
   - Lisa asked what happens if a department chooses to not incorporate critical thinking?
     - Kent and Larry explained that it would be a college level responsibility. And if not, they may decide to let someone else do it.
     - Carolyn thought this was supposed to be a university expectation.
     - Kent said that colleges could have the option of offering courses.
       - Larry explained that this is one of the things we would need to discuss with the Deans because it will require reallocation of resources and some new resources.
     - Carolyn asked if this needs more clarification.
       - Larry said yes, this is another area that needs more clarification along with critical thinking.

4. Lisa had some questions about the model from the last meeting since she was not able to attend.
   - She is curious about the minor and how it will work. If it is not connected to GE, then she wonders what the relationship to GE would be because we already have the ability to offer minors.
     - Larry explained that minors or certificates may have a GE foundation, but they may not need to be completed by GE courses. Members have suggested options such as Sustainable Design, Sustainability, Innovation, World Hunger, Great Books and Great Ideas.
etc. that are not usually offered by a department. Those would simply be opportunities that we could offer.

- Lisa is also wondering if the GE Committee would have the responsibility to ensure that whatever courses are offered for an interdisciplinary minor are appropriate.
  - The Graduate School and Interdisciplinary Studies only works with graduate programs that are interdisciplinary.
  - Larry said we would have to have some way to keep track of this. An academic department would need to be responsible for coordinating a minor or certificate.
    - For example, the GE page might note students can earn a minor in Innovation Studies by completing certain courses.
  - Kent asked if there would be a diverse array of minors or would there just a few? How much proliferation would there be?
    - Larry said he’d be surprised if there was a lot of proliferation because it will take coordination and commitment to make this happen.
  - RaNelle thought the courses for those minors should be reviewed to determine what BC outcomes they satisfy. This could be part of the process to develop a minor or certificate, followed by a regular review to ensure they are still meeting the outcomes.
    - She asked if ALL courses in a minor or certificate will have to be vetted through GE to say that they are GE or is there a possibility that if they are part of the GE minor and the minor is approved, the courses would just automatically be approved as a GE course?
      - Larry said he doesn’t think that ALL the courses will have to be GE courses, otherwise we are really boxing ourselves and boxing students in.
      - RaNelle asked if we are looking at minors and certificates that could potentially be vetted by GE, but that not all of those courses would be individual GE/BC courses.
      - Larry said the question is, who should vet minors? Is GE the right group to vet them? Maybe it should be Academic Affairs since they are the ones who handle the traditional minors.
  - Lisa said it becomes even more complex when you have a combination of GE and random courses that somebody says would work for this minor and the interdisciplinary nature of that program. Without true ownership, would there need to be a committee formed to review this.
    - Larry thinks we need a subcommittee of 2 or 3 people to work out a more detailed plan. He mentioned that on many campuses a unit like University Studies would have responsibility for interdisciplinary undergraduate options.
    - Carolyn mentioned Gerontology as an example of an interdisciplinary program. When Registration and Records sends the curriculum guide out for review, they send it to Greg Sanders in HDE.
    - RaNelle said that when they send out curriculum guides to interdisciplinary areas they do not always get consistent replies because they are not coordinating with each other.
    - RaNelle suggested that minors/certificates should be annually reviewed at two levels. One would be by whoever owns it, to look at it in a curriculum perspective to make sure it makes sense as a minor. The second would be the GE committee to make sure that it still meets the GE guidelines that we had in mind when we created these minors/certificates.
Larry asked Lisa, since she expressed a concern about this, if she would design a plan on how to coordinate this. She accepted. He asked if others would like to help Lisa to think about the structure of and responsibility for the optional interdisciplinary minors and certificates where the foundation would be GE, but they would not be restricted to GE/BC courses.

- RaNelle and Marion both volunteered to help Lisa come up with some suggestions.
- Larry noted that the Provost candidates have all stressed the value of more cross campus collaboration between colleges and this would be another area that could incorporate that.

- RaNelle noted that according to the Curricular Approval Chart on the Academic Affairs website, a degree, major, minor or certificate, needs to go through all the channels up to the State Board.
- Lisa suggested that we educate departments on the fact that even though they might be losing a GE course that a lot of students have been taking because they thought it was a mandatory course for GE, that the department can offer another course that would be DCE, but would still suffice as a GE course.
  - Larry agreed that we need to emphasize that there are opportunities as well as part change.

5. Marion asked what we are doing at the last Senate meeting for the year.

- Larry explained that we are just adding one bullet, according to the concerns they voiced at the meeting.
- Larry noted our previous plan to meet over the summer with groups and individuals on the plan before we have open forums.
  - We will need to figure out who is going to meet with whom. One group would be the Deans. Another group would be those who are listened to and are influential. We should ask some heads and chairs who people seem to listen to at the Heads and Chairs meetings. Larry also thought we should talk with people in the Senate Executive Committee because of the nature of their positions.
  - Marion asked if this would need to be done before the end of the school year.
    - Larry said no, just over the summer.
- Marion asked if we should take our present plan to the Senate and Senate Executive committee to show them where we are at.
  - Larry noted that at the meeting he, Kent, and Amy had with Provost Rafert, the Provost recommended we first meet with the Deans. If the Deans say this isn’t going to work, then we are going to have a problem.
- Marion doesn’t think that we should be so cautious. She thinks that if faculty are on board with it then the Deans aren’t going to disagree with that.
  - Kent said he thinks it’s more a matter of just consulting with the Deans to see if they see something that would be a major snag.
  - Marion asked if we could just have a meeting with the Deans in the next few weeks to review the plan and ask if they see any problems. We could tell them we are thinking of presenting this to the Senate Executive Committee and maybe the Senate as a work in progress.
    - Kent said that’s exactly how he would roll it out.
    - Lisa said that the Deans are the ones who will be sensitive to budgetary concerns.
✓ Seth thinks if we let the Deans know what is going on and get their support, it’s going to help us if some faculty are opposed to the plan. The Deans can help respond to those comments.
  o Larry asked what the committee thinks of this plan and trying to get on the Deans agenda.
✓ Kent said that the Deans have been having their own meetings so he could talk to them on Thursday when they meet. He could ask if they’d be able to meet again in two weeks when he could present this to them and get their feedback.

Next Meeting is Tuesday, April 22 at 9 am in Peace Garden