Science and Math Liaison Group

Meeting Notes

Sept. 26, 2014

Present: Bridget Gourley, Alex Komives, Pascal Lafontant, Jeane Pope, Pam Propsom, Jackie Roberts, Michael Roberts, Naima Shifa, Brian Wright

Goals for the semester and year.

 Continue to work on the “Big Ideas” course. Where are we now? Michael explained that the current plan is: five to seven faculty offer 2-3 week session of “Paradigm Shifts in Science” course. Modular design, faculty rotate through the sections. Weeklong workshop over the summer to create it, plan how to transition between the modules, some capstone element at the end for synthesis. Pilot 2-3 sections in the fall, 6 week commitment on the part of the faculty member during the semester, taught as a paid overload ($5000). We’d like to have this targeted to first-year students. Work with MAO, CAPP and whomever else (Ken Kirkpatrick, Dave Berque) so that this can get SM approval (so we need to have the paperwork and process planned in advance to get approval).

 Where are we with divisional learning goals? Could the division create criteria for what should count as an SM course and then MAO or an SM subcommittee would give approval for the courses? Invite the department chairs to come to one of these liaison meetings to discuss this. Review the Divisional Open Meeting notes from April to see where we ended up. Important to work at the departmental level because that’s where the courses come from. Write an email to department chairs asking them to review the learning goals and come to consensus. Important to emphasize the process and that these learning goals indicate our starting point, but are open to revision.

 Can we continue discussions within departments about departmental learning goals for introductory courses and majors? Focusing on the two overarching goals from Gormally et al. (TOSLS) and not the 9 subscale skills, seeing if there is agreement with the two higher-level skills, and then how does each department address these two within their own specific discipline. Could we look at some of the alternative language that came up during the April Open Meeting?

Other topics.

 Learning goals. This might be a good topic for a workshop or the learning community. Hilary’s IONiC group might be a good resource. Fink’s book on backward course design.

 Better language for the general education requirements. Learning goals should help drive this.

 Procedural implementation of the learning goals and any changes to graduation requirements. How would this work? How can we plan for this?

Plan.

 Invite chairs to future liaison group meeting so they can help drive the conversation about common SM learning goals in their departments.