

University Response
to the
External Review of General Studies Programs
July 2, 2008

A meeting was held on Wednesday, July 2, 2008 in room 104 Roy Hall with the following individuals attending: Dr. Thomas Hanson, Dr. Steve Horton, Roni Biscoe, Dr. Sue Weaver and Dr. Virginia Crossno. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Departmental and University responses to the external review of the General Studies programs conducted by Dr. Judith B. Wertheim in February, 2008. Dr. Sue Weaver, Dean of University College provided a status report on the departmental response to the recommendations made by Dr. Wertheim. Following her report, Dr. Hanson provided a report on the university's response to those recommendations specific to the administration. These are:

Recommendation

1. Make greater use of the Capstone course for General Studies candidates.

University Response

The University supports the departmental response to the recommendation to develop an interdisciplinary studies Capstone course to include service learning opportunities, as well as field experiences.

Recommendation

2. Continue the attention to the current balance on the General Studies Council: long service vs. new induction to General Studies

University Response

The University supports the continuation of membership selection on the General Studies Council to include a healthy balance of members from a range of disciplines, tenured and non-tenured status, as well as different levels of instructional ranks.

Recommendation

3. Make improvements to the facilities to include the following:
 - create a reception area and meeting space for students
 - locate computer equipment and furniture in a lab accessible during the day
 - designate a testing room for students with disabilities
 - locate offices together within the unit.

University Response

There was agreement with the unit response on all of the recommendations listed above with one exception and that was to retain the Dean's office where it is currently. These arrangements have proven to be most effective.

Recommendation

4. Make changes in staffing of University College to include the following:
 - modify the organization of the unit and its relationships with other units

University Response:

By July 10th, complete the reorganization of University College. This will include a status change in the current combined position of Academic Advising/ADA. The Academic Advising coordinator will become the director of the division of General Studies. Responsibilities of this position will include research and marketing and the maintenance of the website and a program of rewards and recognition. Also included will be the liaison with the CALL program, Academic and Career Engagement and Bossier Parish Community College.

- review job descriptions and responsibilities of the advising staff.
- create additional advising positions; fill advising vacancies.

University Response:

The responsibilities of the coordinator of Disability Services will be assigned to an advisor and the unit will fill the Coordinator of the Academic Center position; one additional advisor position (new position) and an administrative/receptionist position (new position).

- assign personnel to undertake a research schedule internally and in cooperation with other offices of the university.

University Response:

This responsibility will fall under the jurisdiction of the Director of General Studies.

Recommendation

5. Pay special future attention to the possibilities of technology, including:
 - make computer equipment available at convenient places and times for students

University Response

The current arrangements for access to computer equipment are sufficient and no changes will be made at the present time.

- encourage increases in online course inventories of academic departments

University Response

The university will support the efforts of the unit in assisting CALL staff by encouraging departments to adapt additional courses for online delivery to General Studies majors.

- use online advising innovations such as advising resources delivered online
- create additional online tutoring opportunities
- utilize online collaborative and record-keeping packages for advisors

University Response

The university will work with the unit in acquiring funds to purchase packages for online tutoring such as **Smarthinking** and other programs to enhance tutoring activities.

Recommendation

6. Develop a plan to formalize use of libraries by General Studies students.

University Response

Changes in General Studies requirements to include LIB 1030: Information Sources and Services will be considered by the General Studies Council. Additionally, the Capstone course will include library usage and resources.

Recommendation

7. Utilize General Studies personnel to advise Northwestern as it moves forward with the Academic Career Engagement program.

University Response

The Dean and staff will continue to be involved in the activities of setting up the Academic and Career Engagement program and serve as a resource for the program as this initiative takes shape.

TH/v

8/26/2008