General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) Group

Fourth Meeting: June 21, 2001, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse

Present: Nanniette Coleman, Frances Dearing, Mary Jane Feldman, Patricia Francis (co-chair), Jack Meacham, Robert Ploutz-Snyder, Donald Steven (co-chair).

Guest: Dr. Charles Spuches (Director of Instructional Development, Evaluation, and Services, ESF).

Regrets: Pat Belanoff, Joseph Flynn, Cathleen McColgin, Herb Merrill, David Rule, Gary Waller.

Thanks to Sharon Weis, Administrative Assistant at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, for making the arrangements for our meeting.

I. Updates

Donald Steven updated GEAR on his presentations on the SUNY General Education Assessment Conference, “Campus-Based Assessment of General Education: A Collaborative Dialogue” (held June 4-5, 2001 in Syracuse) to the Academic Standards Committee of the Board of Trustees and the recent meeting of SUNY Chief Academic Officers in New York City. (Steven’s notes are available on GEAR’s Web page (see ‘Supporting Documents’).

II. Conference: Follow-up

Robert Ploutz-Snyder presented a preliminary assessment of the conference, which showed very positive evaluations by participants, particularly with respect to the success of the conference in fostering faculty dialogue and community building. Ploutz-Snyder expects that complete results and an analysis will be ready by about mid-July. GEAR will share this widely with the SUNY assessment community.

III. Guidelines

GEAR discussed and approved draft Review Process Guidelines. These will be shared with the SUNY assessment community via the assessment listserv (ASSESS-L@ls.sysadm.suny.edu) and comments and suggested revisions will be welcomed.

IV. Review Process

Campus plans will be assigned for initial review to one of five GEAR working groups. Each working group will consist of three GEAR members, one of whom (in italics) served on the Provost’s Advisory Task Force on the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes. This group leader will provide “institutional memory” and be the contact person for campuses. Those campus plans that the working group unanimously considers to meet or exceed the criteria in the guidelines will be considered as approved and will not be taken up by GEAR as a whole. (With a campus’s permission, “best practices” plans will be posted on GEAR’s Web page so that other campuses can learn from them.) Plans that the working group feels do not yet meet the standard for approval will be discussed by the whole GEAR group.

Working groups: Pat Belanoff  David Rule
Naniette Coleman
Mary Jane Feldman
Cathleen McColgin
Jack Meacham
Thomas Moran
Frances Dearing
Herbert Merrill / Robert Axelrod
V. Future Meetings

GEAR meetings will resume in the fall, likely in late August or early September. GEAR has accepted invitations to hold meetings at a number of SUNY campuses, including the University at Albany, the College of Technology at Cobleskill, Hudson Valley Community College, the Colleges at Fredonia and Old Westbury, and the University at Stony Brook. GEAR meetings will be open and invitations will be extended to campuses in the area to attend. All campuses will be asked if they would be willing to have their assessment plans discussed in open but confidential session, so that colleagues from other campuses can learn more about assessment through their involvement in the discussions. If a campus is not comfortable with this process, GEAR will discuss their plan in closed session.

This meeting summary will be posted on GEAR’s Web page: (http://cortland.edu/oir/gear/) and sent to campus Chief Academic Officers and subscribers to the assessment listserv (ASSESS-L@ls.sysadm.suny.edu).