

General Education Task Force
January 26, 2007
Minutes

Present: Anne Kelsch, Tom Steen, Martha Potvin, Ike Schlosser, Pat O'Neill, Helen Melland, Wilbur Stoltz, Daphne Stevens, Steve Light, Genia Kozliak, Ray Lagasse, Anne Walker, Lori Robison, Joan Hawthorne, Pam Kalbfleisch, Lisa Burger, Sally Pyle, Matt Cavalli.

1. Anne Kelsch reviewed the Task Force's schedule for the semester. She announced that the Task Force is on schedule based on the time line developed in Fall 2006.
2. Clarifications regarding the Draft Proposal:
 - How many G.E. credits will be required? Will depend on what goals and requirements are decided.
 - Need to emphasize the goals rather than the distribution requirement.
 - Task Force members like how the goals are formatted in the proposed draft, and how goals will be connected to a rubric.
3. Ike's proposed comparison of old and new program by distribution credits. Several faculty favored an alternative approach of explaining why changes were made in the General Education Program, and justifying the new program on "pedagogically sound" principles (Martha) rather than what was "lost or gained" from the old program.
4. Ike's "Reorganization of Thinking and Reasoning Goals." Discussion centered on the omission of creative thinking in the proposed new goals. Proposal was to have one goal which would include critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and creative thinking.
5. Essential Studies vs. General Education terminology. Discussion included the idea that a new name would be good for a new change, that "essential studies" highlights of the importance of general education as a foundation of all studies, and that "Essential Studies" would be a more memorable and catchy term than "G.E." General consensus was to adopt "Essential Studies" terminology.
6. Lori raised concern about negative wording in the draft such as "Why are you required to take Essential Studies". Consensus was that we should rephrase as much as possible to emphasize the positive benefits of the new gen ed program.
7. Should a science lab be required in the new program? Consensus was for it to remain a requirement.

8. New General Education courses should be validated for how many goals?
Discussion in support of one goal included: Courses could more solidly focus on one goal rather than multiple goals, one goal would be easier for the GER committee to assess and manage, and having one goal per course would make the goals more prominent. Consensus was to validate for only one goal.
9. Matt's Proposal to Reconsider Diversity Goal: Matt proposed that 6 credits be required instead of 3 for the Diversity goal, and that 3 of those credits must be Native American studies. His proposal was influenced by his visit to the Indian Studies department. Discussion included the need for more Indian Studies instructors, if 3 of the 6 credits would be counted outside of the distribution requirements, and if the TF shouldn't go back to the original diversity proposal that asked for 6 credits, 3 on domestic diversity and 3 on global diversity.
10. Proposal to reconsider Information Literacy: Could information literacy be listed under a critical thinking goal or under the communication goal? Some faculty felt we should keep it a separate goal so it doesn't get watered down.
11. Voting on Proposals to Reconsider:
 - a. Vote to re-open discussion on structure of critical thinking goal: 17 yes, 0 no
 - b. Vote to re-open discussion of diversity credits: 12 yes, 5 no
 - c. Vote to re-open discussion of information literacy: 7 yes, 10 no