

WGCC Draft Report May 2016

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In the Academic Plan there was a stipulation to create a Working Group for Collaboration and Cooperation (WGCC). The mandate of the committee was not defined in that document.

The Committee met three times over the Spring 2015 term in order to discuss the WGCC's role in relation to the Gen Ed Committee, the Committee for Faculty Restructuring, and the recommendations we would submit in light of our mandate, as we've determined it below.

Mandate:

To determine what will be necessary for, and to facilitate, faculty collaboration and cooperation across departments, disciplines, and Faculties.

Action:

Creativity is abundant, but insufficient on its own. In light of our mandate, the committee has determined **three key components** necessary to achieve the goal of facilitating collaboration and cooperation across departments, disciplines, and Faculties (we have not concerned ourselves with the monetary resources required).

Education – bringing faculty into a culture of collaboration in terms of curriculum development, team teaching, linkages between credentials, etc.

Time – faculty members need adequate time to engage with their colleagues, students, and/or community members.

Space – faculty members require both physical and virtual spaces in which to engage with their colleagues, students, and community members (a physical space for actual conversations and a virtual space for documenting and archiving collaborative ideas).

Based on the above, the following are the initial recommendations of the WGCC.

Recommendations

Education

- That the WGCC be available (whether it be related to Gen Ed initiatives, the Cap Year pilots, or Academic Planning Committees, or the Faculty Restructuring

Committee) to help facilitate or be a resource for necessary conversations across Departments/Faculties

- The WGCC provide leadership in, and research of, best practices for consultative and collaborative processes, and that the committee share them with the campus community at large
- That a survey be created by Institutional Research and the WGCC asking faculty members what they perceive as barriers to cross-discipline, cross-Faculty collaboration. The results of the survey will be of interest to the WGCC, Gen Ed, and Faculty Restructuring Committees
- That the survey information be fed back into determining appropriate topics to be offered at WGCC hosted PD Events for Spring 2016. These might include best practices/models of collaborative curriculum development, team teaching, defining interdisciplinarity, high impact teaching methods, etc. Pecha kuchas could be presented by different faculty members (20 slides, 20 seconds per slide – see pechakucha.org) that educate others about what we do, introduce opportunities for collaboration, sharing electives, etc. We need a way for us to get to know a lot more about what others do here and pecha kuchas can be shown to diverse audiences.
- That Marketing & Communications be brought in at the appropriate moment to showcase these educational opportunities and the initiatives coming out of them to the community at large as part of what makes Cap U unique.

Time

- Initiatives such as a physical meeting place will not work unless there is time carved out of the grid. We therefore request that at least one common lunch hour be opened up in addition to the Tues./Thurs. ones (which are used for CFA, Department, and Division meetings), and that it be used as a time during which faculty can share ideas, create new linkages, and learn more about all the disciplines, their missions, values, and their assessment methods. Faculty members could give brown bag presentations during this slot or book guest speakers or host a series of guest speakers throughout the academic year
- That there be release sections available for faculty to be involved in or lead any proposed innovative space for collaborative teaching & learning.

Space

- An actual Collaborative Learning Space *and* a Virtual Space (Digital Café or Digital Lounge). These are necessary for faculty to gather and share ideas and discover linkages and synergies as well as for students use (group projects, exhibitions, presentations, creative activities). The WGCC endorses Carol Aitken's document outlining such a space (attached).