

# **General Education Committee**

## **End of Year Report**

Wartburg College, 2012-13

Elected faculty members: William Earl, Kit Kleinhans (Chair), Neil Martinsen-Burrell (Secretary), Amy Nolan, Jennifer Pothast, Todd Reiher (Winter Term only), Christine Schafer (Fall Term only)

Appointed student representatives: Brittany Groe, Kyle Scobee

*Ex officio*: Mark Biermann, Vice President for Academic Affairs

The General Education Committee:

- 1) Acted on several course proposals submitted to fulfill Essential Education requirements.
- 2) Reviewed the Institutional Learning Outcomes, identifying which outcomes can be met through Essential Education (E) and which outcomes are met through the majors (M) and/or through student development (SD). Attached as Appendix A.
- 3) Assessment-related activities
  - a. Discussed the results of EPC's 2011-12 faculty survey on Essential Education.
  - b. Requested and reviewed data for the additional questions on SRIs for several components of Essential Education.
  - c. Met with WAC coordinator Sonja Lynch about the move to a common text and syllabus for EN 112 and with OCAC coordinator Penni Pier about CA 112. Noted that, because WAC and OCAC are developmental, there is not really an assessment mechanism in place for the Across the Curriculum components beyond the foundational courses.
  - d. Discussed the role of the General Education Committee in assessment, especially for areas that don't have coordinators.
  - e. Decided to use ETS Proficiency Profile in May Term to assess critical thinking, writing, and mathematics, targeting 1Y and 4Y students.
  - f. Recommended posting assessment reports online regularly, to further transparency and to assist in shaping a culture of continual improvement.

## Appendix A

### General Education Committee analysis of and comments on Institutional Learning Outcomes

## Wartburg College Institutional Learning Outcomes

Wartburg College is a learning community built upon an integrative curriculum, a rich variety of learning-focused co-curricular activities, and intentional opportunities for reflection and discussion. Wartburg is committed to educating the whole person by helping students to develop their intellectual talents, to explore their personal, professional, and social convictions, and to engage as active participants in community. A Wartburg education challenges and nurtures students to:

### **1. Develop intellectual skills that are essential to all academic disciplines, foster interdisciplinary and integrative thinking, and provide depth of study within an academic major. Such skills include ...**

- Reading, thinking, and inquiring in a critical fashion (using analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application). E
  - *This is an explicit outcome of IS 101 and IS 201.*
  - *Target this at higher level in summative capstone paper/project/experience.*
- Communicating effectively in writing and speaking. E
  - *Primary focus of EN 112 and CA 112.*
  - *Target this at higher level in summative capstone paper/project/experience.*
- Using technology and information effectively. E
  - *Information literacy is an explicit outcome of IS 101, IS 201, EN 112, RE 101, SR.*
  - *Assess basic skills in Ess Ed; assess higher order abilities in major.*
- Using and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data accurately. E
  - *Ask MCSP Department for input on how they have assess Math Reasoning.*
- Understanding the questions examined, methods of inquiry used, and approaches to problem solving across a range of academic disciplines. E
  - *This is explicit in ID course goals.*
- Demonstrating command of the subject matter, methods, and applications of an academic major. M

### **2. Develop personal, professional, and social convictions that inform ethical action, promote the common good, and enhance civic responsibility in local as well as global contexts. Such convictions include...**

- Practicing civil discourse and mutual respect in relationships with others. E, M, SD
  - *These are already part of our current IS 101, IS 201, and Faith and Reflection. What current assessments might we be able to use and/or build on?*
  - *Consider using self-reported data, e.g., preprinted question on SRIs.*
  - *Should we expect to see development from IS 101 to IS 201, from first to second F&R course?*

- *With respect to SD, student senate and residential life are two important places where this is demonstrated.*
- Understanding the potential for both dynamic tension and harmony that may exist between the pursuit of personal benefit and the promotion of community well-being. SD, E?, M?
  - *This is an advanced concept that might be best assessed later in the students' college experience.*
  - *There are seeds of this in the Leadership and Service section of IS 101.*
  - *Is this easier to assess in some majors than in others (e.g., student teaching, social work senior practicum, etc.)?*
  - *Can this be profitably assessed in Essential Education, or is it better assessed through Student Development (participation in service trips, monitoring conduct violations and crime statistics, etc.). Perhaps we should remove the "E" code.*
- Accepting responsibility for their decisions and actions, and basing these on ethical considerations. E, SD, some M
  - *A shout-out to Chris Schafer for suggesting that this outcome should be demonstrated "like everywhere."*
  - *"Accepting responsibility" is named in IS 101. Is this a place to do a baseline assessment?*
  - *Ethics is named in the criteria for 2<sup>nd</sup> Faith and Reflection course and capstones. Needn't have a standard question; could aggregate data from departmental reports on how well this outcome has been achieved.*
  - *Role of the Honor Code and Honor Council? Can't standardize how faculty implement this, but should try to change culture of reporting violations.*
- Promoting sustainable practices and informed stewardship of local and global resources. SD

### **3. Become actively engaged in multiple communities and seek opportunities for continued growth. Such engagement includes...**

- Supporting communities through active citizenship, leadership, mentoring, and service experiences. SD
  - *Note relevance of interdisciplinary minors (Leadership, Intercultural Studies, etc)*
  - *Measurable objective: maintaining Carnegie "community engagement" classification in both curricular and co-curricular categories. Identify significant data already being collected.*
- Collaborating effectively with others in the multiple communities to which they belong. SD, E, M
- Enhancing their competency to thrive in an inclusive and multicultural world. E
  - *Can / how can we measure this in Essential Education?*
  - *Can aspects of this be measured through alumni surveys?*
- Developing a sense of purpose and vocation. E, M, SD
  - *This is related to IS 101 and capstone courses.*
- Caring for and developing their
  - physical (SD,E),
    - *This is the focus of PE 100.*

- mental (SD,E),
  - emotional (SD),
  - spiritual (SD),
  - and financial (SD) well-being.
- Participating in learning as a lifelong pursuit of growth and development. SD

These three outcome statements, along with the illustrative bullet points, define the expectations of a Wartburg education and provide the benchmarks against which the College holds itself accountable.

E = learning outcomes to address through Essential Education

M = learning outcomes to address through academic majors

SD = learning outcomes to address through student development plan

Fall Term 2012