

**General Education Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Friday, 6 October 2006
3:00 pm**

Present:

Joey Benoit, Donna Brown, Lisa Burger, Bruce Dearden, Jay Fisher, Art Jones, Pamela Kalbfleisch, Anne Kelsh, Evguenii Kozliak, Ray Lagasse, Helen Melland, Martha Potvin, Sally Pyle, Keaton Sondreal, Tom Steen, Daphne Stevens, Anne Walker

Announcements:

- The next meeting on October 20 will be a “mini-retreat” from 2:00 – 7:00 pm. Decisions will be made on the six, now seven, proposals. A subcommittee will be formed to draft in written form, as a package, the agreed upon proposals.
- Anne Kelsch and Tom Steen met with the Provost. Ethics and wellness issues were raised. Dr. Weisenstein wants to see more than ethics as part of the philosophy. He agreed to write a proposal, our now 7th proposal.
 - Joey Benoit announced that a survey is to come out soon to faculty and students regarding ethics and academic integrity.

Freshman Experience Proposal

Donna Brown reported beginning with a general overview of the revised proposal.

- One credit Freshman Seminar course required of all students within the first two semesters at UND. All Freshmen would have this in common.
- There could be a theme to hold it together. This could be common for all Freshman Seminar courses, or there could be choices with instructors.
- The emphasis would be on discussion, reading, speaking and critical thinking skills.

Discussion:

- Why a 1 credit course? Why Pass/Fail? Would this be taken seriously?
- A 1 credit course for incoming Freshmen is not an issue for them, as it is for Seniors.
- Pass/Fail seems to be appropriate. P/F makes it less intimidating for new students.
- The course must be meaningful, and not a how to study or how to enter the university course.
- The course must offer support for incoming Freshmen with good academic content.
- Assessment would be based on clear academic criteria.
- This seems to be an expansion of Arts & Sciences (humanities) and not a hard science focus.
- Could there be themes based on particular departments?
- Could this be a capstone project to have Seniors teach?
- Could a common them be incorporated within the Freshman Seminar and Senior Capstone? (Vertical integration; a “learning community” could result from this.)
- Could guest speakers be included on a colloquium model?
- Would doctoral students be good candidates to teach?

Recommendation to the subcommittee:

- Firm up the proposal based on discussion.

Senior Capstone Proposal

Sally Pyle and Anne Kelsch reported. They presented Option B which was put together as a result of previous discussion and input from the Taskforce.

- Option B would allow departments to own a Senior Capstone course (major specific), or a generalized cross-disciplinary capstone.
- Required completion of 100 credits and within 25 credits of graduation.
- Approval regarding prerequisites, major and/or minor specific, would lie within the department.

Discussion:

- Would the validation and revalidation process be enough that the course would ensure that the course is within the general education mission?
- Would the course bring together all or some of the gen. ed. goals? It may be difficult for some courses to meet the social-cultural diversity goal.
- Would flexibility in credit, 2-4 credits, all for greater flexibility? And could it then more easily be tied in with the Freshman Seminar?
- Themes for campus discussion (for a particular year) could be a vertically unifying element.

A straw poll was taken asking whether we favor Option A (presented at earlier meeting) or Option B. Results were not tabulated at the meeting.

Quantitative Reasoning Proposal

Bruce Dearden reported by presenting the Mathematical Association of America's report, Quantitative Reasoning for College Graduates: A Complement to the Standards.

The summary conclusions were reviewed. The goals were highlighted indicating that QR is reflective of using math skills for deeper reasoning and in more sophisticated ways.

Question presented to the Taskforce was, should Quantitative Reasoning be a Gen. Ed. goal? How does it fit? As a stand alone goal? A part of Critical Thinking? Should Critical Thinking be renamed Critical Reasoning and more clearly incorporate QR into that?

Discussion:

- At the retreat in August, there seemed to be an objection to Math 103 as a pre-requisite to a QR goal.
- Do we establish a pre-requisite, e.g. QR skill set and problem solving at a particular level, identified by a particular ACT score or transfer (entry level) course, or math placement test?

The members of the taskforce are requested to send ideas to Bruce.

The same for all proposals, send ideas to the main contact person for each proposal.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Lagasse