Interdisciplinary Programs at Loyola University New Orleans

Loyola University New Orleans is committed to expanding the opportunity for students to engage in interdisciplinary learning as both high-impact pedagogy and as an expression of our Jesuit identity. The development of Loyola University’s 13 interdisciplinary minors has taken place over the years, as faculty from a variety of departments and students from a variety of majors took the time and effort to create unique academic communities in an effort to expand their study of specific interests and subject areas. In an effort to more robustly support these initiatives across the university, Loyola has convened an ad hoc committee of Interdisciplinary Program Directors. The intention of this committee is to explore areas of mutual programmatic support that include, among other things, increased funding for activities and programming, increased campus visibility, course and faculty development, improve assessment infrastructure.

To date, this committee’s accomplishments have included:

- Development of common IDP Brochures
- Allocation of budget lines for all programs
- Provision of direct access to budget information on FRS
- Provision of targeted faculty/director development opportunities such as the "measure what you treasure" assessment workshop last fall
- Open access to LORA for all IDP Directors allowing them to communicate with their respective advisees,
- Agreement on template for IDP Web site
- Participation in common table/display for IDP programs at the Presidents Open House
- Provision of opportunities to meet with directors/heads of key offices across campus to discuss relevant issues of mutual concern, e.g., Admissions Office, Web Team, Office of Student Records, and Student Affairs.

One major commitment for the coming 2011-2012 Academic Year – specifically for the Fall 2011 semester - is to support each interdisciplinary minor in the development of individual and unique strategic plans. While many of Loyola’s interdisciplinary minors already possess such plans, it is imperative that the university assist those programs that have yet to articulate their strategic and long term goals. Such planning will identify for each minor, as well as the Office of Academic Affairs, areas of specific strengths and future programmatic needs.

AY 2011-2012 Upcoming initiatives:

- Plan a common IDP Open House
- Develop common recruitment plan
- Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and develop an overall strategic plan with detailed action plans

The committee has a Blackboard site with meeting minutes and other important materials posted.