Title V General Education First-Year Seminar  
December 17, 2010  
12pm-2pm

Meeting Notes

The grant will help us revitalize general education at City Tech

(Name, Dept, 1st yr class, gen ed is…)

Sandra C, art history, foundations

Michele, prerequisites

Daniel A, dentistry broadens

John A, HM, what will set students apart

Ezra H, Math, 1175, controversy about great books

Charles H, English, Developmental Reading, how you particulate hands across the curriculum

Dan W, ADGA, CoPI, writing/WAC

Roberta M, consultant, always local and foundation for lifelong learning

Jonas R, Math, 1175 (algebra/geometry), all that stuff

Mark N, English, composition, old wine in new bottles

Pete C, Social Science/history, US history post Civil War, common academic intellectual experience

Barbara B, grants, aware of drawing on liberal education every day

Robin M, ADGA, photography, what generates the ground specific engagement

Jody R, English/WAC, Eng 1101, a bit foreign, an opportunity to learn along w/students

Shelly S, Architecture, breadth and depth

Justin D, Humanities, Effective Speaking, requirements that make students informed participants outside of the college, practical applications outside the classroom

Maria B, dental hygiene, histology, prerequisites and awareness of health care in this part of Brooklyn

Sean S, English, composition, critical thinking and esp. moving from memorization to synthesis

Laina K, biology, general biology, well-rounded individual w/skills + experiences that have application in the real world

Boris G, physics, intro physics, universal knowledge in humanities, social, natural sciences

Maura S, library, lifelong learning + leading to an informed citizenry

Cinda S, iCubed project coordinator, use your local knowledge to solve global problems

Matt G, English, Eng 1101 w/architecture, less important what it is than what it should be: openly, critically, flexibly and creatively about the world

Julia J, HM and Faculty Commons, connectivity and the actions that come out of those connections, gen ed provides foundation

Richard H, English, Eng 1101, short: read write think feel; long: motto used to be “to live a life to earn a living”

**What is the purpose of general education? Why are we doing this?**

As technology and information changes, provides w/adaptive skill set

Foundation for everything else we want to build on, then can diverge into specialized areas

Make connections between different disciplines – makes one culturally rich, demonstrate connections to students

Exposing students to what has humanity accomplished so far? Where has human intelligence been directing itself?

Need to be learning broadly and deeply to keep ourselves versatile

We have big questions and we need them involved in how those questions get answered

Opportunity to be exposed to different fields and disciplines; provides students who may wish to switch tracks with experience to help them

Purpose of this seminar is to discuss wild dreams for the First Year Experience

1: Julia, Charles, Viviana, Peter, Laina

2: Dan, Mark, Paul, Ezra, Karen

3: Robin, Sean, Jonas, Boris, Barbara

4: Jody, John, Maria, Sandra, Maura

5: Matt, Roberta, Michelle, Justin, Daniel

Group 1

Student union

Mini café environment fo rinformal learning opps

Mini oppos

Theme based learning

Use the city

Physical location where history, biology, etc. can be clustered, come into and out of one another’s offices to collaborate/connect. Cool connections. Offices, mini-labs, conference clusters

Mini-budget each semester to personalize classrooms. Put books/bookcases in classrooms

TAs

Display of student achievements in classroom walls. So students leave work behind for others to see

Everyone should have netbook, etc.

Virtual meeting place, social network as learning space

Believe in beauty and think campus lacks it

We should be surrounded by beauty. We need some thought to aesthetics, sensory experience of campus. Whole feel of place should be beautiful

Green roofs

Outdoor, surrounding environments – not building fortress. Build oasis w/in gritty urban environment where students want to be, hang out.

GROUP 2

* Integrate gen ed into courses, so maybe you don’t need sep eng.math courses
* Have an interdisciplinary course – many profs teach one course on common theme
* Get rid of building. Use neighborhood as learning ground
* Having course reflect microcosm of society
* Have students teach each other. Profs act as facilitators
* Ensure that students learn in culture of respect
* Students as agents of own exposure to ed experiences

GROUP 3

* Seminar meets in diff location every week. Meet in historical locations, e.g. Custom’s Room.
* Another group of locations would have to do with careers, ex. Restaurant. Think of scene in the Wire where teacher takes class to restaurant. Get tour of kitchen. Take students to hospital. To places that will involve future career.
* Some natural locations, e.g. Waterfront

GROUP 4

* Would like a first-year experience.
* Give commuter students an experience that is more immersive, not just high school + 1. Shared texts
* Tech: dismantle computer labs, give them mobile devices, no printing
* Wouldn’t have to buy textbooks
* Digital platform
* Smaller class sizes, opportunity to do more hands-on work. Large classes make things like field trips harder
* Writing. Put writing everywhere
* No limits on financial aid
* Research – more opportunities to get information literacy
* MORE – a lot of “more”

GROUP 5

* Technology, mobility
* Computer-aided design but only have six terminals for use, students fight over use. Need more access to that at home
* Common experience. Not necessarily in learning community. Classes come together in a digital space in which learning can cross-pollinate across courses.
* Opportunities for writing and effective speaking in the classroom. Other CUNY colleges have programs where public speaking takes place in a variety of classes. Mobile videographers go around and record single student speeches in all classes that they take, form portfolio from that. Shows progression of student work over time.

Shelley/Jody:

* Pass around description of grant – four different components
* A lot of what we proposed in grant just came out in wild dreams
* Cognizant that we can’t tell DOE what will come out because what emerges has to come from college community itself
* A few things we said:
* whatever Gen Ed is at a place like City Tech, where students concentrate on majors/careers, Gen Ed has to be delivered across curriculum
* Highlight the laboratory model – way students learn in architecture
* Do a better job of implementing high-impact practices across college. E.g. first-year experience, undergrad research,
* <http://livinglab.commons.gc.cuny.edu/> - blog, groups. Please sign up for an account if you don’t already have one.
* Common reading for next meeting: *Surely You’re Joking, Mr. Feynman*
* Next meeting: January 28th
* Think about breakthroughs – what is the next big breakthrough in your field
* Focus on some of the tools/techniques needed in your courses – rubrics, etc