DePaul University Academic Program Review

Cycle 6: Spring 2003--Spring 2004

Memorandum of Agreement -- November 2004

Scientific Inquiry Domain

As a result of the sixth cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 6), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

Common items for the Liberal Studies Program:

Domain goals and learning outcomes:

Each Advisory Committee will articulate its specific goals, consistent with the DePaul Learning Goals, and will then derive from them assessable expected student-learning outcomes which are to be included in all unit syllabi. This task is to be completed according to a schedule to be provided by the LSC and/or its chair so that the LSC can approve these goals and outcomes by June 2005.

Writing standards:

Each Advisory Committee will determine the acceptable amount and type of writing to be required in its courses, taking into consideration the variety of courses offered in that domain, and being sure that such assignments are sensitive to and consistent with the students’ prior and/or concurrent writing experience and preparation, including the first year writing course(s). This task is to be completed according to a schedule to be provided by the LSC and/or its chair so that the LSC can approve these standards by June 2005.

Quality control:

During the coming year, Liberal Studies Council will establish a sub-committee to consider ways to ensure the academic quality of LSP courses. While it remains the responsibility of Liberal Studies Council to set standards for rigor and challenge, this subcommittee will make recommendations to the LSC about mechanisms and processes to ensure those standards are maintained. As part of its recommendations, this committee will identify distinct roles for the advisory committees and contributing departments in carrying out their responsibilities in maintaining the quality of Liberal Studies courses. Once the Liberal Studies Council approves these recommendations, it will be the responsibility of the advisory committees to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

Actions agreed upon by the Scientific Inquiry Domain for the coming academic year (2004 -2005):

1. Clarify Course Criteria:

   a. The Scientific Inquiry Advisory Committee will ensure that syllabi articulate the domain’s learning goals and outcomes, and that the faculty understand what the courses are to accomplish.

   b. The Advisory Committee for the Scientific Inquiry Domain will, with the advice of Scientific Inquiry faculty, clarify the domain’s Criteria for Inclusion with respect to student requirements for each course component (quantitative, laboratory, and elective) and create customized criteria for each component.
2. Quality Issues
   a. The Advisory Committee will open and maintain lines of communication with faculty who teach in the Scientific Inquiry Domain and the Chairs of their departments to receive feedback and ensure that any concerns about the domain are being met.
   b. The Committee will host an annual Scientific Inquiry faculty meeting to discuss issues of concern and solicit feedback.

3. Quantitative Reasoning:
   a. The Advisory Committee will initiate discussions with academic advisors across the University to ensure that students who are required to take ISP 120 have completed this requirement prior to taking Scientific Inquiry courses. Further, advisors will be asked to inform students of the benefits of taking their Scientific Inquiry courses fairly soon after ISP 120.
   b. The Scientific Inquiry Advisory Committee will collaborate with the Quantitative Reasoning Advisory Committee with regard to revisions to ISP 120 and/or the creation of a new course structure.

4. Assessment:
   a. The Advisory Committee will communicate domain assessment results at the annual Scientific Inquiry faculty meeting with an eye toward course improvement.

Signed:

Advisory Committee Chair: ________________________________

APRC Subcommittee: ________________________________

Chair of APRC: ________________________________

Associate Dean, Liberal Arts and Sciences: ________________________________

Dean of the College: ________________________________

Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs: ________________________________

Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs: ________________________________