September 18, 2009

To: NSSE/PD Group
   Doug Cremer, ITS representative
   Phyllis Cremer (co-convener)
   Paul Decker (co-convener)
   Rebecca Devereaux, OSD representative
   Andrea Dietz, Architecture representative
   Anne Ehrlich, OSD representative
   Vic Liptak, WUFA representative
   Mine Ucock Hughes, Business representative
   Andrea Dietz, Architecture representative

Cc: Robert Bjorklund, convener, WUFA Curriculum Committee
   Penny Collins, co-convener, WUFA Educational Planning Committee
   William McConnell, co-convener, WUFA Educational Planning Committee

Re: Business Before the Group

On Tuesday, September 8, we kicked off the meeting of the ad hoc group academic and student development experts to discuss two issues that crossed and blended organizational interests: the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Personal Development Curriculum.

At that time, I mentioned that the group was taking over duties that the Student Success Task Force had undertaken in the past. SSTF had similarly blended membership and looked at those areas of intersecting concern and interest. Since no other forum exists for this kind of consideration, Phyllis Cremer, Paul Decker, and I created this new group.

Its two charges, I hope, are clear, and I likewise hope that you are making progress in them.

First is the consideration of the NSSE and FSSE results, with an eye to identifying the most important areas to address to be focused on for institutional improvement. I understand that the Business faculty reviewed the NSSE results at their last meeting. They will forward the group their observations and recommendations, as I hope the other schools and units will do as well.

Second is the consideration of the PD classes and curriculum. University policies require the approval of the current courses and curriculum in PD. However, no framework has been established for identifying what are legitimate PD courses; nor has there been any framework or plan for assessment. This group should provide the insight so that a proposal can be made to the Faculty Association’s Educational Planning and Curriculum
committees. Until these frameworks and plans are established and syllabi and curriculum proposals contain or conform to those frameworks and plans, they cannot be submitted for approval. The PD courses are under a one-year moratorium in which current PD courses may be offered but no new ones added. And those courses currently taught will not be able to be listed for fall 2010 until the Curriculum Committee and EPC have made their recommendations. The only exception are the TELP courses that bear a PD designation and have gone through the appropriate faculty and campus approval processes.

I am hoping that I can receive recommendations regarding NSSE by the end of the fall semester so spring can be devoted to planning for improvements to be implemented in fall 2010. It is also urgent that a submission regarding PD that bears this group's recommendation can be made to the appropriate committees by November, since the fall calendar will be built early in spring semester.

I further hope that the utility of this group can be established and that it might become a group that would be used to review all proposals and concerns that reach across academic and student development boundaries.

Thank you for your service. Please let me know how I may help.

Best,