Faculty Meeting Notes
September 5, 2012 Faculty Meeting
Kit Otto, Faculty Observer

The General Education committee is actively trying to analyze the current general education program and make incremental improvements. The committee surveyed the faculty last spring to collect data on faculty experiences with the general education program. Jeremiah Duncan presented a summary of the results, which indicated that there is strong agreement on the goals, but responders were less sure that those goals are being met.

Elliott Gruner brought the motion from the Gen Ed committee to revise a description of the “Writing in the Disciplines Connection” that appears in the catalog. Students are expected to take one course within their major with a significant writing component, and the proposed revision included a quantitative recommendation that writing “should be an integral part of the course and account for a significant part (approximately 50 percent or more) of the final grade.” The lengthy discussion that followed focused on the wording, and its specificity or flexibility. The proposed revision was amended slightly and passed, but there was enough ambiguity on a voice vote that a show of hands was needed.

Pithy comment from S. Coykendall (paraphrased): “I’m really glad we’re having this discussion…. Writing is the number one skill that our students need.” [and that their employers want]. I don’t think we have a lot of graduates who had too much writing while they were here, but I do think we have many graduates who didn’t have enough.”