

TIGER TIPS
RESOURCES FOR AUBURN RESEARCHERS

**2014-2015: A time of reflection, assessment and change for the
COMPASS Curriculum**

If a compass doesn't point north is it broken? Unlike other compasses, Jack Sparrow's compass in the Pirates of the Caribbean didn't point north, but it had supernatural qualities. The compass could not be used to navigate in a conventional sense, but it did direct the owner to whatever he or she wanted most at the moment. (http://pirates.wikia.com/wiki/Jack_Sparrow's_compass)

The COMPASS development team is using the time from July 2014 to July 2015 to assess past successes and challenges of the COMPASS curriculum, and develop recommendations for improvements in teaching . One of the most important and fundamental choices the team has to make is deciding whether the curriculum is one that is guided by a map or by a compass.

Using a map requires strict adherence to a chosen course, with no deviations allowed. It assumes someone (i.e. the instructor) already knows the best path. It is about discipline, control and compliance. The problem is it creates a dependency mentality because in this scenario it is believed the leader has all of the answers.

Alternatively, encouraging instructors to use a Jack Sparrow compass to guide participants through a process of discovery assumes participants in the curriculum will learn as they go and get stronger as they gain experiences, collect insights and make decisions along the way. It assumes there is more than one right path, and no one person is smart enough to know which one is best. It is about personal freedom and collective accountability. It serves to create an independence mentality because discovery is about asking the right questions. It is the granting of choice that allows people to assume personal accountability, carve a unique path, fulfill their true potential and pursue opportunities. This is the philosophy that will guide both the team as they assess the past and plan for the future and the curriculum instructors as they reflect upon how they will weave experiential learning and participant involvement into their classroom experience. (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/careers/careers-leadership/do-you-lead-using-a-map-or-a-compass/article14894119/>)

The emphasis of the review process will be on forward planning, informed by an analysis of recent data trends, ending with an identification of the necessary steps to maintain excellence and

to correct deficiencies. As part of the review process the team will address issues in the course of the review:

- Program quality and past student success will be evaluated using course surveys from 2012-2014.
- The team will explore ways to enhance participant involvement and learning in the classroom.
- Based on instructor and participant input, the team will assess the need to add additional classes and/ or additional class time for certain topics.
- The instructor corps will be analyzed to ensure teaching continues to be high quality.
- Faculty input on the COMPASS program will be sought.
- The benefits of adding classes on skill development for human interactions will be assessed.
- The need to develop additional advanced classes on topics such as budget development, direct/indirect costs, and best management practices will be assessed.

It portends to be a busy year for the development team. As we navigate, at times, uncharted waters, we will not be following the north arrow but rather will be relying on our compass to guide us in the direction we need to go.