

**Strategic Planning: Academic Planning Working Group Meeting**  
**18 Sept 2014, 3:30-5 PM**  
**Hammond 314**

**Members attending:** Randall Grometstein (chair), Jeannette McMenemy, Cathy Canney, Chris Picone, Michael Turk,

**Guests attending:** Brian Bercier, Jane Fiske, Paul Weizer, Chris Cratsley

Survey will not be given since it is too late.

But RG suggests surveying the faculty or students about textbooks. Many faculty are using free pdfs, or cheap printouts of those pdfs. Should the cost of texts be parts of our whitepaper?

MT. It might run up against academic freedom.

PW. President is raising cost as an increasing problem. It makes more sense to include in the financial planning group. College affordability will fit there.

RG. From the SPC meeting, the colleges theme could be something about “student success.”

CLA’s from follow-up to Academically Adrift: strong correlation between CLA scores and ability to find and keep a full time job.

So we should examine our delivery of academic programs, and remove as many barriers to success as possible. Same goal for revising the LAS curriculum.

UW-Oshkosh. Revised Gen Ed curriculum to focus, in first year experience, on one of three themes (e.g., enviro sustainability).

We need to hold students to a high metric. Global cognitive growth.

“Who Gets to Graduate?” NYT article. UTexas-Austin: simple, inexpensive interventions.

- Best predictor of college completion = income of parents. It is NOT related to ability, not related to test scores.
- See article for interventions. The messages/interventions had a large result on minority, low income, first-generation students. “Ex: this is a hard course, but I know you can do it.” These are practical solutions.

**White Paper idea:**

The greatest barrier to completion = economic...So remove barriers...ex. reduce textbook costs...

Can we find obvious bottlenecks, obvious obstacles to success for first gen and similar students?

CCa. Goal: Access, Afforability, Support. Umbrella of student support.

MT. Interventions do not equal expectations.

CCr. We have talked for years about a first year experience. What are the characteristics that we are trying to build, the shared goals we would embrace? Often staff have ideas for FYE, but they not embraced by faculty. Communicate that students can succeed, they can do well in this environment.

ML. Difference between rich and poor kids: someone cares. A mentor. Flip one or two key lectures. Students feel that professor reached out, customized to students.

LG. Students will choose work over school. Not the case in wealthier schools. Our students do not see that the person who succeeds also succeeds in life.

**WPaper:**

IDENTIFY what works to engage students and share that so we are not all scrambling to try things that will improve retention, completion.

CCr. Evidence: High impact practices are already known. Service learning. Learning communities. Undergrad research. Diversity in global learning (e.g., study abroad). Capstone projects. Internships/Field experience. the more experiences students have like this, the more likely they will be retained. Especially true for minority students. Help students feel like they belong.

Maybe the unifying theme of the LAS is what is unique about FSU? NESSE data go both ways: lower foreign language. But more than average complete internships.

MT. First year experience: SMALL classes! Inculcate the high standards there. But impediment will be resources. But we should be decoupling ideas from funding at this point.

- Note: small classes may have some of the same problems we have already.

First year experience: make them feel engaged academically.

Checklist for change: easy to add courses, hard to remove them.

CP. We should avoid being naïve and ask faculty who teach intro courses. Many already try engaging things in LAS courses, and yet often students just don't care about the content. Engaging students is not as easy as it seems in discussions like this.

CCr. Balance strategies for success (eg STEM results...), with more engaging classroom experience.

JM. Streamline curriculum. Seek efficiencies.

LG. Students are anxious in the first year. They fit in by sophomore year. We need to help them become part of this community. Use first-year experience AND LAS to help them feel like they belong. Can we bring in families as well?

RG. Simplify the requirements of each discipline so students CAN switch majors without imposing such barriers to finish.

Have Jr-Sr come to class to talk to first year students to talk about how the world looks different now than when they started. Students who are asked are grateful!

[What we do already: research and creative practice day?]

How can we remove as many obstacles as we can?

**Competencies:** Reading. Statistical interpretation.

If students cannot meet those competencies, what do we do?

We have a division between the LAS program and the professional programs.

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We need to get moving on the white paper, and have faculty buy in.

**Let's articulate the ones we are comfortable articulating**

PW. What does multiple delivery methods mean? What does first year experience mean?

- We need to have more specific recommendations.

Are we providing the best delivery methods for a blue-collar school?

Competency based education (CBE). Prior-learning assessments.

Portfolios. Will help students complete education in 4-5 years.

We need to market our academic plan. Access + Affordability.

RG. CBE requires an enormous effort on the part of the school to demonstrate that students have that learning.

JF. CBE is about moving forward, not just prior learning.

RG. Can someone propose some white paper objectives?

- Curric simplification and Gen Ed realignment?