Thoughts and Ideas for Category and Goal Reform

A number of ideas were suggested for potential improvements to the categories and goals:

- **General observations and Ideas**
  - No knowledge it mentioned in most GEC categories and that is something General Education generally is thought to contribute to students, even in a competency model
  - Any revision should be consistent about the nature of the goals. For instance: Should the goals thought of as a minimum threshold for all graduates? An aspirational statement?
  - Goals should be worded in a way that is maximally understandable to students
  - The different areas reflect differing conceptions of “knowledge that works”

- **Potential Overall GenEd Program Goals or Categories**
  - Think critically about yourself
  - Empathize with other individuals
  - Comprehend the natural world
    - Or perhaps making evidence based claims
  - Operate effectively and ethically in today’s society

- **Structure based around habits of mind**
  - Openness
  - Curiosity
  - Make evidence based claims
  - “Generate new questions” from previous language would fit here
  - Audience Understanding?
  - Community Engagement
    - Alternative: Sense of Agency
    - Alternative: Personal Capability
  - Grit
  - Self assessment and critical self reflection might be a useful category as well. This would dovetail with critical pedagogy or asking new questions

- **Potential Category Revisions**
  - Distribute P&P into other categories eliminating it
  - Disband the Critical thinking and Ethical reasoning category
    - GIK combined with Ethical Reasoning
    - Critical Thinking will be its own category
  - Critical thinking should include a more thorough description of underlying processes
  - “Analyzing Information” combining aspects of several categories
  - Experiential learning as a domain
    - This might be better implemented as a means to an end
    - It could be highlighted and emphasized in training and supporting documents
Notes from GEC winter retreat 2015
Attending: Kelly Carr, Fiona Glade, Betsy Nix, Alan Weisman, Gisella Bardossy, Mike Kiel, Nancy O’Neill, Catherine Andersen, Jack Bates, and Aaron Oldenburg

Assessment Plan

Catherine Andersen briefly reviewed the assessment plan, clarifying that Middle States would be accepting of revision to areas and goals as part of demonstrating ongoing improvement processes.

Jack outlined that his role is to provide requested guidance to the GEC and offered the following observations:

- The next step must be articulation of measurable goals
- Some assessment must occur before the next report to Middle States

Moving forward logistics will be a big concern, we must get a handle on what courses introduce and enforce, the various competencies. There is no way to assess without finding what you will assess and making sure there are sufficient artifacts. However, we should move forward now with some assessment in order to begin learning about our baseline. Capstone assessment might be a good place to assess in the 15-16 academic year as capstones are already assessed by programs and so must be generating sufficient artifacts.

It was also suggested that we could potentially use some indirect measures to demonstrate assessment and improvement in courses like the sophomore seminar. There was a brief discussion of the success and potential of assessment with portfolios in the writing program/communication domain.

Goals for the Next 3 Months (Spring 2015)

- Complete clarification and revision of the learning goals for the domain areas
- Develop a plan for resources, summer workgroups, and institutional effectiveness
- Consider possibilities for external review or input on the program other than Middle States
  - The AACU summer institute may be a good choice
  - Nancy and Catherine will attempt to identify training or other opportunities
- Chart possibilities for summer work
- Address the lingering issue of technological fluency

Next Meeting

Michael Driscoll will be present to discuss issues surrounding ACE and IB transfer credits