Suggested Topics for 2010-11 Undergraduate Council

Susan Anderson: As for additional topics for discussion next year, won't we also be continuing to talk about grade culture, or is that all going to be revised in the next 4 weeks?

Karen McLaughlin: The issue of student writing has come up in many discussions, so I wonder if that might be a topic for next year. Specifically, I wonder what experience students get beyond the core (121/122/123) courses, and a useful discussion could center around what skills should they have as a graduate of the UO. It might be a component of re-invigorating the general education curriculum.

Dean Livelybrooks: Regarding long-term agenda items, I'm again wondering about university-wide capstone projects, which would look different for each program of course.

The goal, with which some may not agree, is that all UO graduates (baccalaureates) have a substantive experience "in the industry or application" as it were before graduating. This may be another way to better market our undergraduate program in competition with others (adding to FIGs, frosh. seminars, etc.).

Steps might involve.

1) an inventory of what is already being done. What percentage of graduates go through this sort of program? In what majors? Where are the holes? Are those programs interested in developing a senior project/etc.?

2) what is done elsewhere? Mining other institutions for good ideas. I know that my undergrad. alma mater has UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities), which has been successful for several decades.

3) what resource commitments are involved? Perhaps the idea of a university-wide requirement is too expensive?

4) what universal requirement makes sense? (assuming answers to 1,2 & 3 are generally affirmative).

Pardon me if we have indeed considered this and rejected it in the recent past. I do think this could address 'value of degree' questions that students always have (and they should!). Having first-hand experience applying knowledge gained within a degree program will help students make better decisions about post-college. Having a universal senior projects/etc. requirement will push major programs to better consider what is next for the degree-attainers.

Sue Eveland: One dilemma I am facing as registrar is the lack of faculty policy/guidelines on when it is appropriate to change a grade. We have no "statute of limitations" on grade changes, though changes have to be submitted on paper with a second signature (by the dept. head) if over a year old. Still, I have all kinds of what I consider to be questionable changes long after the fact. Sometimes I ask the college dean/assoc. dean to weigh in.

Given the grading culture work that the UG Council has undertaken, might it be possible to create guidelines about grade changes? Is it appropriate for a faculty member to assign extra work to a student so a grade can be improved? Is it appropriate for a student to be given the opp to rewrite a paper, redo a final, etc? Should the one year deadline be firmly enforced?