

Discovery Committee Minutes, October 19, 2011

Present: Barb White, David Richman, Wayne Fagerberg, Michele Holt-Shannon, Tom Safford, Lisa MacFarlane, Jessica Fruchtmann, Sean Moore, Bill Ross, Bob Henry, Jing Wang, Steve Pugh, Kathie Forbes, Dennis Britton, Ihab Farag, Rosemary Caron

Also present: Associate Deans, Dan Reagan, UNHM; Ted Kirkpatrick, COLA; Bob Henry, CEPS; Kim Babbitt, COLSA; Roger Grinde, WSBE

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 2, 2011

The committee met with the Associate Deans and discussed the following -

Discovery course proposal system update: Amy Cunningham has met with each college regarding the Discovery online course proposal system. Suggested edits and changes are being done to the system and are scheduled to be completed by end semester, with the goal of implementing online course submission for all by semester II (January, '12).

Themes of Discovery courses/clusters of courses:

Is it workable/doable to develop clusters of Discovery courses to help guide students who may have a particular area of interest?

If it has the potential to create another layer of complexity then it would not be desirable. Many majors in CHSS, COLSA and CEPS are fairly heavily prescribed.

There may be constraints regarding how to deliver them, as well. In CEPS and COLSA, for example, some of the Discovery courses are spread out because of all the other required courses. COLA may have more flexibility. This idea may be akin to a minor in the sense that if a student can squeeze it in, great. But we don't want students to get in a position where they feel bound to go through with these.

Sending this type of information to advisors could be very helpful. Often students are looking for the "easy" course; so to direct them into something they have interest in is very positive.

The goal is to help a student explore more thoughtfully what they are interested in.

We would have to be careful not to gear the clustered courses toward the student's major intent. One of the goals of Discovery is to get a student to take something they wouldn't normally take.

The question of what is behind the disciplines comes up often. Better to have this information with better course descriptions. Part of what Discovery is offering is an integrative experience.

It could not be constraining or required, and should be targeted to all students but knowing that all will not take part. It should also be kept in mind that this is something that would need to be durable.

For UNHM this plan would probably not be particularly effective, as all Discovery courses are not offered there.

The Discovery Program office will begin to explore clustering courses around some of the ideas/themes that have been suggested (e.g., ethics; social innovation).

Inquiry courses:

Collectively it was agreed that a memorandum of understanding would be drafted and sent to all present at this meeting, that captures what was discussed regarding Inquiry course delivery online, major changes to a course and when to reconfirm, and the ratio of 444 to INQ attribute seats in each college.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30PM.