Dear NIU Colleague,

Our task force includes faculty, staff, and students on campus who have been given the task of rethinking the baccalaureate experience and how it relates to the General Education Program at NIU. This revitalization is imperative for improving the success of our graduates and assuring the success and longevity of NIU in the twenty-first century.

To this end, we seek your help in completing the following survey in which we ask you to share your unique role and experiences in any of your undergraduate courses that you offer at NIU. The Survey link:  https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DHR22DC

The survey asks about the undergraduate courses you typically teach (and not just general education but any undergraduate course), as well as other learning activities, and the degree to which they already align with the recently approved Baccalaureate Goals and STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs). We want to begin to catalog the diverse ways in which NIU faculty and instructors educate students within the entire undergraduate curriculum. The new NIU SLOs, developed by considering input from more than 1200 faculty, students, alumni, and employers, are:

SLO #1: Integrate knowledge of global interconnections and interdependencies
SLO #2: Exhibit intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives
SLO #3: Analyze issues that interconnect human life and the natural world
SLO #4: Demonstrate critical, creative, and independent thought
SLO #5: Communicate clearly and effectively
SLO #6: Collaborate with others to achieve specific goals
SLO #7: Use and combine appropriate quantitative and qualitative reasoning skills to address questions and solve problems
SLO #8: Synthesize knowledge and skills relevant to one's major or particular fields of study and apply them creatively to develop innovative outcomes.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. We ask for honest opinions; there are no correct or incorrect responses.

It is our goal to make sure these data are used only to get a broad mapping of NIU courses and their relationship to the SLOs. Although the survey does not specifically ask for identifying information, it might be possible to infer your identity from responses you provide. Keep in mind that the Task Force may share course/SLO coverage results with your department curriculum committee directly as we begin to map how the SLOs may be best interwoven into the program and degrees NIU has to offer. Once that is complete, the Task Force will permanently remove any potentially identifying information and employ aggregate data to share with the entire NIU community.

The Survey link:  https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DHR22DC
Our goal is to move forward with the campus-wide initiative to help revitalize and re-frame the Baccalaureate Experience at NIU. In upcoming months, this survey will be followed by focus groups and informational meetings. Consonant with the principles of shared governance, the Task Force will use the results of this survey, the student survey, and public forums to help develop and prepare a strategy for revitalizing our general education program. Recommendations will be shared with the entire NIU community.

Background information on the Baccalaureate SLOs may be found at: http://www.niu.edu/bacreview
More information about the GEVTF may be found at: http://www.niu.edu/gened

Thank you for your participation!

- Michael Kolb, Chair, The General Education Visioning Task Force, (aloha@niu.edu)
Dear NIU Students,

There is a group of faculty, staff, and students on campus who have been given the task of re-thinking the General Education Program at NIU and how it fits into the larger baccalaureate experience. This revitalization is imperative for improving the success of our graduates and assuring the success and longevity of NIU in the twenty-first century.

To help us with this task, we would appreciate you taking a 10-15 minute student or faculty survey to share your opinions and experiences about General Education and other educational activities at NIU. This is your chance to provide your unique input. The survey link may be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DHKD3VG

Several of the questions in the survey refer to the university's recently approved Baccalaureate goals. The related Baccalaureate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are listed below.

SLO #1: Integrate knowledge of global interconnections and interdependencies
SLO #2: Exhibit intercultural competencies with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives
SLO #3: Analyze issues that interconnect human life and the natural world
SLO #4: Demonstrate critical, creative, and independent thought
SLO #5: Communicate clearly and effectively
SLO #6: Collaborate with others to achieve specific goals
SLO #7: Use and combine appropriate quantitative and qualitative reasoning skills to address questions and solve problems
SLO #8: Synthesize knowledge and skills relevant to one's major or particular fields of study and apply them creatively to develop innovative outcomes.

At the end of the survey, we collect some basic demographic information about you. However, we do not collect information that identifies you directly. Unless you voluntarily provide specific identifying information, the survey will be anonymous. When results are shared with the broader NIU community, data will be aggregated and all identifying information will be removed. The survey link may be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DHKD3VG

Your survey input is essential for empowering instructional faculty to better support the student population. This survey is a critical first step and will be followed by subsequent focus groups and informational meetings to get student input as the revitalization process progresses.

If you wish to learn more about the new Baccalaureate Goals, you may visit the website: http://www.niu.edu/bacreview
More information about the General Education Visioning Task Force may be found at: http://www.niu.edu/gened

Thank you for your participation!
Michael Kolb, Chair, The General Education Visioning Task Force, (aloha@niu.edu)