

Joint Provost / Senate Council General Education and Reform Assessment
Planning and Coordinating Committee
(GERA)

Notes, November 7, 2005

Attendees Present: Larry Grabau, Richard Greissman, Jane Jensen, Phil Kraemer, Deb Moore, Tad Pedigo, Ernie Yanarella, Connie Ray, Bill Rayens, Rebecca Scott

1. Ernie will devote approximately one hour of the next University Senate meeting to the work done thus far by GERA. Ruth Beattie and Gerald Smith have accepted invitations to become a part of this committee. Gerald will attend when his schedule permits. The joint Provost/Senate Council letter announcing the committee will go out soon, now that membership is solidified.
2. Discussion took place regarding the current environment/perception that students take USP courses for their first two years, and then take "major" courses the last two. The hope is that USP will evolve into being a four-year continuum. Deans could be asked, "What pre-requisites do your students need?" and compare that to the answer to "what do all students need?"
3. Are the principles outlined in the ad hoc committee report the starting point, or are they merely a guide? The consensus was to utilize the five principles as a starting point, for now. Faculty must agree with these before any implementation can be discussed. The greatest buy-in will be needed from those who will be consuming and contributing the most.
4. Concern was voiced that the greater good of the proposal could be buried under financial concerns. Focus groups and forums were discussed, but it seems likely a differently named, perhaps combination of the two mechanisms will be utilized. Tactics to involve various groups was discussed. Information gathering could be organized by college. The suggestion was made to request that deans identify faculty to be involved in group discussions, but it was also noted that this practice could allow a dean to select only certain faculty, and skew the group opinion.
5. Questions were raised concerning how USP should be evaluated. Should an evaluation be done at the end of the first year? Should the evaluation at the end of the second year be different than that of the first? What is expected of students?
6. It was decided it was too late to schedule any activities for the Fall 2005 semester.

Discussion topics for November 14, 2005: (1) structure of college forums and (2) activities for the Spring semester.