Recorder’s Summary

Forum date: 2/23/2017
Table number: 6

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Key points and ideas that emerged from table discussion (bulleted list of 5-10 points with a couple sentences of description for each):

**LE Works**

Many of the faculty and staff that sat at this table and decided that the current liberal education is not really harming anyone. Many think that the current way it works, is beneficial to many of the students. Little changes need to be done. One idea that they had thought to make it even better is to have a cross theme between all schools. References were made to CEHD where their students read a book during their freshmen seminars. We could implant this technique across campus, therefore students can all have one thing in common.

**Change in the Ideology of the LE system**

Instead of focusing on topics within themes, a better change might be to focus on learning topics. For example, we can redirect our focus on the environmental theme and put that onto more specific skills such as problem solving. This solution was brought up to address issues with students' flexibility. Some students may have a huge emphasis into certain fields such as environmentalists, but may lack in other skills. Therefore, instead of focusing on an environmental theme that they are already good at, they can also learn new skills or topics.

**Career Development**

It was brought up that companies are now looking for students with a diverse course load. A professor brought up an example of his student, where companies were specifically looking at their transcript of courses and not their grade. The current LE supports this cause, and should not be changed.

**Themes that better fit the student’s future**

One big skill that faculty that was important was communication. Public speaking skills were often associated with majors and not directly with the themes of core classes. If we are sending students out into the world, should they not be prepared with the right communication skills? It also brings up the questions of the theme of civic/life and engagement. Some felt that this specific theme is not a good idea for fresh 18 year olds who have not fully developed their identity yet. It should be offered still, but not to first year students.
Transfer students
Many agreed that the LE system fits the needs of first year students, however is not so flexible with transfer students. It sets them back, and can be confusing for those that come into the University. However, it can also be beneficial in that those quantitative skills from LE courses can be more helpful to them than first year students.

Summary of discussion (300 to 500 words):

Many of them seem to agree that the current LE system is not so flawed. It is doing wonders for many of the students that they work with, and have much to praise, but don’t criticize it as much. Their focus was more on adding more things to the LE system to improve its quality. Their biggest concern was how LE was affecting students beyond their undergraduate path. What skills are they learning from these courses that will help them in the real world? They saw a need for more courses that put a focus on team building, problem solving, and cross-cultural competency.