



the Human Community

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From the Dean's Desk

By Linda Cabe Halpern, Dean of University Studies

Dear Colleagues,

The General Education Program has been under the direct supervision of a dean since 1996, when it was still in its development stage and I was named JMU's first Dean of General Education. JMU decided to establish the position in order to increase the visibility of the program and to provide it with an advocate. As the Program reached maturity and stability, it was combined with other units to create the University Studies office in 2006. The programs in University Studies include, in addition to General Education, the Honors Program, the Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies Program, University Advising, and the Center for Assessment and Research Studies. All are large academic programs that operate across colleges, and some interact frequently with units in Student Affairs. The General Education Program has benefited from its association with these other units, but there has sometimes been some confusion on the campus at large about which University Studies activities are

directly related to General Education. General Education is the largest program in University Studies, comprising approximately 40% of undergraduate credit hour production at JMU.

We have given a lot of thought to the joint goals of protecting the visibility and identity of the General Education Program and reducing the possibility of confusion with other activities and programs in University Studies. At a meeting this past summer, the GenEd Cluster Coordinators and University Studies leadership decided that it was time to more clearly differentiate the two.

The Cluster Coordinators have always been an important part of the Program's leadership, and they will take an even larger role as spokespersons and leaders, and Dr. Herb Amato, Associate Dean of University Studies, will take on the additional responsibility of overall coordination of the General Education Program. Amanda Tusing is the administrative assistant for General Education and will provide support for their activities.



I am still the dean responsible for the General Education Program, and still thoroughly committed to the ideals and mission of the program, but we believe that it will be better for the program if I remove myself from its day-to-day activities. Congratulations to Herb Amato and the Cluster Coordinators, who are fully up to their expanded responsibilities.

For all these reasons, this is the last newsletter that will start with a message from me. I am proud to work at an institution with as great a commitment to general education as JMU has, and proud of the quality of teaching and learning in the Program.

Thank you.

Linda

Study Abroad Grants Are Back!

Co-sponsored by General Education: The Human Community and the Office of International Programs (OIP), the Study Abroad General Education (SAGE) Grant Program is intended to expand general education offerings in international set-

tings. SAGE grants support the redesigning of an existing general education course for offering during the summer as part of a new short-term study abroad program. This year, each grant funds a planning trip (airfare, lodging, modest meal

stipend) to the destination country, possibly during spring break or in the summer preceding that of the program's initial implementation. Other costs associated with the project are negotiable. Application deadline was October 22, 2010. For more information, visit: www.jmu.edu/international/fac/sage.shtml.



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From the Office of General Education

By Herb Amato, Associate Dean of University Studies

As you read from Dr. Halpern's column, times are changing in The Human Community. However, at no time in the near future will Dr. Halpern not be a big part of directing and overseeing the General Education Program, as she does with the other programs that report to her.

In my new role within the General Education Program, I plan to give the Cluster Coordinators the opportunity to be more visible throughout the University. I see my job as the person who provides support in ways to allow them to be successful.

The items on the agenda for the Cluster Coordinators and me to accomplish this year are:

- Fill Cluster Coordinator's vacancies for 2011-2012
- Select a new Chairperson to serve as the chair of the GEC for the next two years
- Contribute to the 2013 SACS Reaffirmation for Accreditation

- Discuss and/or help implement recommendations from the Cluster Five Program Review
- Support Cluster Four throughout the year in its Program Review
- Reinstate the SAGE Grants (support provided by the Office of International Programs and General Education)
- and continue to help strengthen the General Education Program and support the mission of the university.

To recap the year so far, Summer Orientation (Transfer and 1st Year) was extremely successful. We believe all students left campus with the courses they needed to progress toward graduation. As I say in my student presentation each summer, "we promise that you will leave orientation with a perfect schedule." The only problem is that what I think is a perfect schedule is not always the same as what students think is a perfect schedule. In addition to our work during Sum-



mer Orientation, Cluster Five is putting the finishing touches on its program review, and Cluster Four is working hard collecting data and gathering information for the completion of its program review. It is due in the early part of the fall 2011 semester.

I hope your semester has been a productive one and that you were able to accomplish all you set out to do. As my duties change within the University, know that my door is always open. Please see me or one of the Cluster Coordinators if you have questions or concerns pertaining to the General Education Program.



Dr. John Ott is the 2009-2010 recipient of the General Education Distinguished Teacher Award

Each year, in recognition of superlative achievement in the areas of teaching, a distinguished Teaching Award is presented to a General Education member. The recipient for the 2009-2010 award is **Dr. John Ott**.

John earned his Ph.D. and M.A. from the University of California-Los Angeles and his B.A. at Stanford University. He teaches multiple courses in art history, including GARTH 206.

"Most of my success in the classroom stems from my ability to get students from a broad range of courses of study, class years, and levels of preparation to become personally invested in a General Education course in which the vast majority is obligated to enroll. I have been able to achieve this two primary ways: first, by fostering active student participation; and second, by demonstrating the multifaceted relevance of the study of Art History to their lives."

— John Ott

Provost Award for Excellence in Academic Advising Award for 2009-2010



University Studies and Career and Academic Planning are pleased to announce the winners of the Provost Award for Excellence in Academic Advising for 2009-2010. Awards are presented to JMU faculty members who advise within their department and a JMU freshman advisor. Please join us in congratulating the year's winners: **Dr. Howard Lubert**, departmental advisor and **Emma Phillips**, freshman advisor.



Sustainability matters to us at James Madison University. Our recycled ratios for this publication are 25 percent post-consumer and 50 percent total recycled. This publication is printed on paper and produced by a print vendor that are both certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

GenEd Academic Program Review Process

The Academic Program Review (APR) is intended to provide insight to departments on curriculum and assessment. The General Education Program is on a seven-year cycle for each cluster and the entire GenEd program. Cluster One completed its review in 2007, Cluster Two in 2008 and Cluster Three in 2009. Due to changes in leadership for Cluster Four, Cluster Five conducted its review in 2010, one year earlier than expected. Cluster Four will conduct its review in 2011.

Cluster Five, The Individual in the Human Community, completed its internal review of its structure, goals, objectives, courses, assessment results, faculty and resources. The following faculty members were instrumental in researching, compiling, and presenting the data for the final report:

Cluster Objectives and Goals & Cluster Evaluation and Improvement

Faculty: Terri Prodoehl (Health Sciences), Charles Harris (Psychology), Dena Pastor (CARS), Christina Rohrbaugh (Health Sciences) and Ulas Kaplan (Psychology)

Significant Accomplishments

Faculty: Christine Robinson (Sociology), Natalie Lawrence (Psychology), and Julie Wallace-Carr (UREC)

Resource Needs

Faculty: Jana Walters (Kinesiology), David Daniel (Psychology), Kim DuVall (Psychology), Debra Sutton (Health Sciences), and Craig Abrahamson (Psychology)

After reviewing the assessment data, annual reports, faculty syllabi, faculty and student survey results and having faculty discussions, Cluster Five recognized internal and external strengths and areas for improvement, as well as resource needs.

One of the significant strengths speaks to the developmental relationship Cluster Five has to the university mission; human development, health and adjustment, and sociocultural processes are central to Cluster Five courses. Effective instruction and programs in these key areas are essential for "educating enlightened citizens." In this context, courses and programs address key university initiatives such as environmental stewardship, international programs, and diversity in significant ways.

An area of improvement addresses an external need of the faculty. While faculty have become skilled and talented in teaching large classes, an area that they would like to collaboratively address across campus is the technology, equipment, and layout of the larger classrooms.

The recommendations are intended to be a focus for the next five year period – 2010-2015.



Join the Dance of Art and Science

Nearly 8,000 undergraduates from the classes of 2014 and 2013 read articles from the DNA Age as part of their Freshmen Orientations. Please encourage them to continue those conversations by attending one or more in a year-long series of integrated arts and sciences events focusing on the study of the genome. Of particular interest are the performances of *Ferocious Beauty: Genome*, coming to the Forbes Center, and a lecture by Dr. Francis Collins, Director of National Institutes of Health and formerly Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute. For a complete calendar of events, visit: www.jmu.edu/universitystudies/danceofAS.shtml.

Snapshot of the 2010 incoming students

- 23 of our freshmen students were high school valedictorians.
- Over 60% of freshmen were in the top 20% of their high school class and 72% were in the top 25%.
- Over 150 of this year's freshmen brought AP credit in each of the following subjects: *GWTRC 103*, *GHIST 225*, *GPOSC 225*, *GPSYC 101* and *MATH 235*.
- Top Dual Enrollment credit subject areas are: *GWTRC 103*, *GHIST 225* and *GPOSC 225*.
- Top five major choices of freshmen students (in order): Undeclared, Biology, Nursing, Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies, and Psychology.
- New transfer students number 712 (summer and fall combined). 68% of transfer students come to JMU from two-year institutions, and 32% from four-year institutions.

GEC Highlights from 2009-2010

- The GEC approved the new C&I approval process.
- The GEC approved the nomination of a GEC representative to serve as a voting member of the C&I online process.
- Cluster 5 eliminated *GEIC 101* and *102* course offerings.
- Cluster 1 added *GPHIL 150* – Ethical Reasoning to the critical thinking area.
- Cluster 2 added two new courses, *GENG 221* and *GENG 222*:

GENG 221 Literature/Culture/Ideas: This course will take a thematic approach to literature by examining multiple literary texts that engage with a common course theme concerned with the human experience. Themes address cultural, political, social, religious, or philosophical aspect ideas through literature. Specific topics will vary.

GENG 222 Genre(s): An examination of representative works in a literary genre, in a set of related literary subgenres, or in both a literary genre and one or more closely connected genres in other humanities disciplines.

Nominate Your Exceptional Student Work for the General Education Student Conference

Have you seen any exceptional work presented in your General Education courses? If so, please nominate your students for the General Education Student Conference. The conference is an excellent venue to showcase the work of the students in your GenEd courses! Nominate a student by using the form located at <http://www.jmu.edu/gened/studentconference.shtml>. All formats, including poster sessions, group panels, individual papers, etc. are applicable. Please nominate any deserving student to participate in this exciting and academically rewarding event. The conference next year is on Friday, September 30th, followed by an elegant buffet for the nominees, their families and nominators. Nomination deadlines are December 16 for the fall semester and May 1st for the spring semester.



Sixth Annual General Education Student Conference

The sixth General Education Student Conference was an outstanding success. On Friday, October 1, 2010, forty-one students presented at the conference, having been nominated by their professors for their creative, outstanding and distinguished work in general education courses. Panel topics included: Examining Hollywood GCOM-style; Human Rights and Marginalized Populations; Exploring Identities on the College Campus; Brotherly Love and Dreams Deferred; Culture Jamming; Global Warming and the Environment; Intercultural Communication Dynamics; Banning Smoking on Campus; and Embracing Complexities. More than 200 guests attended the banquet for conference participants, their families, peers, nominators, and faculty. Please join us in congratulating the following student participants:

Alysa Autry	Brittany Friedman	Wenqing Li	Tyler Robinette
Myles Bell	Aryn Garfield	Matthew Lobb	Heather Rocholl
Dwight Brown	Hannah Gentry	Carolyn MacLeod	Shauna Ryan
Maria Cambone	Jordan Gilmore	Taylor McCarty	Emily Smith-George
Nicholas Christy	Britt Graham	Katie Nikitakis	Priscila Tchorbadjian
Erin Dalrymple	Liz Hammer	Dorothy Nugent	Maria Todd
Erin Daniels	Amanda Hoffman	Katherine O'Connell	Yujing Wang
Brandon Duncan	Kellan Howell	Kathryn Ogborn	Rachel Wright
Scott Dyer	John Ironmonger	Ryan Olson	
Mary Kait Fisher	Meghann Joyce	Courtney Peck	
Agnieszka Frank	Jessy Leifer	Margaret Perkinson	

A Special "Thank You"

General Education would like to thank the faculty who nominated a student for the 2010 General Education Student Conference. Thank you for allowing students the opportunity to share their exceptional work with their peers, faculty, and their families:

Geary Albright	Eleanor Henderson	Michael Klein	Michael Moghtader
Daisy Breneman	Thaddeus Herron	Louise Loe	John Ott
Annick Dupal	Elizabeth Johnson	James McGinnis	

We would also like to thank faculty members who volunteered to serve as moderators for the conference panel sessions:

Mary Kay Adams	Raymond "Skip" Hyser	James McGinnis
Daisy Breneman	Elizabeth Johnson	Michael Moghtader
Annick Dupal	Michael Klein	Michelle Moreau

And a special thanks to the student workers in the Communication Resource Center for their help with stamping programs and facilitating guests to the busses:

Alex Davenport	Tessa DuBois	Michelle Koob	Sarah Nickerson
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Preparation for QEP has begun

This fall marks the first steps in a plan that will soon affect every person on JMU's campus.

The project, called the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), is in its preliminary stages. New to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation requirements, the QEP is mandatory for JMU to receive reaffirmation of accreditation (for more information, see the article "SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Underway"). The QEP is intended to be a course of action that addresses a particular educational issue pertinent to JMU. The plan's purpose is to enhance JMU's effectiveness by increasing student learning in a way that is specific to the university. It is also an opportunity to focus creatively on achieving our mission. After a two-year planning phase, the QEP will be implemented over a course of five years.

Since the requirement is new, several universities are currently implementing their first QEPs. Virginia Tech created "Pathways to Success," which serves to improve learning skills for first-year students, while Trinity University in Texas is focusing on developing information literacy in students with their plan, "Expanding Horizons: Using Information in the 21st Century." Other common topics include critical thinking, writing across the disciplines, active learning, and civic responsibility.

SACS requires that the entire university be part of the topic selection process. JMU's QEP Planning Committee will solicit proposals later this semester and early in the spring. Any student or faculty member may submit a proposal. The committee will review the responses, select those most promising, and ask for more

detailed submissions of those short-listed proposals.

One of the primary conditions of the QEP is widespread participation. Every constituent group on campus should know and understand the plan. SACS would even like for alumni and members of the Board of Visitors to be familiar with it as well.

Though the topic has not yet been chosen, the university is fully committed to providing adequate funding to implement and sustain the program.

The written QEP is due in December 2012. SACS will then review the report and, during the on-site visit in the spring of 2013, will evaluate the appropriateness of the QEP to JMU's campus community. Once the plan is approved, implementation will officially begin in the fall of 2013. For more information, contact Lee Sternberger (sternblg) or visit www.jmu.edu/sacs/qep.

Familiar Faces join General Education

General Education is pleased to welcome **Dr. Steve Baedke** as



the Interim Cluster Three Coordinator. Steve has graciously agreed to head Cluster 3 for the year while a search is conducted for a permanent coordinator.

Clarissa Shoecraft



joined us in January as an administrative assistant and fiscal officer for University Studies. Clarissa also has the pleasure of being the evening Children's Program Coordinator for Skyline Literacy at PeakView Elementary School.

General Education Gift Card

Please consider making a gift to the General Education Program at JMU. Your gift enhances academics, provides support for scholarships, and helps attract and retain top-quality faculty members and students.

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SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation underway

As of summer 2010, JMU's SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) Reaffirmation of Accreditation has begun.

SACS oversees the accreditation of approximately 80 degree-granting higher education schools each year including JMU. Reaccreditation occurs every ten years and serves to ensure that institutions are maintaining strict requirements. These requirements vary widely, from collecting evidence that all faculty members are qualified to teach their respective classes to ensuring that students' rights are openly accessible. Together, these requirements certify the school's ability to fulfill the needs of students while also further developing the institution's quality.

Though the accreditation process is actually considered voluntary, it is crucial for JMU. Through accreditation, faculty members are permitted to compete

for federally funded research grants, students can receive federally subsidized financial aid and JMU course work is recognized by other institutions.

JMU's next compliance certification report is due in September 2012. Additionally, an on-site reaffirmation committee will visit JMU in the spring of 2013 to evaluate any issues they would like to have clarified.

To prepare, the JMU SACS Steering Committee will spend the next two years compiling the two separate documents required for reaffirmation. First, the Compliance Certification demonstrates how JMU is in compliance with a given set of standards created by SACS and Federal Requirements mandated by the government. A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is also required to improve student learning within the university (see article titled "Preparation for QEP



has begun" on Page 5 for details on the QEP).

Herb Amato (University Studies) and Ann Myers (Social Work) are serving as Co-Chairs for the SACS Steering Committee.

For other committee members or more information about SACS and the Reaffirmation of Accreditation, visit our Web site at www.jmu.edu/sacs.