GEC Meeting 10/22/14  
Present: Gisela Bardossy, Fiona Glade, Aaron Oldenburg, Betsy Nix, Nancy O’Neill, Catherine Anderson, Daniel Page, Kelly Carr, Alan Weisman  
Absent: Mike Kiel (Betsy Nix recorded notes)

Summary: The majority of the meeting was spent discussing feedback about the pilot sophomore seminars and how to make the course more successful in the future. The assessment plan for General Education was also discussed and members are asked to come to the next meeting with draft talking points for reporting to their colleges and schools.

Sophomore Seminar Changes:

- Common Read
  - The vote was unanimous to keep the Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks as the common read for a second year.

- Faculty Training
  - The shared Sakai site should be emphasized more and serve as an assignment repository for all sections. Faculty could be brought together to develop assignments over the summer.
  - The Museum Project should potentially be revised, we should remember that the goal of getting student work in front of a public audience.
  - Expectations need to be communicated more clearly, a one page hand out across sections would be useful.
  - A standing midterm lunch among instructors should be scheduled, this would facilitate communication and build a sense of community and continuity.
  - Recommendations or a FAQ could be made for future faculty.
  - We need to encourage faculty to be as articulate as possible about the purpose and nature of the course.
  - CELTT is going to take the lead scheduling a training for Spring Faculty.

- Course Ownership, Control, and Support
  - The course needs a consistent, single, contact person similar to the way the Freshman seminar is housed in the CAS dean’s office.
  - Sophomore Seminar needs to be firmly rooted in the faculty committee, but the day-to-day needs to be housed somewhere.
  - The course requires a level of coordination that is not happening now.

In light of Assistant Dean Daniel Page’s departure, discussion ensued as to how best structure the administration of General Education Council tasks going forward. After examining the support structures at other Universities, we will make recommendations to the provost’s office and the faculty senate about what administrative resources are needed to ensure the success of the General Education program.
Sophomore Seminar Instructor Feedback:
Since our last meeting, Gen Ed Council college representatives interviewed the current faculty of the sophomore seminar; faculty appreciated that the Gen Ed Council had contacted them.

- Frank van Vliet did not use the common syllabus. In the business school they had a one-credit course about professionalism which they converted into Sophomore Seminar.
  - He has incorporated the common writing assignment, has weekly discussions on-line about the common read. Some students have opted out of the on-line assignments, even though they are losing points by not doing so; he does not know why. He had to give a crash course on ethics.
  - Students enjoy the practical activities, but it is taking a lot of creativity on his part to link the activities to the common read. During the job search unit, he asked students to look at job advertisements from Henrietta Lacks' era and compare them to contemporary offerings.

- Ron had a difficult time running the course in SIAT. If one of the goals of the course is to speak outside of the discipline, that is very difficult.
  - Both Ron and Sean liked the common read. Ron is doing the museum project, but Sean is not.
  - Some of the disciplinary focus is getting lost.

General Education Assessment:
Kelly distributed a 5-year schedule of Gen Ed assessment. Writing and Communication are the first to be assessed.

- The Council will examine syllabi to make sure General Education courses are listing the General Education goals
- Individual or small groups from the committee could examine different domains
- We need to add the element of when those courses are listed, and how often they rotate.

As we begin assessment and communicate about it to the schools we should note that:
- Jack Bates is the CAS assessment fellow and CAS provides 95-98% of Gen Ed classes
- MSB is working through accreditation right now, and this may affect some aspects of their participation

For Next Meeting:
Members should develop a basis for talking points about assessment to use in reporting to our colleges schools and others.