**Education SWATeam Meeting 12/2**

*Members in attendance: Gillen Wood (Chair), Mallory Mahen (Clerk) Sean Kennedy (faculty), Cheelan Bo-Linn (faculty), Anna Mehl (staff), Natalie Bosecker (staff), Eric Green (staff), Blaise Torrence (student), Jayce Carlson (student), Bill Stewart (Gen-ed Board), Ximing Cai (iSEE), Meredith Moore (iSEE)*

*Members not in attendance: Anna Riedl (student)*

Agenda:

1. Review findings from ACE-IT program as a model for a sustainability workshop
2. Input from General Education board on sustainability gen ed requirement

Meeting:

* Eric Green shares findings from ACE-IT program
  + Alcohol safety education program for students
    - Collaboration between new student programs and the provost
    - Offered every fall to matriculating freshman and first year student class
  + Supported by approx. 80 peer educator that serve around 800 students per week
    - Peer educators are student workers employed by the university
  + Previously a 2-hour in person but moved to an online model hosted on Compass
    - Program appears on students’ Compass dashboards and they complete modules weekly throughout the semester
  + Per educators filmed content for the modules and students must pass a quiz related to each module
    - Peer educators also host “office hours” to maintain employment
      * Currently have very little hours with the shift to online delivery
  + Full time professional and graduate student coordinate peer educators and programming including training
  + ACE-IT and other first year workshops are “mandatory,” although there is no real penalty for not attending or not completing the Compass course
    - However, program boasts an 80% completion rate
  + Costs typically associated with this program include:
    - Printing services (when in person)- $2,000/year
    - T shirts for peer educators- $600/year
    - Peer educator wages- $1,815-$9,075/week
      * Since moving online, the costs have dramatically decreased
* Discussion on modeling a sustainability workshop after ACE-IT
  + An online format would be more accessible to students
    - students could also work at their own pace
    - More content can be included because there is not the time constraint of an in-person workshop
  + Costs would be minimal due to reduced peer educator wages
  + Advertising and publication would be key to encourage students to participate
  + There are concerns of overloading first year students with so many programs
* Bill Stewart from the general education board speaks to the possibility of a sustainability gen ed requirement
  + The idea of a sustainability gen ed requirement has been floating around for the last few years
    - Typically met with support, although no concrete action has been taken to move the idea along
  + It takes 1.5 to 2 years from the time of the proposal to the time of implementation of a new general education requirement
  + Need strong support from deans across campus for this to be pushed through
    - There are many experts in sustainability on this campus who want dedication to their research and education
      * They may fear that a gen ed requirement would dilute their efforts
      * Would need to change that perspective and publicize the benefits
    - Sustainability is often siloed but it needs to be spread as a campus-wide effort
  + When the last successful general education requirement was proposed, a task force on diversity and inclusion in the provost’s office was established
    - A similar task force including deans from a variety of departments that support the sustainability gen ed requirement should be established
      * This group can provide an array of opinions and work out the fine details of the requirement
  + This requirement would show that the University of Illinois is dedicated to sustainability so much so that it wants every single student to leave here knowing something about it
    - It would brand the university as a “sustainability school,” making it more competitive with other schools with similar reputations
      * This would also attract more students who have a strong background and interest in sustainability
* Team discussion from team on sustainability general education requirement
  + Approx. 60 courses have already been identified that would meet the requirement
  + The requirement would cause a shift in student populations within the current sustainability courses offered
    - There would be an influx of students with little to no interest in sustainability that would be enrolled in the course just to satisfy the requirement
    - This makes it difficult on professors who are used to a certain classroom dynamic and environment of high interest and participation
      * This affect would be mitigated over time as more sustainability courses are offered
  + The requirement provides incentive for departments to develop interdisciplinary, sustainability-focused courses
    - For example, a sustainability in business course for business students to take and fulfill the requirement
    - There is a certain benefit for major departments to keep students taking classes offered by that department
  + With more courses being developed, it increases the visibility of sustainability on campus
  + Each student taking at least one course in sustainability accomplishes the goal of allowing students to make informed decisions and develop life-long sustainable habits
  + Some members of the team are concerned with overwhelming students by adding more requirements to graduation

Action items:

1. Develop recommendation for a sustainability general education requirement to be submitted to the iWG