

UNIVERSITY SENATE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT GENERAL EDUCATION PLAN MARCH 26, 2010

Fundamental Studies

Jason Kahn, Chemistry and Biochemistry, stated that we should absolutely not let students out of the writing classes as proposed on the plan.

Lillian Doherty, Classics, concerned about the potential conflict between the intention of the fundamental studies requirement and the current limits on admission of undergraduate students in English and math courses. She is concerned about who is going to teach these courses and would hate to see the exploitation of adjuncts.

Jim Harris stated that he is proud that we are going to add so many seats but the real issue is where we get the money to pay for this. We deliver right now is through graduate students. However, our current students are already teaching too much and increasing the number of graduate students doesn't help them because there are no jobs out there for them.

John Townsend, BSOS would like the taskforce to consider the minimum passing grade to be a C instead of a D-

Romina Heyman, graduate student, stated that there is a difference between undergrads teaching and grad students. It would be nice to have graduate students teach and allow them to actually have a position.

Chuck Caramello stated that he likes the idea of no exemptions for freshman English but had concerns about who is going to teach the freshman courses. Adjunct lecturers work well for professional writing but may not be appropriate for freshman English. We don't want to burden the graduate students with this task. Tilley, point of order

Denny Gulick asked what kinds of courses and what kinds of units will apply to fundamental studies. He is worried that all math courses would apply.

Bob Buchanan stated that there are new means of writing but there are no specific examples of a course that fits in this criteria. Are you going to develop new courses that fit into this and what kind of teachers will you get to teach them.

Jim Harris stated it is an implementation issue but there are solutions that are varied like online not just graduate students and adjuncts. This is something that

can be done by hiring post docs and permanent visiting profs but there are resource implications. This is not a problem. We can do it.

Distributive Studies/I-series

Kevin Tervala, Undergraduate, stated that he liked the concept of scholarship in practice but would like more detail as to what these courses would look like. Are there courses in ARHU or BSOS or liberal sciences that would fit into this because otherwise it would increase the load?

Dave Tilley stated that paying 10k for 50 i-series courses doesn't seem cost effective. He said that he could only vote for this if the actual cost was specified. He also asked if we could have the new plan without the i-series?

Steve Halperin suggested that in scholarship and practice tone of the language suggests that you are talking about applications of scholarship they learned somewhere else. Better to phrase it as the interaction between scholarship and applied subjects.

Jason Kahn stated that the i-series courses are great but how portable are they from faculty member to faculty member? It would help the report if you added a list of the courses and who on campus can teach them

Dave Levermore asked that the task force clarify that the i-courses must be taken here and not transferred in. He also thinks that there should be several faculty that can teach the same i-courses.

Bob Hayes stated that he was a TA for an i-course. The content is wonderful but the class size is challenging. Content is great but the ability of the students to engage is challenging.

Matthew Popper, shared his experience that of taking an i-course. It is course completely worth it. He has learned so much already. They are very similar to the honors courses that are discussion, part lecture and part moderated debate.

Boden Sandstrom stated that she was teaching an i-course and thinks it is a fabulous program. She stated that it won't work unless we can hire a TA for 3-4 years.

Marc Pound stated that the task force was missing an opportunity by not including research faculty

Diversity/Cultural Competency

Mark Leone stated that he found a rebirth for anthropology on this campus in it. The document is inspiring. Spoke to competency that the over-professionalization of the undergraduate experience. Said that none of this compromises, through the professionalization and competence, the notion of scientific procedure learned in anthropology. The use of general knowledge from the past of our field and doesn't compromise anthropological theory or any social theory.

Richard Klank stated that exposure to elements of culture, develops the culture. There is so much quality to be experienced around here.

Jim Harris stated that the best part of the plan is the diversity section. It is the most needed. His undergraduate board has uniformly questioned the depth of the current diversity program. This promises something that is really important.

Sangeetha Madhavan stated that there is not enough on equality and social justice and how we balance teaching about the US and international contexts and how the two can be done more fluidly.

Adison Ramen advocated for inter-group dialogue courses. He stated that they address a very specific controversial topic and provide a safe zone for speaking openly. It is a small group course and he has learned a lot. There is dialogue and discussion but they also do many readings and an out-of comfort zone experience. The course is unlike any other.

Karol Soltan stated that he did not feel that this section has real seriousness and rigor.

Romina Heymann asked the taskforce to also consider latinos and Hispanics in their discussion of diversity. She also asked if there would be any courses that emphasized Hispanic and latino culture as a result of this requirement.

Jeffrey Hurt stated that students should be competent in the cultures of the west. It is controversial but doesn't stand for one thing but does stand for tradition. He urged the task force to address traditions of other cultures in the report.

Mark Leone stated that the job of anthropology is to unsettle people. It's not that we have to invent new courses. It transfers what we have into what is more centrally available. This is a way of enhancing the effort of tradition.

Experiential Learning

Jason Kahn stated that implementation couldn't be separated from the goal. We can't ignore that it takes the same time to teach a large lecture and a small lab

Richard Klank stated that the involvement in the process of something gives a special kind of learning that students need. Not just the making of something but the cultural development is important. Students have more passion and involvement when you expose them to culture.

Miscellaneous

Lillian Doherty asked about competence in language and if the idea was to make that across the board and use language courses to fill a variety of different requirements? Are you leaving second category of advanced studies to the general rules of the colleges as to how many courses must be taken at the upper level.

Doug Roberts asked if the task force considered requiring that our degree programs embed factors like oral communications and experiential learning into their programs. That could reduce the course load.

Bob Buchanan asked if a well-designed internship program could qualify as scholarship in practice and experiential learning?