Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo
General Education

The 2012-2013 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the General Education Program concluded with a culmination meeting on January 16, 2015.

During the meeting, the program was commended for the significant progress made since the last PPR, which includes:

1. The greater alignment between CSU GE and community college GE facilitates transfer, reduces time-to-degree for transfer students, and enables CSUF to better meet its mission serving California's students.
2. The campus shift to an intentional focus on student learning outcomes represents a best practice in general education, reminding all that GE is not about "checking off boxes" but about engaging students. Recent collaborations between the Office of Academic Programs and the Academic Senate leadership have reinforced this connection.
3. The persistence of relatively small classes (under 40) during challenging budgetary times is critical to providing individualized feedback to students, and is particularly noteworthy.
4. The depth of commitment to shared governance and faculty participation in the oversight of GE is praiseworthy, and a significant demonstration of the "Fullerton Way".
5. Efforts to streamline the submission process are appreciated by departments and faculty, and thus highly commendable.

The major recommendations and concerns raised through the PPR process were discussed. Suggestions on how to address them are provided:

1. GE assessment process:
    a. GE should develop an assessment process that is appropriate to a large university with a large number of GE courses, sustainable over time, and manageable in terms of faculty and staff workload.
    b. GE assessment needs to focus at the program level, rather than the course level. It is inappropriate to assess every single GE course. As such, the General Education committee, in collaboration with colleges, departments, the Office of Academic Programs, and the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness, should identify the appropriate courses to be assessed for each student learning outcome (SLO).
    c. This process needs to begin as soon as possible, in conjunction with the approval process of the GE SLOs by the Senate.

2. Assessment of WASC core competencies:
    a. GE assessment should go beyond the GE curriculum, and address the WASC core competencies as well.
    b. Faculty capacity building on this regard has begun. Several GE committee members and other faculty members have received university support to attend WASC core competency workshops. It is expected that these faculty will present the knowledge gained at the workshops to the GE committee and faculty in general.
    c. It is important to build core competency assessment into existing GE assessment, and pay special attention to assessing "at or near graduation".

3. Integrated GE advising:
    a. The campus should revisit the centralized GE advising model due to the new college-based Student Success Teams, and better integrate GE and major advising in order to minimize the distinction between the two. The integration is not intended to diminish the role of GE advising, but to highlight that GE is part of the degree program.
    b. Different colleges have different needs – some prefer to have GE advising within the departments (with appropriate training), and others prefer to have the college-based Student Success Teams handle it. The AAC will work with the colleges to meet their individual needs.

4. Integration of GE skills and advanced disciplinary knowledge:
    a. GE committee should reflect on ways to better integrate GE and disciplinary SLOs to enhance both the development of the skills associated with a liberal education and mastery of a discipline.
    b. GE pathways have the potential to create coherence between GE and major knowledge/skills. Pending the evaluation of results of the pilot GE pathways (AY 2014-2015 & 2015-2016), the GE committee should consider possibly expanding GE pathways into more colleges.
    c. It is suggested that the university should consider establishing a UPS on curriculum experimentation initiatives such as the GE pathways.

5. Double-counting policies:
    a. The campus should revise GE double-counting policies to ensure equity between native and transfer students and among the majors and colleges.
    b. CSUF is the only CSU campus that does not allow double counting – we need to focus on how the policy will impact our students.
    c. The Senate has started the discussion on this topic, but some serious concerns have been raised by the faculty. It will be important to address how faculty perceive the policy change will affect them.

6. Bottleneck courses:
    a. GE should address bottleneck areas by scheduling more sections in the bottleneck areas identified through ongoing analysis of data.
    b. It is suggested that GE needs to, at the minimum, annually evaluate the bottleneck courses. IRAS will be able to provide the necessary data for this purpose.

7. Curriculum innovations:
    a. GE should explore the use of curriculum innovations such as "virtual labs" as a way to offer more sections with limited facilities and/or space. GE is encouraged to examine best practices at other institutions.
    b. GE faculty should be encouraged to explore creative yet simple solutions without compromising student learning.

8. GE website:
    a. The GE website should be housed in the Office of Academic Programs, under the auspices of the Office of Undergraduate Studies and General Education, to provide a

    clear and coherent set of information for faculty and students about the connections between degree programs and general education. This process has begun.

    b. The website needs to be more easily accessible and better maintained. It is suggested to ask faculty and students how they typically search for GE, and make the website "user friendly".

    c. It is equally important to make sure that old website is taken down to avoid confusion.

9. GE budget:
    a. Currently GE does not have its own budget, and is funded by enrollments managed by departments. This is a structural weakness. It is recommended that a separate budget is necessary to support GE program's further development.
    b. It is encouraging that there is now budget for GE pathways, GE coordinators, and GE faculty professional development. This funding support needs to be continued.
    c. The university is recognizing the budget needs, and is working on solutions.