

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
November 1, 2006
Johnson Hall Conference Room

Present:

Andrew Bonamici, Herb Chereck, Hilary Gerdes, Dan Keller, Anne Laskaya, Dan Patton, Steven Pologe, Ashley Rees, Chris Murray, Ron Severson, Karen Sprague, and Paul Engelking

Absent:

Dave Hubin, Dean Livelybrooks, Martha Pitts, Bill Ryan, Arkady Vaintrob, Kate Wagle, Malcolm Wilson, Pat Bartlein, Lyllye Parker, and Ken Calhoon

Guests:

Dorothee Ostmeier (subbing for Pat Bartlein)

Minutes:

The minutes from the October 18 meeting were not available for review. The Chair announced that they would be distributed to the Council prior to the meeting scheduled for November 15, 2006.

Agenda

After reviewing the Agenda with the Council members, the Chair summarized the process for soliciting data on grading from three departments. Three departments will be selected at random to run and review a query report designed by Jim Blick in the Registrar's Office. The query will survey general grade distribution in course ranges (100-199; 200-299; 300-399; and 400-499) during the same time periods studied for the Grade Inflation Report (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004). Only the Fall term data for each year would be used. The report would be ready for testing by November 3, 2006. A small committee from the UGC will test the reporting process before it is sent to randomly selected departments.

The remainder of the meeting Agenda focused on General Education Criteria activity at the state level.

General Education Criteria and Outcomes

(See: [Spelling Commission Report on Higher Education](#))

Karen Sprague explained that the letters and reports from the American Council on Education (ACE), which were distributed previously at the October 18th meeting, were indicative of the trends in national thinking on General Education. At the state level, a group of faculty from OUS schools, Community Colleges, and private institutions (that work with AAOT) have written draft statements of General Education Criteria and Outcomes. Karen described the work she was engaged in with meeting with Community College faculty to discuss these draft statements and solicit feedback. Now, she wanted

to consult with the Undergraduate Council as to the best way to initiate the same discussion on the UO campus:

- 1.) What is the Council's perspective on these draft statements on General Education?
- 2.) How can the discussion be started at UO?

- **Discussion**

The Undergraduate Council raised several important points:

- It is important that we want to preserve institutional uniqueness;
- It seems the criteria are too general;
- If students could get all of these things from General Education courses, they would be very well educated;
- Part of the goal of this project is that educators are writing criteria, not legislators;
- Maybe at UO, smaller groups within disciplines should have conversations on criteria, e.g. departments in Humanities;
- CAS has a very detailed approach to syllabi reviews; how do we address syllabi for distance learning and internet learning?
- Does each class have to fulfill every criteria? Criteria should be made flexible;
- Can commonalities be put forward in an introduction to the General Education Criteria and Outcomes? The introduction should address not only commonalities, but distinctions, as well;
- Can the criteria and outcomes be "anchored" to a list of core values (like spokes to the hub of a wheel)? Then show how each value plays out in each discipline.

Action

The Council discussed a process of developing small focus groups to examine General Education Criteria and Outcomes. Members noted that it was important to look at the current draft document on its own merits and critique it. Focus should be kept on faculty discussion and ownership of criteria and outcomes. After some consideration of the possibility of cross-institutional discussion groups, the Council decided that the conversation should start internally.

The Chair summarized the discussion by reiterating that the goal of the General Education Criteria and Outcomes is to improve the quality and transferability of General Education courses. To move the discussion of this issue forward, the directors of undergraduate studies in each department will be asked to invite interested faculty within their respective discipline to review and critique the draft statements. A timetable will be proposed and decided upon at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, 2006, 1:00pm at Johnson Hall Conference Room.