Preparing for the Review of a General Education Course

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Workshop Agenda

1. The Gen Ed review process

2. Course portfolio requirements
   a. Course and Enrollment Information
   b. Learning Outcomes and Assurance of Learning
   c. Course Satisfaction Ratings
   d. Improvement
   e. Certification

3. Example portfolio

4. Questions and discussion

Introductions

- Who you are: your name, department, and gen ed course title or reason for interest in gen ed review process

- Were you involved in the original process of making the course part of the general education core?

Statewide Transfer General Education Common Core

- What is it and why was it created?
  - A body of expected competencies that established a common intellectual experience across institutions so that students could transfer seamlessly across institutions

- How are campuses using it?
  - Each state educational institution is required to offer a general education program of at least 30 credit hours, which addresses these statewide competencies and their associated learning outcomes.

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How will the results of the General Education Review be used?

Ongoing reviews will be used by the UAC to:
1. promote student learning and success across the undergraduate student experience, with a particular focus on foundational courses;
2. ensure that General Education courses have learning outcomes evidence of learning aligned with the STGEC;
3. recognize promising teaching and learning practices that might be adapted and scaled to other courses, programs, and departments at IUPUI and elsewhere;
4. identify ongoing sources of professional development needs that can be addressed through a variety of sources (e.g., CTL; Gateway to Graduation); and
5. model the spirit of peer review, continuous improvement, and innovation as a hallmark of a comprehensive-yet-flexible General Education program.

Gen Ed Course Review Plan

- This year the focus is on professional development
  - How do we make sure course has learning outcomes aligned with what is needed in PULs, state learning outcomes?
  - How do we design and assess assignments in alignment with those outcomes?
  - How do we put together a course portfolio with the elements needed for the course review?

- The improvement review cycle will begin in Fall 2017, to be ready for 2022 re-accreditation

What this Means for You

- All gen ed core courses have already been aligned with specific statewide competency domains, the IUPUI Gen Ed domains, and the IUPUI PULs.

- This process was completed when the courses were submitted for approval to be part of the gen ed core.

- The Undergraduate Affairs Committee reviewed the proposals and selected courses for the gen ed inventory.

- **Now we must provide assurance to accreditation bodies and our state funding agencies (ICHE) that what we have said is happening in these course *IS* in fact happening.**

Course Portfolio Requirements: Learning Outcomes and Assurance of Learning

Learning Outcomes and Assurance of Learning

- One-page narrative
  - Course description
  - How different sections provide same learning outcomes
  - Common assignments and evidence of learning outcomes from assignments
  - Evidence or explanation of how course provides continuous improvement
- Syllabus
- Alignment of student learning outcomes to PULs/ IN STGEC outcomes and assessment (Course Review Form)
- Student work samples
- Evidence that multiple sections are offering similar experience

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Learning Outcomes Alignment Grid

Course Student Learning Outcome	IUPUI Principle(s) of Undergraduate Learning	Statewide Competency Domain and Learning Outcome	Mechanism for Assessing Student Learning to Determine that Outcome Has Been Achieved

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Statewide Categories and Competency Domains	IUPUI Gen Ed Broad and Specific Domains	IUPUI PULs
The **Foundational Intellectual Skills** category • Written Communication • Speaking and Listening • Quantitative Reasoning The **Ways of Knowing** category • Scientific Ways of Knowing • Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing • Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing	**Foundational Intellectual Skills** • Core Communication • Analytical Reasoning • Cultural Understanding **Intellectual Breadth and Adaptiveness** • Life and Physical Sciences • Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences	1. Core Communication and Quantitative Skills 2. Critical Thinking 3. Integration and Application of Knowledge 4. Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness 5. Understanding Society and Culture 6. Values and Ethics

Addressing Misalignment

- Misalignment between learning outcomes that were submitted and approved and learning outcomes currently listed on the syllabus can be addressed.

- This is an opportunity to be proactive:
  - Small adjustments to learning outcomes are possible.
  - Changing domains for a given course will require UAC review and approval.

- Your Undergraduate Affairs Committee representative can provide information about the review process.

Signature Assignments

Signature Assignments: Key Characteristics

- Well-aligned with course-level learning objectives.

- Focused on emulating real world applications of course knowledge in terms of process and content.

- Often require students to reflect on their work.

- Collaboratively designed by faculty who teach in various sections of a given course.

Signature Assignments: Benefits

- Allow for the collection of uniform assessment data across different sections of a single course. (Of course, signature assignments must be used in all sections of the course.)

- Provide significant common data sets for use in documenting the achievement of learning objectives at the programmatic and institutional levels

- Promote faculty discussions of student learning, pedagogy, and assessment

Signature Assignments: Process for Faculty

1. Review the targeted course-level learning objectives to ensure similar understandings of them.

2. Brainstorm, draft, and revise an assignment (tasks, problems, etc.) that aligns with the targeted objectives.
   - The action verbs that describe student behaviors are a good place to start in constructing an effective assignment.

3. Faculty discuss their expectations for student work and design a rubric for the assignment (the AAC&U VALUE rubrics can serve as templates). https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics

4. Faculty agree to collect and collaboratively review student work samples.

Signature Assignments: In Sum

- Building Signature Assignments Requires Substantial Levels of **Intentionality**
  - Careful planning of course sequences and embedded assignments
  - Assignments and rubrics carefully created to elicit and evaluate student responses
  - Implemented collaboratively by instructional staff
- However, the result is a powerful method for demonstrating student mastery of course content and for improving teaching and learning generally.

Signature Assignments Distinguishing Features

- Can be an assignment, task, activity, project or exam purposefully created or modified to collect evidence for a specific learning outcomes.

- Can be designed to facilitate the assessment of learning outcomes derived from the PULs and Statewide Transfer General Education Core.

- Work well when they are course-embedded.

- Ideally, other coursework builds toward the signature assignment and the signature assignment measures the culmination of what the student learned in the course for intended learning outcomes.

Library of Signature Assignments and Resources

- Library of Signature Assignments from Various Disciplines
    - https://www.assignmentlibrary.org/
- National Institute of Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)
    - http://learningoutcomeassessment.org/

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Transparent Assignments

What is Transparency in Learning and Teaching?

- Transparent teaching and learning methods explicitly focus on *how* and *why* students are learning course content in particular ways.
- Transparent methods benefit students who are unfamiliar with college success strategies by explicating learning/teaching processes.

  - Greater benefits for underrepresented and first-generation students

Winkelmes. *Liberal Education* 99, 2 (Spring 2013)
Winkelmes et al. *Peer Review* 18, 1/2 (Winter/Spring 2016)

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What does Transparent Assignment Design look like?

Faculty/Instructors agreed (in national study, 7 MSIs) to discuss with students in advance:

Purpose

- Skills practiced } long-term relevance to students' lives
- Knowledge gained } connection to learning outcomes

Problem-centered

- **Task**
  - What students will do
  - How to do it (steps to follow, avoid)

- **Criteria** for success
  - Checklist or rubric in advance so students can self-evaluate
  - What excellence looks like (annotated examples where students/faculty apply those criteria)

How we know Faculty Development boosts student success:

(*Peer Review*, 2016)

AAC&U and *TILT* Higher Ed collaboration

7 MSIs, 1800 students, 35 faculty

- 425 First generation students
- 402 non-white students
- 479 low-income students
- 297 multiracial students

- 2 x **small teaching intervention** (2 assignments)

- Boosted students' learning in 3 important ways (medium-large effect for underserved students):
  - Academic confidence
  - Sense of belonging

Increased GPA, retention

Course Portfolio Requirements: Course and Enrollment Information

Course and Enrollment Information

- Course enrollments
- Class sizes (targeted enrollment capacity)
- Course semester offerings
- Distribution of grades (including DWIF data)

Course Portfolio Requirements: Course Satisfaction Ratings

Course Satisfaction Ratings

- Maximum one-page narrative that describes your efforts in collecting student satisfaction ratings (course evaluation/not faculty evaluations)

- Evidence of student feedback being sought/offered throughout the semester (mid-semester surveys or focus groups, classroom assessment techniques such as minute paper or muddiest point)

- Evidence of students' feedback on the course

Course Portfolio Requirements: Improvement

Improvement

- Evidence of direct and indirect student learning has been used to refine or improve class activities, assignments, or methods of assuring learning

- Portfolio demonstrates a plan for continuous quality review and improvement

Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Learning

Direct	Indirect
demonstrate knowledge and skills	students' perceptions of their knowledge and skills
tangible, visible and self-explanatory evidence	provide information about how and why learning is occurring
objective tests, essays, presentations, classroom assignments, and portfolios	self-assessment, peer-feedback, end-of-course evaluations, questionnaires, focus groups, or exit interviews

Course Portfolio Requirements: Certification

Certification

- Certification from the dean
- Certification from the department chair/director

Questions and Discussion