

2005 AAG “HEALTHY DEPARTMENTS” WORKSHOP

Freeport, Maine

JW Harrington’s notes, 25-26 June

Healthy departments: suggestions from central administrators

Rod Erickson views departments with a “QDCT” rubric; a threatened department falls short in *more than one* of these headings, and will suffer when resources are allocated¹

Quality: what are our best units? Teaching and learning outcomes; research quantity and quality

Demand: are students attracted to the unit’s programs? A combination of majors and “service” teaching; cost/SCH

Centrality: “Could this university get on without this department?” Emphasize the unique roles that geography plays in education and research. This might include participation in interdepartmental/interdisciplinary activities and programs; key courses or programs.

Trouble: Does the administration spend an inordinate amount of time on this department? (constant letters/memos to the dean or president; lawsuits; negative publicity)

View each administrative role (chair, dean, provost, president) as a *teacher* to those “above” and those “below,” and as a *researcher* to get good information about larger context and the actual contributions of the units or faculty/staff reporting to you..

Take care with any reports sent “up”: accuracy, format, tone, use of the dean’s and president’s language.

When you request something:

- Put it in the context of institutional goals
- Note how much your unit is willing to put up toward the effort

When your request is denied: Discover why, accept it, and learn from it.

AAG’s HD initiative

Vicky introduced the HD Committee: John Adams, Sarah Bednarz, Dick Marston, Alec Murphy, Marie Price, Michael Solem [I may have missed a name]: “rapid-response team to immediate requests for assistance”; organize panels and workshops; suggest department reviewers; learning about departments and meeting with institutional administrators; collecting and disseminating annual reports, self studies, etc., available on the AAG website; collecting and disseminating national statistics and trends; creating a website to provide resources and promote interaction, to be unveiled within a year.

Solem on “Professional Development Projects for Geography Departments”

- Geography Faculty Development Alliance (GFDA)
 - Workshops, follow-up panels, follow-up communication with early faculty
 - Longitudinal analysis: determinants and indicators of professional success
- Enhancing Departments and Graduate Education (EDGE)
 - NSF’s Research on Learning and Education
 - Ken Foote, Michael Solem, and Jan Monk

¹ Joe Wood reminded us that the most important sources of permanent funds for new activities are not tuition increases or state budget increases, but higher enrollments and reallocations among units.

- Factors affecting success in graduate education: special attention to women, minorities, and international students
- Make use of departmental surveys, formative assessments in programs, consultation w/ OD specialists, AAG specialty and affinity groups
- Major reporting at the 2008 HD workshop

Assessing student learning

Think about the Fink model of aligning objectives, activities, and assessment – at the level of the degree program as a whole.

Include surveys of alumni and employers!

Foster a climate of pre- and post-tests, to determine value-added.

Consider making use of the ETS Human Geography AP exam as a pre- and post-test.

We need to urge entering majors to save their work and begin to think about what they're learning.

Use the literature on “critical thinking” to unpack that phrase and make more informed inquiries of student work.

Don't forget ethics and integrity as learning outcomes of importance to society and employers; how can we assess this as a programmatic outcome??

Doctoral programs: roundtable

Bagchi-Sen (UB): 150 grad students, mostly Ph.D.

Mote (UGa): 70 students in residence, evenly MA/PhD; 30 TA lines

Murphy (Oregon): 50 grads

Napton (So.Dak.State): 40 Master's, new PhD program with a large # of new fac who will be in USGS and teach one course each

Aspinall (ASU): 40-45 Master's, 45-50 doctoral students, professional Master's in GIS, Geog Education, (Rock Art?)

Mensing (UN, Reno): submitting a PhD proposal this fall; would begin in Autumn 2007; Master's in LU Plng and Master's in Geog (about 30 active students); 10 faculty, hoping to get to 12

JWH (UW-Seattle): 250 u-grad majors, 70 grad students (over half PhD)

Marston and Harrington (KState): Targeted Excellence in GIS Infrastructure; 1 in 11 KState students taking World regional each year. 16 PhD students (began in 2000); 11 faculty now, moving to 14

McMaster (Minnesota): 80 grad students in MA/MS/PhD, 60 students in a self-sustaining GIS Master's

Barta (Indiana State): 11 Geog fac, 22 total; 20 Master's 20 PhD 20 Geology; 30 u-grads.

Hanson, moderator (Clark): 60 PhD students in residence (all funded, none pay tuition); free-standing GIS Master's, self funding, in conjunction with the International Development program.

Lawson: (UW Seattle)

Rod Erickson joined us.

Hanson introduced the question of balance between u-grad and graduate programs.

- At Clark,

- u-grads can elect to have a doctoral-student mentor; doctoral students volunteer to do this
- encourage collab research betw/ u-grads, grads, and faculty
- train TAs to mentor u-grad research projects

Course buyouts:

- At KState, you can get a 25% teaching reduction (one course buyout) in return for one month's salary to the department or two 400-person sections of the World regional course
- At ASU, the chair has allowed course reductions for extremely research active faculty (mainly funded research), and would suggest a higher teaching load for faculty not producing published/funded research.
- KState: sets a norm of 50% research, 40% teaching, 10% service; chair and colleague agree on a one-year mix ("contract"), upon which the colleague will be judged for salary adjustment; JWH noted the utility of the multi-year planning period for tenured faculty.

Distribution of graduate supervision:

- At Clark, below a particular number of doctoral students, the course load is 3/2 rather 2/2.

Hanson noted that UBC has a formalized point system for merit evaluations.

John Harrington decides merit with a three-year moving average on teaching and service, with research on a five-year moving average.

New Ph.D. program proposals need to request a commitment of TA lines or other forms of graduate support.

Napton: has negotiated MOUs betw/ key funding agencies and the university to reduce the fringe benefits paid on graduate-student employment. Erickson cautioned that this is not in the institution's best interest.

IGERTs create a two-tier structure of graduate support.

We need to share info across institutions regarding such things as

- Faculty start-up packages
- Number of TAs/faculty or grad students
- TA/RA stipends
- Chair/head compensation and training: KState and ASU have 6-8 sessions/year of topical chair training
- Mensing: 6-8 chairs voluntarily meet monthly to share methods, processes, info

Hanson asked about the actual conduct and mentoring in our Doctoral programs

- At ASU, a student's paperwork for entry/matriculation will not be signed off until there is a formal commitment by a first-year mentor.
- At UW, professionalization by requiring publication submission and/or grant proposal
- ASU field exam, will be adopted by OSU (see Oberle article)
- Minn. has a new professional-development seminar on job talks, publications, ...
- KState: before the student comes to campus, meets with three faculty meetings to plan the program; now most faculty members hand a written statement of expectations to their graduate students. [It might be useful to circulate a sample.]
- Time in program: Oregon's Graduate School requires formal petition for continued graduate status after 7 years from matriculation; Oregon requires an annual meeting between each student and her/his committee.
- KState, Washington, and Oregon meet as a faculty to assess each student's progress and quality. KState precedes this with a spreadsheet; Washington precedes this with a spreadsheet and narrative files; Washington follows this up with a quantitative ballot and

numerical ranking for the purposes of assigning TAs and departmental service support.

- Language capabilities of foreign-language-native TAs: the chair or grad director of Georgia's and Buffalo's departments must telephone each international candidate ; PSU's and MSU's graduate schools partner to interview and recruit prospective grad students in China; PSU has invited u-grad students to sit in on the spoken-English tests of international TAs; KState at the University level requires that an external evaluator come in, a month into any class taught by an international TA, to survey the students about the quality of instruction – if deemed inadequate, the TA cannot be in the classroom the next semester.

ASU (as a Univ.) will not hire without PhD in hand, period.

Richardson asked whether departments are finding an adequate pool of excellent faculty candidates, and whether our doctoral students are finding good jobs; the overall response was that the pool seems to be quite adequate except perhaps in GIS. Bagchi-Sen asked how to benchmark programs' placement of PhDs. Oregon and Clark, perhaps 30% non-academic; Washington, perhaps 50% non-academic; [it would be good to follow up these notes with a survey of the others present]

Development and outreach

Hanson: annual Atwood Speaker and banquet, inviting all alumni in MA & NY, and administrators

Erickson: PSU spends \$60M beyond state support for public outreach. While this use of essentially tuition money is being scrutinized, public outreach is being encouraged as a systematic part of what faculty do. Systems: service learning; consulting; executive training

Erickson: When public universities began systematic development activities in the 1980s, they were fairly centralized; the next wave, in the 1990s, made deans integral to the process; the next wave, in the 00's, involve faculty and chairs much more directly. All about relationships. Penn State Geography began in the late 1980s, with:

- Older and emeritus faculty, by getting them involved in the fund-raising process: they taught the folks you're likely to be asking for donations, and they're sitting on large retirement nest eggs.
- Alumni base – help the University identify and track those whom they haven't tracked.
- Newsletters – electronic and otherwise.
- Leadership giving from the chair.
- Coordinate with central development, and go on visits with folks from local (college) development.
- Build relationships with people under 55, rather than focus on them for giving.
- Stewardship!!! “Most donors give because they want to recreate themselves”: a scholarship for future students like them; pursuing study that they pursued; helping a program from which they benefited. The direct beneficiary of that fund should write a letter explaining that (s)he has benefited directly.

Hanson asked about Committees of Visitors. Erickson suggested that you know why you're doing this: using it to raise funds is difficult; doing it to get advice works better. A

fund-raising board must be composed of people with large gift capacity; you might *not* mix the two purposes.

ASU Geography has a membership group, Friends for Geography, which pays a nominal fee that pays for their semi-annual newsletter.

Ask a retired faculty member to help with the outreach to all (but especially older) alumni.

Issues of diversity

Lawson:

- Given the important issue of “pipeline,” each of us and our institutions should focus in the areas we can most effectively influence: K-12 students, K-12 teachers, communities, undergrad students, grad recruitment, grad students, faculty hiring, faculty development.
- Geog grad student enrollment (NSF data, published in a recent AAG Newsletter): 42% women, 3% Af-Am, 3% Hispanic, 0.7% Native Am.; Geog fac, based on the responses to the recent survey of departments – no Af-Am. women at full professor rank, no Native Am. Women at any rank....
- AAG’s roles? Leading by example; report of the Diversity Task Force (Joe Darden, John Frazier, Vicky Lawson, Ines Miyares, ...) to be presented at the next “Race, Ethnicity, and Place” conference; upcoming “AAG Diversity Clearinghouse” on the website, with best practices and opportunities for support of underrepresented groups in Geography.
- Department roles? “Take on issues of climate.” Open doors, willingness to listen, mentoring, identifying assumptions.
- Institutional roles?

Frazier:

- Department roles? Explicit recognition of difference and discussion of climate. Make the rules clear; establish a culture of mentoring, collaboration, praise. Develop a curriculum that speaks to multiculturalism.
- Institutional roles? Geographers should serve on institution-wide diversity efforts, committees, and mentoring systems (EOP, McNair,...)
- Across the AAG? Network to identify people and possibilities.

Wood: Recognize the local institutional situation and advantage, based on local/regional ethnic makeup, the desire of many students and faculty to return to their home regions.

Konadu-Agyemang: It would be helpful for such a discussion to be led by a more diverse panel, and/or to engage disciplinary leaders from diverse backgrounds. Noted the number of Africans among the geography professoriate; where are the African Americans?

Bagchi-Sen: We should watch the climate in specialty groups, perhaps making SG leaders more sensitive to inclusion. Let’s be aware that not all women use feminist approaches

Solem: current AAG projects:

- “the Wilson Report” urges more integration
- AAG FIPSE project to team with Howard U. re teaching materials for K-12 instruction relevant to multicultural education
- EDGE will be investigating issues of climate in graduate education

JW Harrington: Curriculum matters

Richardson:

- AAG leadership has cultivated linkages with Howard U.: Race, Ethnicity, and Place conference; K-12 curricular development; helped arrange for a large contribution of GIS software.
- U.S. Employment & Training Act includes \$25M for community colleges which connect with external entities (AAG) in areas with high job demand (geostechnical fields).

Ziehr: plea to deans to include these change efforts in the reward structure for departments, chairs, and faculty members.

Building Programs and Departments

Nancy Wilkinson, SFSU: Growth through –

- working hard to develop a shared vision (for her department: good teaching, more research, diversity, aim toward a particular curriculum foci in the future),
- being upbeat and extremely excited with deans,
- using the administrators' own language,
- honest assessment of strengths;
- enlightened opportunism;
- good relationships with administrators (she made an appointment with the new provost, explaining the exciting possibilities for the department (in substantive terms he could understand); later, that provost overturned a negative decision by the dean;
- get the positions because of university initiatives, but then write the job ad based on the specific and self-generated vision and needs.

Alec asked, "What info or numbers did the administrators want?"

- Quality criteria for graduate students
- Raising the bar for P&T
- Master's degree production / faculty FTE

John Frazier:

- To build enrollments, create topical courses that give geographic approaches relating to (a) diversity and (b) university themes;
- Relate salary adjustment to clearly articulated department goals and needs
- Mentoring and supporting junior faculty
- Serving on campus-wide or university committees, to build networks.
- Find and promote your niches on campus

Joe Wood: to the concept "enlightened opportunism" add "strategic magnanimity"

Joint hires can help grow the program – but design these carefully.

Ideas to try out

Weekly/ monthly gatherings to celebrate successes: at colloquium?

Invite president or provost to the department, with some students; use those opportunities to explain what the department is working on, and to ask contextual questions

Leadership & leadership development

Communicate up and down: asking everyone on all sides how you can be supportive, and articulating your vision “above” and “below”

Understand good models of governance, and apply them

Scott Mensing (Nevada-Reno) asked how early/mid-career faculty members, made into chairs earlier than optimal, should negotiate the competing demands of administration, teaching, and research. He noted that his dean has told him “you must maintain your research profile.” There were no real answers to that question.

Things JW might do

Let Kavita know of my interest in working with next year’s workshop.

Explicit study of governance models

Readings:

Bensimon, E.M., K.Ward, K.Sanders. 2000. *Department Chair’s Role in Developing New Faculty Into Teachers and Scholars*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Guinier, Lani. *The Canary in the Mine*.

Leaming, D.R. . *Academic Leadership: A Practical Guide to Chairing the Department*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Midaugh, M. *The Delaware Study* (assessing the productivity at department levels) Jossey-Bass.

Wergin, Jon F. 2003. *Departments That Work*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

More writing on universities (of different types) as workforce development institutions, as well as other types of ec dev’t activity/ linkages

Follow up with George Engelmann, chair of Geog & Geol at Nebraska-Omaha, re the way his College of Arts & Sciences names and works with chairs: dean names chair for indefinite period, giving written and meeting based assessment annually and tri-annually (the tri-annual review is based on dean’s interview with faculty in the unit)

Get info to Sharmistha regarding UW’s LCV project (links to the *UWeek* articles)

Think about a UB case study?

JW’s suggestions for future workshops

After the model of the GFDA, suggest and use research-based literature for key issues, so that they don’t devolve into “war stories” (e.g., dealing with difficult colleagues).

Emphasize the range of group processes; some sessions should be more discussion and less presentation, some vice versa.

If there’s not enough demand for annual workshops, alternate biannual general workshops with biannual focused workshops (e.g., diversity, grad programs, ...)