

Arts and Sciences RAP - FLC 2017/2019

Nicole Jobin – Sewall RAP

In the Spring of 2017, with the generous support of Associate Dean Kyle McJunkin and ASSETT, Elizabeth Anderman (Farrand RAP Associate Director), Nicole Jobin (Sewall RAP Associate Director) and Amanda McAndrews (ASSETT ATC) as co-facilitators formed the RAP-FLC. The 2017-2018 RAP-FLC consists of members from all of the Arts and Sciences RAPs.

Elizabeth Anderman - Farrand, Steve Dike - Honors, Jessica Gorski - Health Professions, Nicole Jobin - Sewall, Nathan Pieplow - Global Studies, Janet Robinson - Libby, Galina Siergiejczyk - Global Studies, and Doug Snyder - Baker

These members meet four times in the fall semester and five times in the spring in order to address the following goals.

RAP-FLC Program Goals for AY 2017/2018

- Building community and connections among faculty from all Arts and Sciences RAPs
- Aligning individual RAP learning goals with the 2016 ARPAC learning goals
- Developing appropriate assessment measures to determine if we are meeting these goals
- Investigating evidence-based teaching and learning practices

By engaging in these activities, the current sense of rigor and teaching excellence in the RAPs has been strengthened, has become more cohesive, and will be collectively communicated and continuously cultivated in this community.

Accomplishments

Over the course of the year, we worked together to define the following goals that we propose should be held in common by all Arts and Sciences RAPs. We also suggested a range of possible metrics that we could use to assess our achievement of these goals, and proposed to the RAP directors that the FLC be continued for another year in order to complete the work on creating these assessments.

RAP Wide Proposed Goals

- ***RAPs will foster, through individual attention, a sense of intellectual purpose that equips students to be active participants in the life of a major research university.***

Collectively, RAPs will:

- Facilitate high school to college transition
- Enable students to take initiative in their academic endeavors
- Develop active learners who participate confidently in class activities
- Promote interdisciplinary thinking

- ***RAPs will enhance foundational academic skills through small classes, collaborative and applied learning opportunities uniquely available in residential learning communities.***

Faculty will encourage:

- Creative thinking - Students understand the importance of original thought and interpretation. They will be able to develop and communicate their own informed analyses.
- Critical Thinking - Students evaluate both quantitative and qualitative data, demonstrate inductive and deductive reasoning and demonstrate the ability to make an argument from evidence.
- Information literacy - Students can navigate complex information landscapes.
- Communication skills - Students can present research, arguments in writing and oral presentations.

- ***RAPs will create inclusive communities and a sense of belonging by building early connections between students and faculty, staff, and peers through coordinated co-curricular and extracurricular activities.***

Students will feel:

- Sense of inclusion by being integrated into the campus community, including in their RAP community
- Sense of global citizenship and cross cultural interconnectedness
- Encouraged to engage in deep experiential learning in order to develop strong leadership
- Empowered to overcome feelings of loneliness, isolation and anxiety

Proposed Potential Metrics

Student exit survey questions: Our RAPs already use year-end surveys of students. We examined our surveys together in order to find the questions we have in common. We recognize that each RAP might wish to add additional questions, but we will propose that all A&S RAPs include ten common questions. The draft of these questions will be done after our last meeting this month.

Faculty year-end reporting: We would like to recommend that faculty be asked to do a year-end report or questionnaire. We are proposing to create a menu of possible items that

faculty could choose to report on. This could include more open-ended or qualitative measures as well as quantitative ones. The idea behind this reporting is both to assess how well we are reaching the stated goals above, and also to give faculty additional “multiple measures of teaching” that can be included for FRPA, merit pay reviews, and reappointment notebooks. We hope to have samples of ways this could be done as examples for individual RAPs to consider after our last meeting this month.

Making use of information already collected by the University: We would like to have a better sense of what data is already being collected, or could be collected, at the university level about our students. What information, in addition to retention rates, GPA, etc. is available to us and do we have the ability to gather any additional data once our students leave the RAP? We know this is an area the directors have already been working on and we believe that this information should be more widely discussed with RAP faculty.

What Worked and What Didn't

We were able to accomplish a lot by creating the common goals and proposed use of metrics detailed in the previous section. Our meeting times were quite productive in the small group and we worked well together while also deepening our understanding of how each RAP is unique yet tied to a larger common purpose.

While this experience was extremely positive, there are also two areas which were somewhat challenging. The first is in getting buy-in from the various RAP faculties we come from. At several points during the semester we attempted to get feedback and conversation going about our work back in our home RAPs. This was more successful for some of our participants than others, and partially depended on individual RAP culture and the level of support of individual directors. Those of us participating were fired up about our project, but in a busy semester it was often difficult to get uniform participation from our individual faculties and directors when we asked for input. There is also some fatigue as RAP faculty have been active in the Foundations of Excellence and Academic Futures discussions which may have also affected participation levels.

The second challenge was that we had goals that were larger than what could be completed in a single year. Given this fact, I, along with Amanda McAndrew and Elizabeth Anderman as co-facilitators, reported to the A&S RAP Directors in April that we hope to continue the RAP-FLC for another one or two semesters in order for the work to be more complete. The following is the conclusion of our report followed by a to-do list generated by the group and its facilitators about what still needs to be done.

Final thoughts:

The RAP-FLC goal of building community and connections among faculty from all Arts and Sciences RAPs has certainly been met this year. We learned much more about what we have in

common across our RAPs institutionally and instructionally. Continued conversation about our pedagogical and programmatic goals is a must as the RAPs go forward.

We also discovered that our individual RAPs and RAP instructors already do many things that help to meet the proposed ARPAC goals. In the process of revising and restating these goals in our own words we have taken the opportunity to explore the how different foci of our programs still provide us with much common ground.

We would like to recommend that the work of the FLC should be continued as we assay new methods of assessment that get at both quantitative and qualitative measures of what the RAPs provide. We believe that we have created a foundation, but that individual RAPs need to take the work we have done further to develop measures that make sense specifically for each program. These measures should communicate to fellow faculty, students, and the University at large the goals and achievements of the RAPs. Continuing communication between RAP faculty will provide cohesion between RAPs as this measurement goes forward as well as to keep best practices at the forefront and providing us with opportunities to continue learning from one another.

RAP Wide FLC suggestions for future actions:

Continuing the FLC: Next year have another FLC that focuses on faculty year-end reporting. Goals for the group would be to develop common questions that RAP faculty would report on. These questions would help evaluate what is happening in the RAPs by giving a sense of what, specifically, faculty are doing. The report would also help RAP faculty demonstrate excellence in their teaching. This group might also help create a beginning-of-the-year survey so that we could see if we are changing anything over the course of the year. (Currently we are researching possible funding opportunities to help make this happen - maybe with support from the RAPs themselves.)

RAP year end survey questions: We are close on this but haven't solidified the list. Nikki Jobin and Elizabeth Anderman are willing to put together a draft for the RAP directors to review. RAP Directors would review the list and commit to using it. Once approved by the RAP directors we'd like to explore ways of combining with the housing survey so that all of us can get the results we'd like.

Post doc position: The group proposes that the RAP directors hire a post-doctoral position to help create and implement RAP surveys. The candidate would also be responsible for working with University data sources to tease out the most relevant information for RAPs. Possible funding for this needs to be explored. (Meeting set up between Nikki Jobin, Elizabeth Anderman, Mike Breed and Noah Finkelstein on TQF and ways to pursue this.)

Individual RAP goals: We'd like to recommend that each RAP create their own specific goals that align with the RAP-wide goals. (Some RAPs have done this recently but others need to articulate a clear vision and set of goals.)

Appendix – Technology, Techniques, etc.

Web Express

<https://www.colorado.edu/webcentral/web-express-features>

We used this platform to create a web site to make our progress available to our RAP communities. Web express does require some training through OIT.

Our web site, which includes materials pertinent to the FLC, can be found at the following:

<https://www.colorado.edu/rapflc/>

G-Suite including Google Docs, Google Drive, Google Slides, and Google Sheets

<https://oit.colorado.edu/services/messaging-collaboration/gsuite>

In order to share research and useful academic papers, collaborate on our draft goals for the A&S RAPs, share documentation from within our RAPs, and make our meeting slides available to the group, we took advantage of CUs G-Suite services. One of the most useful applications of this technology included hooking up one of our computers to the projection screen in our meeting room, in order for the group members to be able to edit documents as a group and see changes in real time.

Doodle-Poll

<https://doodle.com>

An easy way to set meeting schedules for a group of busy people.

Qualtrics

<https://oit.colorado.edu/services/business-services/qualtrics/faq>

Many of our individual RAPs use Qualtrics to administer end-of-year surveys. We also discussed creation of a new year-end-survey for RAP faculty that could be administered through Qualtrics.