

I have verbally raised the following concern with members of the General Education Task Force but would like to give you the following written statement.

I strongly believe that a written commitment from the administration regarding the provision of resources is needed before a vote is taken *and* that the wording of the ballot contain language that clearly states that implementation of the program will not take place until the faculty are confident that the necessary resources are in place.

The program as proposed will be expensive. If we are to meet the ideals set out in this proposal, a substantial amount of time will be required to develop the new courses that are contained in this proposal. If this program is to be effective, we cannot merely shuffle deck chairs by renaming courses. The general education program at Southern is huge ocean liner that cannot be turned around on a dime. Once the program is implemented, it cannot be put into place piecemeal. If we admit students under this plan, the Tier 2 courses and the Tier 3 capstone courses must either already be in place or ready to go. We will be doing this at the same time that we are teaching our current general education courses for those students who were admitted under the old program. In effect we will be operating two general education programs at the same time. This cannot be done with the current size of the faculty. Hiring more adjuncts to staff the old program, will shortchange those students. The unfairness of such a situation should be obvious: students in the old program in classes of 40 students taught by a recently hired adjunct versus classes with 20 students in the new Tier 1 competency courses primarily taught by full-time faculty. Many of our part-time faculty do an excellent job, so my statement is not a reflection upon their skills. We all know that students do better in classes of 20 than 40 and that full-time faculty provide institutional mentoring that is not possible for part-timers. The increase in the size of the faculty is not just necessitated by the requirements of the transition period. Bracketing the transition costs, the program itself if it is to be fully implemented will need more full-time faculty. We all saw the problems that were created by the staffing shortages when the First-Year Experience Program was put into place.

Some important questions need to be answered:

Have we determined how many additional full-time faculty we will need to implement this program? I need proof to believe that we can carry out this change with the size faculty we currently have.

Have we determined how much reassigned time will be needed by faculty to revise their courses? If some of this is to be carried out in the summer, will monies be there to pay for this work? Remember that we are 10-month employees.

Will the demands for creative activity and service be lessened during the 5 to 6 year period it takes to make this transition? Have we determined how long a transition period this would be?

I'm sure that I could come up with many more questions regarding resources. Answers to the above questions need to be provided before I could vote positively on the proposal. I regret to say that a proposal, no matter how excellent, that does not clearly contain language about the necessary resources will not get my vote.

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