COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

GE Council RETREAT
Grant Humphreys Mansion

January 12, 2015, 1:00-4:00pm

NOTES – Approved

Objectives: Celebrate and reflect on 2014 accomplishments, gather input regarding priorities for 2015, and gather feedback for Ian and Maia.

I. Greetings, Introductions & Meet Our Retreat Facilitator (Ian & Maia)
    Margaret Doell – ASU
    Wayne Artis – CFAC (PPCC)
    Kay Schneider – CSM
    John Lanning – UCD
    Mike Lightner – CU System
    Richard Nishikawa – UCB
    Jerry Migler – CCCS
    Scott Thompson – CCCS (NJC)
    Jeff London – CFAC (MSUD)
    Bill Niemi – WSCU
    Jeff Reynolds – Aims
    Rhonda Gonzales – CSU-P
    Steve Lindauer - Facilitator
    Ian Macgillivray – DHE
    Maia Blom – DHE

II. Brief History and Tour of the Grant-Humphrey's Mansion (Lindsey McCutchan, History Colorado)

III. Resolution of Tribute to GE Council from Colorado Commission on Higher Education (Ian)

IV. **2014 Accomplishment Questions**
    A. <u>Group 1</u>: *Wayne Artis, Margaret Doell, Mike Lightner, Rhonda Gonzales, Jeff Reynolds*
        1. What has been the impact of our (GE Council) efforts on students' successes to date? How do we know? How do we measure the impact?
            - <u>Group notes</u>:
                - Demystification of the transfer process:

- o Transfer, graduation, 2-year degree completion
- o Streamlined transfer decreases overall cost for students.
  - o A lot of unanswered questions: Is the time to completion shorter due to gtPathways / STAAs? What is the success of transfer students? Is it better or worse due to DwDs? Has facilitating easier transfer had an impact on student success?
  - o Lack of data (specific to gtPathways & DwDs)
    - o DwDs – too early to tell
    - o Success after transfer (persistence, overall GPA, graduation rates) – data comparing before & after GEC efforts (first semester after transfer)

2. Does the impact on students' success, to date, meet, exceed or fall short of our expectations and goals? Why?
   - Group notes:
     - o A clear pathway exists = meets/exceeds expectations.
     - o Results are unknown.

Overall response:
   - We do not have the data to quantify the impact. But, the group assumption/belief is that there has been a positive impact on students' success. Perhaps, more so with 2-year schools, than with 4-year schools.
     - o Better progression for students; a smoother glide path.
     - o Degree completion, time to complete, GPA – all improved.
     - o Elimination of course retakes.
   - Less curricular innovation may be a possible negative impact of standardization [gtPathways].
   - GEC would like to engage with the Data Advisory Group (DAG) to identify data needs and develop reporting (e.g., SAAs, DWDs).
   - Impact on students' success meets or exceeds GEC's expectations to date.
   - Assessment of content areas and competencies is critical.

B. **Group 2**: *John Lanning, Kay Schneider, Jerry Migler, Bill Niemi, Maia Blom*
   3. What have we learned regarding our collective process and ability to fulfill the role and responsibilities of the GE Council?
      - Group notes:
        - STAAs:
          - o Process led to accountability and faculty involvement.
          - o Process requires faculty input and review outside of the GEC.
        - gtPathways curriculum: currently undergoing an evolution in the process because of fewer courses currently going through review.

[Evolution involves electronic reviews, use of webcams and Adobe Connect, conference calls.]

4. What have we learned regarding the quality and effectiveness of our work products (e.g., processes, recommendations, assessments)?
   - Group notes:
     - Data are there to be mined; it would be nice to have hard data rather than anecdotal [data].
     - Possible data questions to consider:
       o Are more students transferring?
       o What are their graduation rates at both 2-year and 4-year schools?
       o The % of transfers *with* associate degrees?
     - [More data are needed. The *application* of gtPathways courses (not their transfer) is the most important piece of gtPathways curriculum. The "round table" discussions that come as a result of Fac2Fac and gtPathways reviews are very valuable on multiple levels. A negative: gtPathways can render a Gen Ed core a bit "plain vanilla" – gtP can restrict curricular innovation in a Gen Ed core.]

Overall Response:
- GEC is a standard by which other councils/committees can be measured. Very appropriate and effective bureaucracy. Ian/Maia's facilitation is very effective (e.g., maintaining inventory of milestones).
- GEC members are accountable, involved, and collaborative. They all exhibit a sense of ownership.
- GEC appropriately seeks and engages with faculty (i.e., faculty driven actions and recommendations).
- GEC members are concerned about transition of senior members. Concerned about loss of institutional memory/knowledge.
- To address transitioning, some members are developing job descriptions for their interpretation of the role as their school's representative. (Suggest sharing this among all members for input or use at their school.) One member suggested "shadowing" as a technique to on-board prospective new members.
- GEC should leverage subcommittees or working groups as a method to conduct work (vs. full committee "red lining"/editing during monthly meetings).
- GEC should look beyond their statutory role to propose to the Commission additional scope to affect students' success. GEC's sunset

provision date is 7/1/2016. GEC needs to consider creating its own mandate, and presenting this mandate to the CCHE.

C. **Group 3**: *Richard Nishikawa, Scott Thompson, Jeff London, Ian Macgillivray*
   5. What have we learned regarding our ability to act as our respective institutions' liaisons to assist the Department?
   6. How can we improve our efforts and work products so that they are more useful to our constituents and generate better results for our students?
      - Group notes:
        - Disconnect between the voices of faculty and the roles that they play in the educational process.
        - Expectations of different members of the GEC and their different roles and constituencies.
        - Encourage involvement of the faculty in the process, e.g., Faculty-to-Faculty conferences.
        - Continue the role of the GEC.

   Overall Response:
   - Members find that understanding their school's leaders' expectations is challenging. *(Special suggestion: CDHE leadership assist/facilitate the definition of the member's role, clarify responsibilities with school leadership, and conduct periodic conversations to ensure alignment or to address concerns/issues, such as with Academic Council).*
   - Members recognize they report to more senior leaders on-campus. Their effectiveness can depend upon their leader's sponsorship and support for initiatives.
   - Members recognize they accomplish more at their schools via collaboration with their school colleagues (vs. individual action).
   - Faculty engagement is essential. Some schools have a GE committee, others do not. Best practice? For schools without GE committee, GEC Members may want to define the best manner to engage with faculty.
   - Recommendation for new members is to volunteer early and often within the GEC. It's an effective method to get "on-board" and become effective as liaison within their school.

General comments:
   - GEC should be thinking about other areas/items/issues for which inventories need to be maintained.

V.   2015 Potential Focus

	Members' priority votes
Revise gtPathways competencies and content criteria	**9**
Implement quality control of gtPathways courses	**7**
Develop prior learning assessment policy with statewide cut scores	**6**
Define and implement data to support GE Council's responsibilities (Request to assign to subcommittee for action, report back to full GE Council members)	5
Maximize Fac2Fac Conferences	5
Develop focused fields/meta majors	2
Make Colorado a LEAP state	2

- ➢ **Revise gtPathways competencies and content criteria**
    - o Must involve faculty and academic units. Members caution about negative reactions if faculty are not involved.
    - o As some content areas do not change much over time, GEC should focus on more dynamic content areas. Prioritize work effort.
    - o Concern about too expansive of a revision scope. Focus on updates and revisions (vs. overhaul or rewrites). Address measurable learning outcomes.
    - o Beyond the statute statements, what should the GEC add or change to improve results?
    - o Technology missing?
    - o The competencies are mandated in statute.
    - o The content areas should not be changed; only mild tweaks or updates would be the best. Learning objectives can be edited.
- ➢ **Implement quality control of gtPathways courses**
    - o GEC can provide schools with framework; a starting point for their efforts; can help jump-start the schools' efforts.
    - o Schools must create their individual quality control plans. Plans provided to accreditors may be an effective starting point.
    - o GEC should review the schools' plans in order to provide feedback. This exercise may afford opportunities for sharing best practices across schools. GEC should not position their review as approval or lack of approval.
    - o How can the GEC encourage schools to create a quality control plan? How can we encourage schools to execute the plan?
    - o Executing plans is dependent upon the results of the "Revision of gtPathways competencies and content" (gtPathways 2.0) initiative.

However, the framework for a quality control plan can be developed simultaneously with the revision initiative.

- ➢ **Develop prior learning assessment policy with statewide cut scores**
  - o This issue is very difficult; it will be a struggle to resolve.
  - o However, GEC must construct a proposed solution. There is Member consensus that the GEC must make recommendations concerning a prior learning assessment policy or a policy will be imposed on the GEC and the schools. Statewide cut scores may not be part of these recommendations.
  - o Members would like to understand the drivers behind this effort. Who are the sponsors? What are their expectations? What can be considered? What is the timeline by which the GEC must provide their recommendations?
  - o Prioritize the issues/components of the policy. Address elements in which it will be simpler to achieve agreement (e.g., score level – 3 vs. 4).
  - o Convene faculty to develop discipline-based recommendations (i.e., cut scores).
  - o Considering last fall's AP Report, suggestion made to let each discipline decide.

VI.   Feedback for Ian & Maia (Steve)
- A. *Positive*
  1. Respectful of the variety of institutions represented on the committee (e.g., 2 and 4 year)
  2. Instrumental in a successful transition to a collaborative council (vs. previous temperament and interactions between members)
  3. Effective at communications with Members, including accurate capturing of notes and interpretation of intent (e.g., decision, conclusions, recommendations)
  4. Maia understands the complexity of the content/domain addressed by the GEC. She's very responsive. She gets things done!
  5. Members appreciated Ian's invitation for the social event. Given the efforts to travel to Denver, some are unlikely to attend. One member commented that this was the first such invitation received from someone at CDHE. There may be opportunities to add social time throughout the year
  6. Outside facilitation is valuable, but should be limited to one-time per year, or to help address difficult/tough issues
- B. *Asks [Requests?]*
  1. Understand the importance of faculty involvement. Be sensitive to their needs. Members cautioned that dictates and demands of faculty without proper engagement will complicate or derail execution
  2. Continue to be sensitive to the authority limits of the Members within their schools
  3. Provide Members with thoughtful/thorough implementation assistance for school-level activities. (e.g., scripted talking points, presentation

materials.) Do not ask Members to freelance or improvise executional activities at their schools

4. Be more transparent with Members regarding Ian's constraints, CDHE leadership directives, latitude for GEC action/recommendations
5. Allow for direct communication with CDHE leadership when Ian/Maia may have different conclusions regarding direction, recommendations, etc. Facilitate direct discussion with CDHE leadership to allow Members to express their position. Or, ensure full communication to CDHE leadership by Ian with Members' position without editing
6. Consider active representation between GE Council and Academic Council. E.g., one individual from each committee attend others' meetings