Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences (CULE) Minutes for December 3, 2013,
8:30-9:30, Peace Garden Room

Present: Cole Davidson, Marion Harris, RaNelle Ingalls, Cynthia Naughton, Larry Peterson, Seth Rasmussen, Susan Ray-Degges, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Carolyn Schnell, Beth Twomey, and Kevin Walsh. Recorder: Kelly Hoyt

Unable to attend: Rajesh Kavasseri, Andrew Mara, Lisa Nordick, Kent Sandstrom, and Herbert Snyder.

1. The minutes from 11/26/13 emailed on 11/26/13 were approved.

2. Seth was unable to contact Rhonda Magel about math-based critical reasoning.

3. Larry emailed University of Colorado-Colorado Springs about their multiple competency-based design. He has not heard back from them yet.

4. Cole did not have any additional data on transfer students to report at this time.

5. The committee continued working on the components for our collective model, checking them against the findings from the surveys and meetings.
   - Revisit discussion and complete work on Critical Thinking
     - Larry reviewed the discussion from the last meeting of having at least 1 course of critical thinking outside the major and possibly both courses could be outside, or 1 outside and 1 inside the major.
       - There were concerns with this model regarding who would be in charge of it, who would “own it” and make sure guidelines were being followed.
     - Marion suggested having a single book that was used campus wide to teach critical thinking so that all students were being taught the same content.
       - There would need to be a committee to determine which book to use as there is an abundance of them on the market. It was also suggested that we could take pieces from these books and create our own. Based on her experience with 189, Carolyn suggested not doing that at first. Using and already published book was more sensible initially.
       - Cynthia suggested having an online course, but others felt that unless there were really good teachers, the course might not be very effective. There seems to be quite a bit of evidence that first year students have more difficulty with online learning as compared with traditional face to face classroom learning.
       - Larry asked if we went with this proposal, how does this affect staffing and who would own it?
       - Cynthia suggested that the critical thinking be incorporated into the first year experience. She said there could be some top notch instructors that either teach it or could just do a video showing what critical thinking involves and what being scholarly entails.
       - Larry and Carolyn noted that Larry Reynolds is quite interested in using the expertise of the University Distinguished Professors to get first semester students thinking about four questions which could be linked to this evolving model: 1) What is the Academy and what is its role in society?; 2) What is a
Research University and what is its role in society?; 3) What is Basic Research and what is its role in society?; and 4) If these above enterprises have value to society, what is society’s role in supporting them?

- Cynthia moved and Seth seconded her motion to create a 3 credit first year experience requirement that combines the equivalent of up to one-credit of the existing 189 "skills for academic success" with the equivalent of at least two credits of critical thinking. Courses would be “owned” by each college, but would use a common book on critical thinking in the disciplines. Connections among the disciplines would be explicitly made in the course. All sections would share a core set of common learning outcomes, but instructors would be free to individualize their sections beyond the common core. Courses would need to be broad enough so that students who changed majors would not need to take a slightly different version of the same course. A separate committee would design this requirement and upper division courses should link to and reinforce the learning outcomes from this course.
  - Because we lost our quorum, we couldn’t vote during the meeting. Cynthia suggested we vote by email. Larry will send out an email asking for the committee to vote on this motion.
- Seth noted this first year critical thinking experience could be in addition to the embedded critical thinking requirement we had discussed last week.
  - We will discuss that further at the next meeting. Should it be embedded into a Core Breadth of Knowledge course? Should it be integrated into the major, maybe not in a single course? Who would certify that?

- Breadth of Knowledge – this is the last topic that we need to discuss at this time. We have 21 credits to determine where they should be laid out in the GE model.

Next meeting, Tuesday, December 10th at 8:30 am in Hidatsa