

TO: Members of the University-Wide Review of Undergraduate Education Committee

FROM: Barbara R. Snyder
Executive Vice President and Provost

RE: Committee charge

DATE: December 7, 2004

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the University-Wide Review of Undergraduate Education Committee. Through your service on this committee, you have the opportunity to shape the undergraduate curriculum for years to come. The re-shaping of undergraduate education is vital to our efforts to meet the needs of the students we are admitting today and to our continuing efforts to recruit outstanding undergraduate students.

Although curricula change over time, the guiding questions remain essentially the same. What body of knowledge should all of our undergraduate students be expected to master before graduation? How can Ohio State best prepare undergraduate students in all of our colleges for a lifetime of learning and citizenship?

I have discussed with several groups the reasons for the timing of this review. The General Education Curriculum was developed in 1988 and has not changed significantly since then. Our student body has changed dramatically; for the tenth consecutive year, we admitted the best-prepared freshman class in the history of Ohio State. Ohio State is preparing for re-accreditation in 2007, and undergraduate education will be a major part of that review. In addition, the leaders of the undergraduate student government have called for a review of the GEC.

During the course of your review, I would like you to consider the following aspects of undergraduate education, guided by the overarching questions noted above:

1. the General Education Curriculum;
2. the number of credit hours required for graduation;
3. the appropriate role of freshman seminars;
4. the staffing of undergraduate courses, and faculty-student interaction; and
5. the degree to which undergraduate education reflect university priorities such as diversity, research, interdisciplinarity, and outreach.

In addition, I ask you to consider other topics that may be generated in your work on the above issues as you deem appropriate.

One follow-up action that I believe will be a necessary prerequisite to enhancing undergraduate education is increasing the size of the tenure-track faculty relative to the number of undergraduate students. I have set aside \$3 million in continuing funds that will be available beginning in FY 2006 in the Provost's Strategic Investment Account. I plan to award those funds to colleges through a competitive process to add tenure-track faculty members in alignment with your recommendations.

I will provide funding for a GAA to assist the committee. Vice Provosts Martha Garland and Randy Smith will serve as resource persons for the committee.

I would like to have your report by August 31, 2005. During fall quarter of 2005, we will circulate the report to the campus community for discussion and feedback.

I am grateful for your willingness to take on this important task, and I look forward to working with you to make this effort successful.