6/7/10

To: ASC CCI

From: Mark Shanda, Chair of ULAC

RE: Ongoing review of GEC Outcomes

Following the McHale revisions of the GEC, a resolution was passed by CAA that mandated “a detailed review of student enrollment records” for fours years after the introduction of the new GEC requirements to determine the extent to which the selection of courses within the “Breadth Requirement” had been narrowed by the approved changes. [The primary “post-McHale” change that raised this concern was the “drop 15, add-back 10” credit hour provision of the GEC.]

In our role as the primary monitor of the GEC, the University Level Advisory Committee (ULAC) at its regular meetings 5/17/10 and 6/7/10 took up the issue raised by the CAA mandate and wishes to report the following:

1. Preliminary enrollment data appear to somewhat suggest increased alignment of students breadth choices staying with the student’s major college of offer, i.e. students appear to be selecting breadth courses from their own college – 42% of BIO students chose MPS courses to satisfy breadth requirements, 50% of HUM students choose HUM courses to satisfy breadth requirements, 59% of MPS student choose MPS courses to satisfy breadth requirements, and 41% of the SBS students chose SBS courses to satisfy breadth requirements,. [Percentages are from the 2008 cohort.]
2. These data appear to support the concern that students may be getting less breadth from the GEC than intended. [Greater breadth is defined here as students taking course work from a different college than their major. ULAC recognizes that breadth within a college is not considered.]
3. ULAC is somewhat troubled by these data, but confident that the recently approved semester based Gen Ed requirement address the concern for adequate breadth among students.
4. ULAC will continue to examine data sets including:
   1. Overall enrollment patterns
   2. Degree audit snapshots of students at various points in their academic careers
   3. Survey and focus group data gathered to discuss perceptions about Gen Ed
5. Particular attention will need to be paid to the new “Open Option” categories to examine how they address breadth concerns and whether they truly enable the projected “easier path” for students to successfully complete minor programs.
6. Through careful analysis of these ongoing data, ULAC will continue to monitor the question of “Breadth” in meeting the spirit and intent of the new Gen Ed requirements.
7. No other action is warranted at this time. Curricular efforts need to remain focused on semester conversion and not on an immediate correction responding to these data.