General Education and Student Success

December 10, 2013

General Education Task Force
Goals

• Update on the GEVTF progress
  • Rationales for Student Success
  • Information Gathering
  • National Movement

• What is the role of Gen Ed?
• Feedback
• Assistance reaching out
Outline

• National Context
• NIU Context
• Road to Student Success
• Faculty/Student Survey
• Discussion
National Context

• Paradigms of College Learning

– The 20\textsuperscript{th} Century
  • Breadth = General Education
  • Depth = Major Coursework
  • Course-centered Curriculum
  • Clashing Expectations/Goals

– The 21\textsuperscript{st} Century
  • Skill-based Practices and Purposes
  • Shared Educational Goals and Experiences
  • Integrative Learning
    • Liberal Arts/Professional Schools
    • Freshman/Senior
    • Curriculum/Co-Curriculum

Carol Geary Schneider, “Making the LEAP: Connecting Liberal Education with 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Challenges.” Plenary Address at AAC&U Institute on Integrative Learning, July 2013.
National Context (surveys)

Employers Seek

- Team work
- Science in real-world settings
- Writing and speaking well
- Complex problem solving
- Develop workable solutions
- Understanding of global contexts
- Creative problem solving
- Applying knowledge in new settings
- Understanding statistics
- Ethics and integrity

Employer Desire

- Team structure
- Verbal and written communication
- Decisions and problem solving
- Process information
- Organize and prioritize

Employer Prioritize

- Critical Thinking
- Complex Problem-Solving
- Written and Oral Communication
- Applied Knowledge in Real-World Settings

National Context (dynamics)

• **21st century Workplace Dynamics**
  – 1/3 of the entire US labor force changes jobs yearly
  – 10-14 job changes by the time a worker is 38
  – 50% of workers have been with their company less than 5 years
  – 30 million workers are in jobs that did not exist last quarter

Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
• **2007 – Goals Prioritized**
  – Great Journeys Strategic Plan, Curricular Innovations Task Force

• **2008 – Baccalaureate Task Force**
  – Goals and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

• **2009 – Forums/Feedback (1293 participants)**

• **2010-2011 – Goals approval (CUC)**

• **2013 – Gen Ed Visioning Task Force**

Sources: [www.niu.edu/bacreview](http://www.niu.edu/bacreview); [www.niu.edu/gened](http://www.niu.edu/gened)
NIU Context (baccalaureate)

• Baccalaureate Mission (The Three “C’s”)
  – Critical Thinking, Communication, and Creativity

• The Eight Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
  – Global interconnections
  – Intercultural competencies
  – Interconnection of human life/natural world
  – Critical, creative, and independent thought
  – Communicate clearly and effectively
  – Collaboration with others
  – Quantitative and qualitative reasoning
  – Synthesize knowledge and skills
NIU Context (baccalaureate)

Task Force Membership
- Business: Marketing
- Education: Leadership, Educational Psychology, & Foundations
- Engineering and Engineering Technology: Educational Technology, Research and Assessment
- Health & Human Sciences: Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
- Liberal Arts & Sciences: English, Foreign Language and Literatures, Geography
- Visual & Performing Arts: Art, Music
- Administrators & Support Staff: University Honors Program, Community College Relations Assessment Services, Division of Public Administration Career Services, Planning & Assessment, Student Affairs Libraries, Faculty Development, Libraries, International Programs, Vice Provost, Catalog Editor

Student Learning Outcome Teams
- Business: Management, Marketing
- Education: Literacy Education, Kinesiology and Physical Education, Leadership, Educational Psychology, and Foundations
- Engineering and Engineering Technology: Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Technology
- Health & Human Sciences: Nursing
- Liberal Arts & Sciences: Communications, English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Geography, History, Math
- Visual & Performing Arts: Music
• **Baccalaureate Goals**
  
  – Contextualize student learning
    – Modern versus Historical
    – Global versus local
    – Unity versus diversity
  
  – Facilitate instructional consistency
    – Framing delivery
    – Organizing learning environments
    – Contextualizing assessments
  
  – Integrate Curriculum
    – General education
    – Majors studies
    – Co-curriculum
NIU Context (integrative learning)

• **Baccalaureate Purpose Statement**
  
  The NIU baccalaureate degree experience enables graduates to think critically, create, and communicate by participating in an engaged learning environment to prepare for success in a diverse, global society. This learning environment emphasizes the importance of context. Graduates will be prepared to understand *the impact of history on modern society, the relationship between our society and others around the globe, and the unity and diversity of the American experience*. Students will be exposed to a broad range of experiences and knowledge through the study of natural science, social science, *the humanities*, and the arts.

• **General Education Goal B.1**
  
  Students demonstrate a knowledge of *the historical and prehistorical development of societies and cultures*, and of the relations of such development to the present.
• **Integrate Learning at NIU**
  – The essential skills of the SLOs
  – Practices (High Impact, Engaged, Co-curricular)
  – Encourage Student-Centered Assessments
Why Integrate Learning?

• Employs Existing NIU Strengths
• Improves Student Preparation for Success
  – Dynamic National and Global Change
  – Diversity as a Daily Reality
  – An Economy Dependent upon Knowledge and Innovation
  – Ethical Dilemmas and Decisions
• Positions NIU Competitively
Integrative Learning Practices

• **High-Impact Educational Practices (HIPs)**
  – First-Year Seminars and Experiences
  – Common Intellectual Experiences
  – Learning Communities
  – Writing-Intensive Courses
  – Undergraduate Research
  – Diversity/Global Learning
  – Collaborative Assignments and Projects
  – Service Learning and Community-Based Learning
  – Internships
  – Capstone Courses and Projects

• **Engaged Learning Practices**
  – Research
  – Senior Projects
  – Internships
  – Collaborative Research
  – Scientific Inquiry
  – Ethical Questions
  – Flipped Classrooms

Survey Results (fall 2013)

• **Student Sentiments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentiment</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Most Common Five Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>waste (n = 108), easy (102), boring (99), basic (55), pointless (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>time (n = 117), math (77), English (73), classes (73), major (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>interesting (n = 42), well (30), knowledge (22), rounded (21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sentiment word analysis - 32 most common words used by 729 NIU student respondents.

Means of student responses (n = 728) to five statements associated with Q3. A score of -1.0 indicates that student disagree with that statement. A score of 0.0 indicates neither agreement nor disagreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3: General Education has provided:</th>
<th>all students</th>
<th>native students</th>
<th>students with some transfer credits</th>
<th>students with associates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... an opportunity to explore different academic fields as I was considering a major.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... fundamental skills and knowledge necessary for higher level courses</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in a broad range of areas</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... the ability to recognize how different fields of study are related or dependent on each other</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... a deeper awareness of social responsibility and/or citizenship</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results (fall 2013)

### Student Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION 4</th>
<th>all students</th>
<th>rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>course scheduling</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality of classes</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenience in academic year</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difficulty of courses</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenience during summer</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size of classes</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student life</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social connections</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1.0 = Not important; 4.0 = Very important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION 5</th>
<th>all students</th>
<th>rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student life</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality of instruction</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social connections</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difficulty of courses</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course scheduling</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenience in academic year</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size of classes</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenience during summer</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1.0 = NIU; -1.0 = Community Colleges.
Results (fall 2013)

• **Student Results**

26% enrollment drop since 2003
Results (fall 2013)

• Faculty Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where should the SLOs be experienced? Means of Q5. Scale: 1.0 = General Education; -1.0 = Major Studies courses. 0.0 = 50/50 split.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HISTORY (n = 54)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMANITIES (n = 217)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (n = 986)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How well do your courses map to each SLO? Means of Q8-22. Scale: 1.0 = Low; 2.0 Moderate; 3.0 = High.
## Results (fall 2013)

- **Faculty Co-Curriculars**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Most common examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Global</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>study abroad (n = 76), abroad programs (n = 16), undergrad research (n = 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Cultural</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>study abroad (n = 46), abroad programs (n = 12), research rookies (n = 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Natural</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>study abroad (n = 3), environmental studies (n = 5), field projects (n = 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Thought</td>
<td>1296</td>
<td>study abroad (n = 7), undergraduate research (n = 7), history club (n = 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Communication</td>
<td>1057</td>
<td>foreign language (n = 4), history club (n = 3), USOAR (n = 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Collaboration</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>student organizations (n = 7), research projects (n = 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Reasoning</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>undergrad research (n = 5), quantitative analysis (n = 2), study abroad (n = 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: Synthesis</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>undergrad research (n = 4), study abroad (n = 4), experiential learning (n = 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gen Ed Visioning Task Force

- Benchmarking.
- Reviewed several reports and documents.
- Campus-wide student and faculty survey that included over 1200 participants (~800 student and 400 faculty partial and complete responses).
- Given 14 presentations.
- Solicited responses from all colleges.
- Three conceptual models of general education.
## Actions and Timeline

**Gen Ed Visioning Task Force**

### 2014 → 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nov 1</th>
<th>Jan 17</th>
<th>Feb 14</th>
<th>Mar 7</th>
<th>Mar 21</th>
<th>Apr 18</th>
<th>June - October</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NIU SWOT Analysis</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rename Task Force</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus Groups</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus Groups</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discuss</strong></td>
<td><strong>Report Writing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model Building</strong></td>
<td><strong>Model Building</strong></td>
<td><strong>Model Vetting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Model Vetting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus Groups</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implementation Phase</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROVOST ACTION ITEMS

- Visit to Task Force - December
- Renaming Task Force
- President focused-event
- Mini Symposium on Jan 29
- Final Report Due date - September rather November

### LONG_TERM TIME LINE

- 2014 - Report
- 2014-15 Curricular Process
- 2015-16 - Implementation Phase
- Fall - Curricular Process Begins
Actions and Timeline

- Axes of Variation

[Diagram showing the relationship between practices, categories (foci), student learning outcomes, and a timeline with milestones such as First-Year/Entry to Professional Programs, Inner Core, Distributional Areas, Outer Core, and Fourth-Year/Culmination of Major Studies/Licensure]
Actions and Timeline

- Axes of Variation

**Course Distribution Areas**
- Writing (2 courses)
- Oral Communication (1 course)
- Mathematics (1 course)
- Physical Science (1 course)
- Life Science (1 course)
- Humanities (1.5 courses)
- Fine Arts (1.5 courses)
- Social Sciences (3 courses)

**SLOs**
1. Global
2. Cultural
3. Natural
4. Thought
5. Communication
6. Collaboration
7. Reasoning
8. Synthesis

High Impact/Engaged/Co-curricular Practices
- Research
- Service
- Ethics
- Experience
Actions and Timeline (2014)

• **Additional Steps**
  – GE Symposium
    • Share Aggregate Survey Results
    • Share final SLO language
  – Continue SLO Mapping
  – Research Electronic Portfolio Platforms
  – Tracking of HIPs and Engaged Learning
  – Focus Groups on General Education
THANK YOU!

• What is the role of Gen Ed?
• Feedback
• Assistance reaching out