

Implementation Plan for the Proposed University Studies Program - DRAFT 3-31

Goal 1

Develop a systematic process for submission of courses for approval including criteria, deadlines, appeal and related processes

Activities

1. GE Council reviews & refines the student learning outcomes of the University Studies Program. (June-September 2009)

2. GE Council creates four sub- committees of the Council to develop more specific outcomes for each of the course topic areas on the grid. These committees will develop a set of detailed outcomes, other course requirements and identify potential assessment methods. Timeline for this process will be as follows:

- develop the final criteria for each course topic area (fall 2009)
- work with faculty to develop new courses or adapt current ones (F 09 to Sp 2010),
- approve courses following the outcomes and requirements agreed upon (Sp 2010 and after).

The subcommittees will have several GE Council members plus several non-voting experts in the relevant area from the faculty. A procedure will be developed to rotate the experts in this process over time. It is meant to be an inclusive and transparent process. Other universities have also taken this approach of approving the general framework and then within this orientation having faculty more fully flesh out the criteria for each course content area. GE Subcommittees will be charged to work with all interested faculty. This will be a constructive and collegial process based on the understanding that the University Studies Program provides a general education foundation for all Colleges.

3. GE Council develops a flow-chart outlining the process for course submission and review including appeal and related processes. Develop forms to be used for submission and review. (September-October 2009)

4. Provide opportunities for public comment and review of the outcomes, course requirements and procedures. (November 2009)

5. Recommend a final set of outcomes, course requirements and procedures for approval by the faculty senate. (To be completed by the end of the Fall 2009 semester)

Goal 2
Course Development and Planning

Activities

1. Outreach to departments to encourage the development and /or revision of courses to meet the goals of the University Studies Program. (Fall semester 2009)
2. Sponsor workshops and training to assist faculty in the development of courses. Work with existing departments, committees, programs, etc. to provide in-house support in addition to bringing in outside speakers with specific areas of expertise. See also Goal 6 (Beginning Fall 2009 and ongoing).

Goal 3

Working with FYE and the FYS Task Force establish the parameters of the First-Year intensive experience. Develop a common set of objectives for the 1st year linking both academics and support services. The goal should be to provide a rigorous academic and intensive supportive environment for our first year students. The first year focus is a distinctive component of the William Paterson University Studies Program.

Activities

1. Retreat co-sponsored by GE Council and FYE to identify issues and discuss opportunities of the University Studies Programs
This retreat should focus on issues such as “transition to college”, collaborative opportunities with student development, opportunities for clusters and other creative approaches to an intensive first year experience, issues related to Basic Skills; identify problem areas that will need additional attention. (October 2009)
2. Working with FYE, the FYS Task Force, Department Chairs and Student Services establish a set of working principles, responsibilities, targets and benchmarks related to the development of the intensive first year program. (November 2009)

Goal 4

Develop & implement a transition plan.

Activities

1. Working with department chairs, registrar, admissions, FYE and other offices, develop a detailed transition plan. Bring in a consultant to assist in the development of this plan as needed. Establish working principles, goals and benchmarks. (September-February 2010)
2. Provide an opportunity for public comment on the transition plan (February-March 2010)

Goal 5

Develop an assessment plan for General Education based on the recommendations of the four subcommittees and the adopted student learning outcomes.

Activities

1. Establish a GE subcommittee to focus on the assessment. (Fall 2009 and ongoing)
2. Working with the Assessment Council, Institutional Research & Assessment, Learning Literacies Strategies, Voluntary System of Assessment, develop an assessment plan incorporating areas such as
 - a) Assessment of student learning in relation to critical thinking and effective communication;
 - b) Course-based assessments
 - c) Development of an ongoing “program review” of courses within the dimensions and the grid categories.
 - d) Establish routine assessment of skills specifically addressed by Middle States Standards such as information and technological literacies
 - e) Develop a budget to support assessment activities
 - f) Work with IR & A to develop processes for monitoring student progress through the University Studies Program. Items to be examined may include: completion rates of USP prior to the beginning of the junior year; sampling of student paths through the program by College (analysis of breadth and depth); % of students meeting incoming language proficiency requirements; etc.
 - g) Prepare an annual report outlining assessment activities for each academic year, findings and priorities for the following year.

Goal 6

Faculty Development

See also Goal 2. Priorities for faculty development fall into four areas:

- USP course development
- Enhancing pedagogies for supporting critical thinking;
- Enhancing pedagogies for integrating writing and oral communication ;
- Enhancing pedagogies for integrating information, technology and related literacies specifically into the first year courses and course development.

Goal 7

Articulation

Work with the University Administration to revise existing articulation agreements with regional colleges and community colleges as they relate to general education requirements. (Ongoing)

Guiding Principles of implementation

1. The approval and maintenance of courses offers a significant opportunity for developing and defining our campus culture.
2. A change in student approaches and attitudes towards their education requires some changes on the part of faculty as well.
3. Many USP courses will have a different context and emphasis than current GE courses, especially learning to learn and the transparency of the educational process. The course proposal and approval process must include ongoing opportunities for education and discussion to develop an informed and activist faculty culture engaged with these issues in each of the four dimensions of the USP: thinking, communicating, valuing and connecting.
4. There should be some explicit presence of the four dimensions of USP in every USP course, i.e., every USP course should orient itself with respect to the USP Grid.
5. All departments should have comparable opportunities for having courses approved and offered in the course topic areas of their relevant fields of expertise.
6. Smaller departments and programs will be given consideration in assigning of courses, especially for attracting potential majors.
7. Each course topic area will begin with a small selection of courses (perhaps 1 or 2 per department) and a limited number of sections to establish some stability in course scheduling and to spread students across disciplines.
8. In each course topic area distribute sections each semester across eligible departments.
9. Faculty involved in the disciplines relevant to a particular course topic area should be involved in educating the general faculty about this area and in making decisions about the selection and maintenance of courses in this area.
10. The Grid offers many opportunities for connecting courses vertically (year-to-year) and horizontally (within a semester). Projects for doing this (like the Clusters and residential links) will be encouraged and become more explicit as USP is implemented.

11. Students may take only two GE courses in any one department and should take second year GE courses outside of their major.

Timetable

Spring – approve Framework of USP – Grid, Narrative and Implementation

December 2009 – Senate receives SLO’s and requirements for all USP courses

Fall 2009 through Spring 2010 - Course development and approval

Fall 2010 - Course scheduling for Fall 2011

Fall 2011– Begin new USP system

Course development and approval

Suggested: One GE Council subcommittee for each grid column = 4

Composed of at least 3 GE Council members and 2-3 experts (non-voting and rotating)

will work on: faculty development issues in each area

working with faculty and depts. to develop new courses

recommending courses to entire GE Council for approval

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