

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

October 20, 2010

Present:	Bernie Quetchenbach Kurt Toenjes Mike Havens Mark Fenderson Michael Scarlett Brent Roberts Nik Wong (student)	Melinda Tilton Neil Suits Matt Redinger Neil Jussila Elizabeth Fullon Chase Slade (student) Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)
Absent:	George Cxyz – <i>excused</i>	Tom Regele – <i>excused</i>
Presiding:	Matt Redinger, Chairperson	

Matt Redinger called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m. in the Missouri room.

The minutes of September 22 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Discussion of “Homework” Articles

The Committee thanked Brent Roberts for finding and distributing the articles to the Committee.

It was cited that most of the proposals are really revolutionary. How far will we go from what we’re doing now? It was noted that the cross-discipline proposal to embed the humanities across the curriculum might be a great idea for the COT. However, the extra credits may not fit into AAS programs, which only require 12 credits of Gen Ed.

Many of the articles mention the student perception that Gen Ed is just a series of boxes to check off. However, this perception may partly be due to the instructors of Gen Ed courses lacking awareness and appreciation for what Gen Ed is all about. It was noted that students who are driven and know exactly what degree they want often view Gen Ed as a waste of time. Students who don’t really know what degree they want often find value in Gen Ed exposing them to new fields.

It was noted that students may not like Gen Ed because for some it’s too easy. The course covers topics they learned in high school. However, by the same token, the Gen Eds can be a refresher of much needed topics.

We need to think about how instructors of Gen Ed courses communicate about Gen Ed at the beginning of the semester. For instance, History courses are not necessarily about learning history, but about gathering information, synthesizing it, and saying something meaningful about it. So, someone needs to explain that to the students!

Rocky Mountain College is in the process of developing their outcomes for Gen Ed, and they have nine outcomes for the entire program, not just by category. Our outcomes have become so generic that they may be difficult to measure.

B. Freshman Seminar Course

It was noted that the idea of explaining Gen Ed to students could be a component of the freshman seminar. Including this information might actually move the seminar course toward actually being a part of Gen Ed, because as it stands now it does not fit in Gen Ed at all.

It was cited that the articles in the “homework” note that the number of credits for a freshman seminar do not matter, so our one-credit course could be just as good as a four-credit behemoth. It was further noted that, nationally, these freshman seminars do not improve retention.

The GEC could carry forward a recommendation to include information about Gen Ed in the current course. However, we must make it clear that doing so will not make the seminar a part of Gen Ed, and that we do not want to take the course from the current instructors.

C. VSA

We were told that most universities would participate in VSA; we were among the first. It turns out that less than 10% are involved. We will be compared against that incredibly small field in the statistics. The data—down to departmental levels—will be posted publicly, and it is so very easy to misinterpret. The Committee should recommend we get out as soon as possible.

D. MAPP

We have it and I.T. is in the process of figuring out how to implement it.

E. Gen Ed Committee and the AAC (Accreditation and Assessment Committee)

Tasneem Khaleel, Dean of CAS, noted that the AAC is the group that writes the annual report to NWCCU. The GEC Chair should be a member of that committee to help write the report.

F. Outcomes/Objectives

Some of our outcomes are too vague to be measured. However, if we have data saying we measured those outcomes, then they are measurable.

The next meeting is tentatively set for November 17.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.