

Moving General Education to the Core of the Academy
Roundtable Discussion
AAC&U General Education and Assessment Conference
March 2, 2007

Incorporating Faculty Hiring, Tenure, and Promotion

- Including a clearly stated expectation in all faculty position announcements that teaching in the general education curriculum is an integral component of the teaching position
- Requiring all faculty applicants to respond to the Statement of Purpose
- Arranging for the Chair of the Core Curriculum to take part in interviews of all faculty applicants
- Reiterating expectations regarding teaching in the core when interviewing faculty candidates
- Including teaching in the core as a critical component of teaching effectiveness in the tenure and promotion process
- Considering the extent to which disciplinary divisions contribute to teaching in the Core Curriculum when evaluating the need for new faculty positions.

Developing Structures That Support General Education

- Teaching assignments and teaching load
 - Establishing the schedule for core courses before that of other courses
 - Considering types of core courses taught
 - Discipline-specific core courses
 - Interdisciplinary core courses
 - Creating a process for assigning teaching responsibilities
 - Recommendations from Chair of the Core to Dean
 - Conversations with Division Chairs
 - Survey regarding faculty interest
 - Efforts to rotate assignments at request of faculty
- Teaching groups
 - Identifying course coordinators
 - Enable teaching groups to work effectively
 - Provide opportunities for developing leadership and career advancement
 - Building shared expectations among sections
 - Establishing common elements, topics, goals, skills
 - Promoting creative exchange of ideas
 - Providing formal and informal faculty development opportunities
- Chair of the Core Curriculum
 - Appointing a faculty member to oversee the Core Curriculum
 - Establishing the position to be parallel to academic division chairs in responsibility and accountability
 - Assigning curricular oversight responsibility

Establishing processes for curriculum development, assessment, and revision

- Ensuring full faculty involvement
 - Creating a coordinating group representative of the disciplines
 - Involving all faculty in developing goals
 - Creating a tentative list of courses
 - Assigning groups of faculty to refine course descriptions and create Course Prospectus Documents
 - Holding a series of faculty forums
 - Leading toward unanimous decision to adopt the curriculum
 - Developing a rubric that matches goals to courses
- Conducting systematic reviews of curriculum
 - Involving faculty in curricular reviews
 - Completing surveys
 - Participating in focus groups
 - Creating, using, and interpreting, course assessment tools
 - Revising the curriculum based on review findings

Building Support for the Core Curriculum

- Creating the Liberal Arts Institute
 - Requiring all new faculty to attend
 - Eliciting nominations for non-faculty staff members from all areas of the College.
 - Implementing three days of experiential learning and actual classroom experience
- Nurturing student understanding of and commitment to the core curriculum
 - Requiring an orientation course, Perspectives on the College
 - Including discussions of vocation and the liberal arts in Perspectives on the Individual
 - Integrating course concepts within courses and making connections among courses
 - Involving students in the Core Curriculum assessment processes
 - Involving students in Academic Life Council deliberations affecting the Core Curriculum
 - Weaving core courses throughout four years and finishing with senior capstone experiences
- Promoting the liberal arts and general education to prospective students, parents, and community members
 - Including a sessions at Open Houses for new students that are parallel to discipline based information sessions
 - Highlighting the Core Curriculum in in College promotional materials
 - Educating high school guidance counselors about the importance of general education

Suggestions not yet implemented

- Making the connection between teaching in core and tenure/promotion decisions explicit
- Implementing a plan to rotate faculty teaching assignments based on faculty interests and preferences
- Conducting a Liberal Arts Institute for the Board of Directors
- Expanding the Liberal Arts Institute to reach constituencies beyond the campus community

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