General Education Trends: Implications for Forestry and Other Professional Program Students

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TODAY

• Our OSU process
  • “Baccalaureate Core”
• Phase I Feedback results
• Proposal elements
Process

- **January-May, 2009** - information gathering
  - Literature and peer institutions
  - Colleges and campus focus groups and open forums
  - Student survey

- **June 2009** – presentation of report to Executive Committee and Faculty Senate

- **September-December 2009** – committee work on proposal
  - Sub-group work on elements

- **January-April 2010** – vetting proposal

- **May-June** – revision and voting
Findings: Philosophy

- Consistency – faculty and students
  - Basic skills, critical thinking, etc.

*But not as important as the majors*

Student Survey data
Findings: Philosophy

- Consistency – faculty and students
  - Basic skills, critical thinking, etc. *
    
    \textit{But not as important as the majors}

- Potential to add:
  - Local-to-global citizenship
  - Civic engagement
  - Experiential learning
  - Sustainability
Findings: Structure

- Consistency in philosophy
- Few ‘areas of need’ in structure
  - Size, complexity and the “checkbox” effect
  - Access to key courses
  - Quality/rigor (students!)
- Flow and cohesion of curriculum

The Baccalaureate Core (BaccCore) Curriculum represents what the OSU faculty believes is the foundation for student’s further understanding of the modern world. Informed by natural and social sciences, arts, and humanities, the BaccCore requires students to think critically and creatively, and to synthesize ideas and information when engaging major societal issues. Importantly, the BaccCore promotes understanding of interrelationships among disciplines in order to increase students’ capacities as ethical citizens of an ever-changing world.

Information about Bacc Core courses available at: http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/index.php
Findings: Implementation

- Consistency in philosophy
- Few ‘areas of need’ in structure
- **Big changes in implementation**
  - Advising and communication
    - The “message” and meaning
      - Overly mechanical
    - Skills vs. Perspectives/Synthesis
      - Writing and Math rated high
  - Assessment and outcomes
  - Ownership
The proposal – 5 elements

- “Learning Goals for Graduates”
- Transforming the Culture
  - Sticking with the message
- First-year Linkages
  - Foundational skills; communities
- Experiential Learning
- Implementation and Assessment
  - Administrative Director; FTEs
Issues

1. Cost
2. Rigor
3. Trust