The meeting was called to order at 2:45 p.m.

1. **Approval of the Agenda** – CIC minutes from Nov. 6 and Dec. 4 were not yet available. MSP Fenno-Smith/Simons 9/0/0, to approve the agenda as amended.

2. **Presentation of Educational Effectiveness Data for General Education for the WASC report** (Sally Murphy, Gale Young, and Carl Bellone).

Carl Bellone and Gale Young distributed the GE Educational Effectiveness Report, the Faculty Learning Community report (FLC) on General Education, and an executive summary of both reports. They thanked both committees for suspending their regular duties to help provide faculty feedback on the General Education piece of the Educational Effectiveness portion of the final WASC report.

GE Director Sally Murphy addressed the group and discussed the details of the GE report. She said that there was more data to be mined from her efforts with Julie Norton. They have collected quite a bit of data about lower-division GE, but essentially no data on upper-division GE. She asked the body to consider suggestions on how to gather data on upper-division GE.

The self-report data from both the clusters and the stand-alone lower-division courses were very positive and indicated that the courses reflected the University’s goals and Student Learning Outcomes for lower-division GE.

However, Murphy indicated several areas of concern:

1) We currently have no lower-division or upper-division Student Learning Outcomes for communication skills or assessment measures for critical thinking skills beyond what students self-report.
2) With respect to writing skills, we generally do well, even with 50% of our students needing developmental work in writing. However, we saw a decline in WST scores last year, and we need to know if this is an anomaly or a trend.

3) We have data on quantitative reasoning from Statistics, but not from Math courses.

4) So far, we only have self-report data on information literacy, but we will have measures in place for this skill set soon.

5) Lower-division content areas (humanities, sciences, and social sciences) look good based on the rubric results from the pilot study. A question for the faculty to consider is whether or not we go forward with these rubrics and if they need revision. These rubrics indicated that 25% of students failed to demonstrate competency in the content areas.

6) An area for future study is the lack of institutional support for the GE program and lack of knowledge about GE Student Learning Outcomes on the part of lecturers.

7) The recommendations on how to integrate the skills and content knowledge in the clusters from the 2003 CIC review of the GE program have not been implemented.

Murphy fielded questions from the body. She indicated that she is asking for support for the freshman clusters from the Provost’s office, including stipends for summer curriculum development and support for cluster instructors, perhaps even additional teaching hours.

Murphy addressed the problem of upper-division GE as having more diversity in curriculum and the problems of using rubrics across disciplines. She raised the question of whether or not classes in the majors were general enough for GE.

Addressing the assessment of upper-division GE, Murphy claimed the goal of the piloted GE rubrics was to make assessment less burdensome. Out of 57 faculty who were a part of the initial study, only 3 were absolutely opposed to them. Most found that they could be useful, though they required revision.

Murphy claimed that assessment should not be antithetical to teaching. However, it still exists as an unfunded mandate. Bellone noted that assessment could be less burdensome if it were conducted through sampling on a rotating basis.

Wildy, a member of the Faculty Learning Community, claimed that the rubrics were not as difficult to use as she got used to them.

Liberti noted that she found using the rubrics daunting and that educating faculty on how to use them would be necessary.

Reichman opposed the tendency to bureaucratize and standardize GE through rubrics. There are different learning and teaching styles that cannot be captured by one mode of assessment. The Chancellor’s Office is piloting two nation-wide general assessment tests, and Reichman worries that we will be compelled to teach to the test.

Murphy noted that in the rubric pilot study, faculty were encouraged to write own GE indicators, and acknowledged that rigid rubrics were problematic. The created indicators were not included in the report.
Seitz said that he tried to use the rubric to find out how students met indicators within a particular test, and found it burdensome.

Wildy responded that the indicators were purposely general, and that grades do not always match what students learn in a class.

Young encouraged faculty to refer to the data on rubrics and comments in the FLC report. She applauded the FLC for doing the hard work of developing the rubrics and stressed the importance of faculty development.

Sally asked the body to let her and Julie Norton know where there is data that they would like to see that is not present in the reports. The GE Program is continuing to collect data as a part of its Five-Year Review process.

Reichman inquired about the purpose of the WASC Educational Effectiveness report.

Bellone responded that the purpose is to close the loop on the assessment process, to show that we’ve done assessment, digested it, and dialogued about it. WASC wants to see that we have an infrastructure in place to assess GE on a continual basis. We want to keep assessment in house.

Seitz noted that there are many more lecturers than tenure-track faculty teaching in the lower-division clusters, and that we do not want to drive faculty away from GE because it seems labor intensive.

Reichman pointed out that we should be focusing on the GE program and not assessment. As for the program, Reichman noted that it is a great strength and accomplishment of the University, and it was not in place the last time WASC was here. The GE program has improved retention, and addresses the needs of our diverse student body. We should claim credit for the good that it does, and consider whether or not to link the critical thinking courses to the GE clusters.

Julie Stein noted that the two skills most desired, but missing, in industry are writing and critical thinking skills, so that these should our primary focus.

Several faculty noted that our GE program is faculty run and governed. Several faculty discussed the problem of trying to measure the value of GE, when the results are likely to have complex causes.

Eagan invited everyone present to return to this discussion on the next joint CIC/GE meeting on Monday, January 22. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Eagan