

Agenda
Academic Council Meeting
December 16, 2009
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Multipurpose Room, Grand Mesa Hall

1. Updates:
 - a. January Term classes – cancellations
 - b. Advising and registration needs for early January
– credit hour update
 - c. Transfer Guides
 - d. Student Showcase – April 28
2. 2009 Legislation on Concurrent Enrollments (Tim Foster)
3. Mav3 Graduation Plans (Tim Foster)
4. Results from Student Satisfaction Inventory (Sonia)
5. Discussion on “Are We Doing Enough to Prepare Students for the 21st Century?” (led by Kurt Haas - see information below)

Upcoming Activities/Due Dates:

January 13, 2010 – next Department head meeting (Note: change in date)

January 14, 2010 – department head professional development workshop; January 15, 2010 – faculty professional development workshop – Patricia Phelps

Are We Doing Enough to Prepare Students for the 21st Century?

Here are some sample nuggets from research on the present and future of the labor force:

--From May 25, 2009 TIME: 85% of new jobs created between 1998 and 2006 were “complex ‘knowledge work’ like problem-solving and concocting corporate strategy.”

--According to the Department of Labor, the average person born between 1952 and 1964 held 10.8 jobs between ages 18 and 42.

--Depending on how one classifies a career change, the Department of Labor also estimates the average person will change careers 3-5 times in their lifetime.

--According to the bipartisan (and multi-disciplinary) Commission on the Skills of the American workforce, we now live in a world where technology has transformed the nature of work: “A world in which routine work is largely done by machines is world in which mathematical reasoning will be no less important than math facts, in which line workers who cannot contribute to the design of the products they are fabricating may be as obsolete as the last model of that product, in which auto mechanics will have to figure out what to do when the many computers in the care they are working on do not function as they were designed to function, in which software engineers who are also musicians and artists will have an edge over those who are not as the entertainment industry evolves, in which it will pay architects to know something about nanotechnology, and small businesspeople who build custom yachts and fishing boats will be able to survive only if they quickly learn a lot about the scientific foundations of carbon fiber composites.”

While there is no end to the controversy about what sorts of government policies would best adapt to new work force needs (the Commission’s report itself was very controversial in terms of its suggested remedies) and we have to acknowledge that the world often alters in ways that defy prediction, there is broad consensus that our graduates will need to be more flexible than ever before in almost every way. For many of our students, work life will be marked by constant flux in terms of both employee-employer relationships and their relationships to fields of knowledge.

So, the questions for group discussion revolve around:

- 1) How do we currently prepare students to think across disciplinary lines?
- 2) What are some ways we could change our curricula within disciplines to help students move more smoothly between different ways of problem-solving and understanding?
- 3) What are some ways we could act at a college-wide level to get ahead of the curve in terms of preparing students for more fluid work lives than Americans have had before?