Dr. Norwood introduced himself and commented that the General Education Task Force has been charged with reviewing the current general education policies and practices and proposing what general education should be at OSU. The task force is starting out with a blank slate and will begin deliberately slow to reinforce a broad overview and attention to detail and for the strongest outcome. The purpose of this forum is to listen to individuals have to say and allow them to express their strengths, weaknesses, and desires in regards to general education at Oklahoma State University.

The task force is discussing the following topics:
1. What are the goals of General Education?
2. How should those goals be pursued?
3. How should general education courses be taught?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current general education curriculum?
5. Are there any innovative general education activities (besides traditional course offerings) that OSU should consider?

Dr. Norwood asked the audience for their view of general education at OSU. Dr. Norwood encouraged communications but noted that if members of the audience were uncomfortable with speaking out in a group setting to please contact him in person or post comments to the D2L site. The task force needs OSU’s input.

Dr. Damron welcomed the attendees and explained that this is a process and that it will take dedication, detail and time to complete. There is confusion of the desired outcomes and the task force/university needs to rethink general education and what does OSU what the image to be.

Audience Commentary:
Instead of requiring a “humanities” classes switch the focus to global issues, sustainability, community issues. General education allows students to look at other disciplines. It was noted that an agricultural component should be added to general education and the response it that it should be incorporated in an existing designation. Adding a designation that is more discipline specific wouldn’t work with the current general education system. OSU should be looking at methods to connect general education and the student’s area of discipline to create a relationship with general education and a seamless way to satisfy the general education requirements. General Education should cross and connect with departments and colleges throughout the disciplines. General Education credit should not be placed on courses just to boost enrollment rather the general education requirement should serve the student. More degrees are getting more prescriptive and have little or no opportunity for students to enroll in electives. Senior capstone courses double as problem solving and analytical thinking. There is a need for a better understanding of what goes on in general education courses. Instructors should have a different approach to teaching general education. There was a suggestion to look at general education in relation to transfer students. It was asked who should teach general education courses and the response was junior faculty rather than young faculty members. It was noted that there should be a teaching model to train faculty. Faculty should be able to teach general education course with enthusiasm and in an effective way that it captures the student’s interest and understanding of their responsibilities as citizens.

Conclusion:
What is going to become of these discussions? The task force will meet after the forums to disseminate the information and determine the next steps. Nothing will be passed to the Provost without input from the University community. There is a concern throughout the group about the lack of input from the student body and it was noted that it will be a process and that there are numerous resource to tap into including the “Journal of Education”. The task force is also examining the processes of other universities in regards to general education.