

**Liberal Studies Program  
Director's Report  
5/6/14  
Revised 08/21/2114**

**WHERE IS THE COMMITTEE SINCE LAST YEAR?**

1. Streamlining processes to increase student success
  - a. Passage of the Shared Prefix Policy and implementation involving outreach to all College Curriculum Committees (with the exception of CAL); ACC; ASNAU
  - b. Passage of new waiver and substitution forms and implementation
  - c. Passage of new course review policy and implementation schedule – the review criteria are yet to be accomplished
2. Assessment of student learning and alignment with learning outcomes
  - a. With OCLDAA, conducted an assessment of JLW and Capstone Syllabi.
  - b. With Interdisciplinary Writing Program developing a new writing rubric
  - c. Established LSC work groups to discuss LS outcomes, and re-defining skills and blocks. Currently working on definitions for Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Capstone.
  - d. Reviewing AAC&U value rubrics as a frame for developing new definitions
3. Visibility Across Campus and on Important Bodies
  - a. Director appointed by Provost to the Academic Planning Council
  - b. Director appointed as NAU representative to LEAP at AAC&U
4. Efforts to raise visibility and value of LS across campus:
  - a. Participated in the new faculty orientation program to provide greater understanding of LS
  - b. Represented the Liberal Studies Program at SILT on 10/24/13-10/25/13
  - c. Represented Liberal Studies Program at the NAU Teaching Day, 1/9/14
  - d. Presented “The Importance of a Liberal Education” conference to Chinese scholars, 2/21/14
  - e. Collaboration with Gateway to develop a new “elevator speech” for advisors
  - f. Created a new BbLearn shell for LSC
  - g. Added members from UC and awaiting new members from Honors
  - h. Faculty Excellence Award to George Rudebusch. Revised selection criteria and process
  - i. Conducted 2 Town Hall meetings, one on information literacy and one on what employers want in new graduates
  - j. Developed a listserv for all liberal studies faculty
5. Curricular Initiatives
  - a. Liberal Studies Committee support and approval for Personalized Learning and PL alignment with LS criteria
  - b. Liberal Studies Committee support for Civic Engagement Minor & alignment with LS criteria
  - c. Liberal Studies Committee support for Second Year Seminars (SYS) & alignment with LS criteria

## THE LARGER CONTEXT OF WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS LAST ACADEMIC YEAR

### **Challenges:**

1. A disconnect remains between the distribution blocks and the skills
2. Essential skills and blocks need to be reviewed, updated and possibly re-defined
3. Disconnect between liberal studies and degree programs
4. Student deficiencies in writing and quantitative skills per assessment results
5. Disconnect between LS, GLI—supposed to be embedded through major, Diversity, Honors and CIE but they are not –*i.e.* they are not integrated with Liberal Studies
6. Disconnect between LS and CIE international programs and curricula
7. Difficulties with transfer articulation
8. Identify LS learning outcomes and align with University outcomes
9. Raise the visibility and value of LSP with the campus on a continuing basis through unit leaders, ACC, Deans and faculty – asking Chairs what they need from LS in terms of connecting to the discipline

### **Context for next 1 ½ years:**

1. New vice provost and potentially a new provost with a different vision for LS
2. New president with possibly a different vision for LS
3. LS Director's term ends 12/15. A search for a 3 year position will be conducted Fall 2015
4. Implementation changes required by new curriculum and assessment expectations
5. Need to fulfill and document the Higher Learning Commission obligations by 2016
6. Frame all changes so as not to overwhelm faculty or unnecessarily add to their loads

## SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

### *Requirements for program success:*

#### **Short Term:**

1. Demonstrate that we assess knowledge and skills
2. Demonstrate that we engage in continual improvement efforts and that those efforts are effective for the program and student learning within the LS program
3. Demonstrate that we assess learning outcomes for the foundational courses in math and English
4. Satisfy our institutional obligations for HLC accreditation
5. Re-define and assess skills and learning in distribution blocks
6. Demonstrate that LS uses the assessment findings to improve the Capstone and Foundational requirements
7. Demonstrate that LS uses assessment data to improve JLW and incorporate interdisciplinary writing into the essential skill of effective writing

#### **Long Term:**

In consideration of the changing educational environment nationally, state-wide (The Enterprise), and university-wide, re-contextualize the mission, purpose and implementation of the liberal studies program at NAU.

#### **Time Line:**

AY 14-15	Secure administrative support
AY 15-16	Taskforce: planning, developing models
AY 16-17	Campus vetting and approval
AY 17-18	Course re-designs
AY 18-19	Course re-designs with LS & UCC review for catalog updates
AY 19-20	New requirements