

WORKGROUPS SYLLABI EVALUATION FINDINGS

1. English Composition/ Writing 300s/ Foreign Languages/ Physical Education
 - Written Expression, Contemporary Society, and Self Expression are generally emphasized in these courses; Health & Well Being is emphasized in Physical Education syllabi
 - Writing Enhancement is emphasized in all English and Writing courses, but not uniformly emphasized in the other areas
 - A standard department syllabus is used for many of the sections of the same course
2. Behavioral Sciences/ Cultural Diversity
 - Broad differences exist in the skills and areas of knowledge emphasized in sections of the same courses
 - Critical Analysis/ Problem Solving is emphasized in many of these courses, but not uniformly
 - Extreme variation in length of syllabi; brief syllabi often lack Learning Outcomes/ Course Objectives; Lengthy syllabi often emphasize course evaluation guidelines and procedures
3. Natural Sciences/ Mathematics
 - Math Skills/ Quantitative Literacy and Writing Enhancement are strongly emphasized in all these courses; Research Skills are rarely emphasized
 - Learning Outcomes/ Course Objectives are absent on most of these syllabi
4. Literature/ History/ Philosophy/ Fine and Performance Arts
 - Visual Literacy and Creative Expression are emphasized in many of these courses
 - Writing Enhancement is not uniformly emphasized among these courses

OVERALL SYLLABI EVALUATION FINDINGS

- Certain sets of specific skills and knowledge are generally emphasized in different disciplines (i.e., problem solving in Behavioral Sciences, creative expression in Fine and Performing Arts)
- Specific skills and areas of knowledge are not uniformly emphasized in all courses within a division
- Learning Outcomes/ Course Objectives are not always present or do not always reflect an emphasis on general education skills or areas of knowledge

QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE EVALUATION PROCESS

- Should all general education courses minimally emphasize some uniform set of skills and areas of knowledge, or is breadth and diversity acceptable?
- What skills and areas of knowledge should be emphasized in non-disciplinary courses (i.e., speech, English composition)?
- What skills and areas of knowledge should be emphasized in disciplinary courses preparing students for entrance into specific majors or professional programs?
- What skills and areas of knowledge should be emphasized across general education courses within a division?
- What are the essential elements (i.e., course objectives, evaluation criteria) of a general education course syllabus? How can practices addressing these requirements be implemented?
- How do contextual factors (i.e., class size, student preparation, fulltime/adjunct ratio) shape which skills and areas of knowledge are emphasized in general education courses?
- Since the outcomes reflect syllabi evaluation, not evaluation of classroom practices or student development outcomes, what other methods are necessary to further assess general education and promote curriculum development?