

From: Amy Rupiper Taggart

Sent: Thursday, December 04, 2014 11:23 AM

To: Donald Schwert; Larry Peterson

Subject: Re: Quest: regrets about removal of science lab requirement

Don,

Thanks for your thoughtful comments and your commitment to science education. I don't think anyone is trying to say science matters less; more that we're trying to build more flexibility into the system for getting students to deal with these larger skills-based goals. The reduction in overt coverage of content areas applies to the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts, as well, for instance. In practice, the new model might mean more science immersion for those in STEM disciplines and a bit less for those outside STEM.

I was not on the committee when the science decision got made, but I wonder whether we might bring back to our committee at very least your point about the lab. We are still 1 credit short of the current total number of credits in GE, anyway, which might allow us to add back in 1 lab. I can certainly see the value of the class plus lab experience. And I can also see a 2-credit class plus lab meeting these goals but I understand that would require a restructuring of how science is taught and might put more obstacles in the way of shifting to a new model. I'll defer a bit to Larry on the rationale for the lab removal in the proposed model.

Regarding the recruitment question, I know Larry has heard this about intro courses before and when the departments actually looked at their numbers recruited, they were very low. Have you been able to track that for Geology? Additionally, I think an intro critical thinking course taught in an exciting way to non-majors, undeclareds would have a similar recruitment possibility.

My two cents for now, but these are the kinds of things we need to know about the model before it goes to the Senate, so we can deliberate about what should stay and change.

Amy