Faculty Forum on 11-1-11  
(attendees - 5)

Comments gathered as they relate to the 5 Categories:

Mission  
[ISP is a good idea, but we have “bureaucratized the dream;” ISP is definitely not the old gen-ed; what has ISP added to gen-ed? There is a perception that ISP is the old gen-ed re-worked; ISP goes beyond the “menu” of course options offered in the old gen-ed and ensures a developmental sequence; ISP provides a foundation of common content]

Governance & Structure  
[ISP has become bureaucratized & therefore onerous; faculty are aware of the investment made by the administrators; might be better to replace it if it is deeply flawed; ISP has to have expectations but also adequate support to keep it from being “onerous” for those teaching it; original idea was not to rely on adjuncts (as old gen ed did) but to entice TTF; the original plan assumed more TTF participation; can the ISP board adjust and have flexibility when needed? How static is the ISP? Where do major changes originate? Can everybody play? We get too hung up on degrees; who decides who can offer and teach courses in ISP? Two faculty who planned to team-teach an II course were told their course was integrated but not interdisciplinary enough; no patience with ‘high horse” dynamic; some disciplines can only play in certain areas; why isn’t education considered interdisciplinary?]

Communication & Understanding  
[ISP’s requirement for “magic language” in syllabus is ‘crazy-making;’ the learning outcomes need to be understandable; difficult to figure out what language to put in syllabus; faculty aren’t told what they need to say; ISP “magic language” changes frequently but not tracked; use of Bb is an impediment that is too time-consuming; difficult to transfer credits from outside; what about international credits? Isn’t clear what IQL’s purpose is – are we teaching the basics? How are changes in policy communicated? How do we know when changes occur? Support and workshops are offered late in semester, but would be more helpful earlier; online help is available]

Implementation  
[ISP needs a suite of themes, otherwise the breadth requirement is too diffuse; faculty (TTF) are voting with their feet by their non-participation; important to pay attention to the degree of faculty buy-in; not convinced that making small changes to a fundamentally flawed system is worthwhile; IQL is not working, instead faculty advise students to just take a statistics course; IQL is not “fixable” in its current form; are faculty who are teaching IQL qualified to do so? infrastructure required for IQL didn’t previously exist, so it would be better to embed it into other courses and let math dept. address the gaps; 85% of students took a math course but we need to grab the last 15%; the assumption is that subject experts are qualified to teach statistics, but they can’t teach IQL competently; there is tension between the demanding nature of ISP and the intention to make it inviting for TTF to teach; in “old days” more faculty taught gen ed courses by default because they were already teaching them; ISP developed simultaneously with 4-credit implementation and things were rushed; ISP courses need to be more integrated with the majors to make them more appealing to students; is the lack of pre-requisites for upper level ISP courses working? There should be courses in the major that count for ISP; can student bypass courses with outcomes they don’t want to meet? Which outcomes are most important?]
Assessment

[Bb isn’t functional for gathering data – students have trouble and faculty don’t know how to use it from the students’ perspective therefore can’t teach it, so it fails as an artifact gathering mechanism; ISP needs a more accessible way to assess; a sample of three essays with a rubric that is developed externally cannot serve as a valid measurement of student work; the rubric doesn’t evaluate good vs. bad content, only the quality of the writing itself; who determines the rubric? Content expertise is not built into assessment; prefer to have an individual class or teaching assessed; assessment tasks required are administratively onerous; ISP assessment process isn’t informative to the faculty member and doesn’t improve teaching; doing the exercises is worthwhile; assessment is demanding; sometimes a viable artifact is hard to devise when group work is the norm; how do we know the outcomes are being met?}