

**Gen Ed Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 23, 2007 @ 3pm**

Members Present:

Joseph Benoit, Donna Brown, Lisa Burger, Matthew Cavalli, Bruce Dearden, Art Jones, Anne Kelsch, Ray Lagasse, Martha Potvin, Sally Pyle, Lori Robison, Isaac Schlosser, Keaton Sondreal, Tom Steen, Daphne Stevens, Wilbur Stolt, and Ryan Zerr.

Announcements:

- Ryan Zerr – incoming chair of the GERC is joining the Task Force.
- Today's discussion topics: distribution requirements and math pre-requisites.

Brief report from the work groups:

- Proposal Writing Team – Work in progress.
- Department Liaison Group – Work in progress.
- Program R&I Group – Need Gen Ed Task Force to finish before they can proceed -hopefully after today's meeting.
- Visibility Team – Have not met yet.
- Program Support Team – Met last fall and discussion turned from support to sustainability (e.g. issues such as where Gen Ed would be housed, link with strategic plan) and planning to finish up by the next meeting.

Brief informal progress reports to start the next Gen Ed Task Force meeting.

- With the next meeting falling on the Friday before spring break, should we plan to meet March 9th?
- Anne will send an email to get a sense of who will be able to attend.
 - If attendance will be small, we'll switch to have a virtual meeting instead. Group leaders will need to submit a dated progress report to Anne by Wednesday, March 7th and she will email those out to the Gen Ed Task Force.
- March 23rd meeting – Will be devoted to discussing ideas and voting which ones will be moved forward.
- April – Submit report and recommendations to the Provost.

DISCUSSION

Have we voted on Math pre-reqs? No. Voted to table because we didn't know their impact.

UND Task Force on Essential Studies (ES)

Anne and Tom reviewed task force decisions and developed a matrix to track past decisions on the impact of cross-disciplinary requirements to date (handout). Feedback?

- Comments:
 - GERTA credits are the state board mandates.
 - The proposed overlays are in the bottom 3rd column.
 - There are 9 credits under communication and 3 credits are an overlay.
 - Past votes: Advanced Communication would be covered in the degree
 - Open up to discussion – how should we vote (section by section or as a whole?)

Discussion

- Communication is both a disciplinary distribution and a skill which makes it harder to deal with.
 - Focus on skills?
 - We've specified first two writing courses and the advance or overlay of oral communication
- Are there departments (like engineering) that have developed their own writing courses?
 - Task Force mandated Comp 1, 2, and a course that satisfied the speaking requirements.

- Departments can develop a course to satisfy the speaking requirement.
- Why did Task Force decide to allow that?
 - Task Force discussed and concluded that even though Speech has a syllabus, structure, training, and handbook similar to Composition, Communication would require additional resources to accommodate all the incoming freshman students.
 - If departments wanted to develop an oral intensive course at the 200 level, they could.
- Regarding the writing requirements – Comp 1 and 2 is the only way to meet Gen Ed requirements.
 - Altogether, students have to take 3 credits in advanced communication (oral, capstone)
 - This will have to be intentionally assessed, as will be the case for all overlays.
 - The advanced communication would focus on skills
- Feedback from NSF panel is students need to be able communicate the technical details to a lay audience. This is critical.
- Feedback from faculty also illustrates concern of students' ability to communicate.
- Do incoming students not required to take Comp1 (ACT, CLEP) have to make up those 3 credits?
 - They need to take Comp2 and another 3 credits. They can make up the 3 credits anywhere.
 - This proposal would suggest that students would have to make up the 3 credits.
 - This relates to articulation agreements with other ND colleges, and will have to continue.
- Some institutions test all incoming students to evaluate competencies. However, writing is difficult to incorporate in standardized tests. Feedback from ACT and SAT is not promising.

How many credits for each category? Social sciences, arts and humanities, MST?

- If a math pre-req for quantitative reasoning was required, would that increase the credits MST?
 - Depends on if it was designated remedial or college level.
- Do we want the overlays to count in the 36 credits?
- If we can hold the credit requirements, it might be perceived better by the campus community in that they would not think new credit requirements would be taken out of their major credits.
- How long would it take a new system to get up to speed?
 - Concern of the complexity. Would it make sense to go forward and validated a course for 1 goal?
- How will the critical and creative thinking fit in? There is no course requirement for these two.
 - What will motivate departments and instructors to include these in their courses? Some cross-disciplinary are tied to the distribution and it seems that others just have good intentions.
 - Transcripts show that most classes validate for critical thinking.
 - When each course validates for a goal – we'll be able to see how the classes shake out.

Students want the requirements up front, because they are interested in knowing what is required of them to graduate. Knowing the requirements, not necessarily the goals, is what will get them to graduation.

- Concern that that cross-disciplinary goals will not have adequate exposure (information literacy, world cultures)
 - They will have to go through the validation process.
- We should be intentional about establishing a system that will work for students. There is always the chance that when a student changes majors or receives poor advising that they will miss a course.
- The special emphasis of the overlays is to target perceived problems in our current system.
- This proposal will affect how Gen Ed is managed because the goals will be up front.
 - We need an advocate to search for the missing pieces and recruit instructors or department so close the gaps.

How do we determine if courses are being offered for each of the skills based goals?

- Might have to wait for the validation process to occur in order to get a sense of where things are.

- This means the next action for the task force is to ask departments to choose goals to validate.
- We could allow courses to meet more than one goal even though they only have to validate for one.
- Validation is invisible to students.
- The goals require formal assessment for Gen Ed purposes.
 - If some goals are not designated, it will be difficult to assess.
- The information needs to be very clear. The current setup is clear, but there are still many questions.
 - In discussions, students ask about the distribution requirements and requirements to graduate. They don't ask about Gen Ed goals. The overlay structure might help facilitate those discussions.
 - If goals are part of the requirements, they will be more visible for students.
- How do we figure out where classes lie in terms of the cross-disciplinary goals?

At this point, should we vote for the distribution proposal?

- The 36 or 39 credits are independent of the math pre-reqs.
- Preference is to keep 12 credits in the MST, but there is an understanding that those credits will be transferred to the Gen Ed capstone course.
 - Scientists are concerned that average students in their class understand the basis of science.
- Would we want to consider a tighter distribution of the 9 MST credits?
 - Enforcing lab credits would force students to take a true lab science.
- Should we adjust from 9 to 10 MST credits?
 - The current requirement is 12 credits and many students go over that requirement.
 - Considering truth in advertising – can students meet the 9 credit requirement with current classes or would the lecture/lab sciences courses not allow them to get 9, and make them have 10 credits instead?
 - There are course combinations that would allow students to meet the 9 credit requirement.
 - Right now students can't take just 4 individual lab credits. They are required to register for the lecture component and the lab credits with it.

1) **9,9,9,9 plan proposed by Bruce Dearden**

- **9 credits in Communication (comp1 comp2 and a public speaking),**
- **9 Social Science (in 2 departments),**
- **9 credits in Arts and Humanities (with at least 3 in Arts and 3 Humanities),**
- **9 credits in MST (minimum of 2 dept, 1 lab)**
- **and capstone**
- **36 credits of board mandate and 3 of capstone.**
- **Total of 39.**

YES: 15 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Quantitative Reasoning (handout)

- Review of the options.
- Students arrive with different backgrounds and take a foundational QR and an upper level course.
- Question of how many students this proposal would affect?
 - State ACT scores show 48% of math scores are not ready for college level.
 - 38% of students entering UND have an ACT that shows they are not ready for college level.
 - About 10-15% of students would be required to take Math 102.

- UND can't have the QR goal and then not ensure that these students gain math skills. The concern with requiring them to take Math 102 is that they also need QR.
- The dichotomy of high school v. college curriculum.
 - Currently, state high schools 9-12 grades are including QR
- Math 102 could be adjusted to have more QR. Math 103 is considered college level.
 - But we need to be careful to abide by UND's mission and charter of not doing remedial classes, as that would impede onto the responsibility of 2-year colleges.
- How many sections of Math 102 are there? Two large sections in the fall and 1 in the spring.
- Essentially, the same numbers of students have been taking Math 102 since the increased ACT requirement was implemented.
- How will this proposal work for a transfer student?
 - Math 102 doesn't count toward the Gen Ed requirements or graduation.
 - If the student comes in with Math 103, we are obligated to recognize that class.
 - Math Department does advise them to take the placement test.
- Incoming students would have to demonstrate their abilities and be placed at the appropriate level.
 - Placement testing is more refined than using the ACTs to determine competencies.
 - ACTs 27 and above are placed in Math 103.
- Some students are provisionally admitted without the required math pre-reqs.
- Seems that we need to keep the arithmetic aspects and move toward incorporating QR.
- Concern expressed over dictating to the Math Department what their courses will cover.

There are a few more aspects to clarify and the task force will vote on the Math pre-req at the next meeting.