

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

October 12, 2017

Present: Bernie Quetchenbach
Jim Barron
Emily Arendt
Leanne Gilbertson
Scott Harris
Megan Thomas
Brenna Beckett (student)
Matt Redinger (ex-officio)

Melinda Tilton
Matthew Queen
Tom Regele
Cori Hart
Lance Mouser
Shayla Garman (student)
Tara Haupt (ex-officio)

Absent: Tien Chih*
John Roberts*

*excused

Jim Barron called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in McMullen 305.

The minutes of September 19 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Proposal Guidelines for Study Abroad Courses in the Cultural Diversity Category

Scott Harris put together a draft document (attached to these minutes) to allow instructors proposing trips abroad be allowed to count that credit as Gen Ed credit in the Cultural Diversity Category. The form includes the Gen Ed outcomes for the category, and will likely need some kind of minimum requirement for the 3 credits.

It was noted that International Studies has begun offering a course with the rubric LANG 490something, which is a companion course to be counted in Gen Ed. The students traveling abroad would take whatever courses, be they art or business, and they would also register for the LANG course. The students are then required to submit documentation, such as a journal, detailing everything they did on the trip. The International Studies Faculty Advisor, currently Tom Regele, reviews the documentation and, working with the Admissions Office, the student is awarded credit in the Gen Ed Cultural Diversity category. It's just like a faculty advisor substituting a course, which all advisors are allowed to do.

- Motion by Matt Queen, seconded by Leanne Gilbertson to **accept the document (attached) as the governing document for a study abroad course to be considered appropriate for the Cultural Diversity category in Gen Ed.**

It was noted that a description of the number of hours must equate to 45 class hours for 3 credits. A description of what kind of documentation the student should provide would also be helpful. The Committee will review and edit the document over the next week, and hold a second reading of the final version via email.

- Motion carried.

II. ASSESSMENT UPDATE

- Script and Introductory Video for ETS Testing
- Testing Freshmen Fall 2017 (outside classtime) and Spring 2017 in A&SC 111
- Testing Requirement for All Students Completing Gen Ed

The video turned out great! It was very entertaining.

The video was sent to all the A&SC 111 instructors, who showed it in their classes. We also sent it to all instructors of Gen Ed courses this semester. We had 12 students show up, which is not enough to get valuable data. As for the A&SC 111 instructors administering the test in Spring 2018, that too is of little use as only about 25 students take the course in the Spring. Even combined with the 12 from Fall, it's not enough. So, if we want to test our incoming freshmen, we will have to do it next Fall, and we can then send all the tests to ETS together so we may have a big enough statistical sample. Dr. Barron reported all this to the Senate, as well as noting that we may not need Senate approval to move forward with a required test for all students. Ultimately, assessment testing is not curricular, so it is beyond the Senate's purview. The Committee has tried so many ways to get buy-in on the ETS testing, and nothing has worked. We have to work with Vice Provost Redinger to ask the Provost to make the ETS test a requirement. If they decline to do it at this time, NWCCU is going to *make* us do something in the future, regardless. The Co-Chairs will put together an email to hand this off to the Vice Provost.

III. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS continued

B. Search for Cultural Diversity Questions on the Proficiency Profile Exam

There is tremendous consistency in what questions were picked out by the Committee members, which is encouraging. There are definitely enough questions to use for an assessment of our Cultural Diversity category. Melinda Tilton will assemble all the results, including those from Senate Chair Susan Gilbertz. We will then ask ETS to pull the results for those questions from the data we already submitted from past tests, and the Vice Provost's Office will pay for that analysis. We have our Cultural Diversity assessment!

IV. VICE PROVOST REPORT

Dr. Redinger arrived and noted that we definitely won't be able to implement a testing requirement for all students by Spring 2018. Also, the Provost would rather use a sample group than test all students. Instead, we should move to discussing other kinds of assessment, such as portfolios. If we move to using portfolios—requiring students to submit one artifact from each Gen Ed course as well as write a short reflection—a committee will need to review those portfolios, and there would be funding to pay faculty to do that. It was noted that if we choose to go with the portfolio option, we will have to mandate that all Gen Ed instructors require their students to submit the artifact and reflection. It was noted that the schools who do this kind of assessment say a majority of their students take the portfolio seriously as an assessment of their Gen Ed.

V. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

C. Template/Guide for Biennial Review of Gen Ed Courses

We need to make the review meaningful. It was agreed we will request a syllabus for each course, with the assignments that meet the Gen Ed outcomes highlighted, along with an explanatory paragraph. The deadline will be February 2018, which gives time to finish before the year ends. Then the Committee will review them, as this is part of Gen Ed assessment, too.

The meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.

Check-Off for Study Abroad Experiences to Qualify as Coursework in Fulfillment of the MSUB Cultural Diversity General Education Requirement.

The MSUB catalog states the rationale for the General Education Cultural Diversity requirement:

Cultural diversity presents us with an awareness and understanding of the variety of human experience, especially as manifested among cultures, both present and past.

- *Understand social, cultural, political and economic changes over time,*
- *Comprehend the international ramifications of domestic policies and how these may affect and be experienced by people in other cultures,*
- *Appreciate and be sensitized to world cultures.*

The General Education Assessment Objectives for the Cultural Diversity requirement are:

1. *Demonstrate an ability to identify and solve problems relating to cultural diversity within the discipline.*
2. *Demonstrate the ability to communicate and analyze effectively concerning cultural diversity within the discipline.*
3. *Demonstrate a basic understanding of the importance of awareness of cultural diversity within the various disciplines.*

Faculty led study abroad trips possess the innate potential to fulfill both the rationale as well as the set of assessment objectives for Cultural Awareness. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to faculty members who would propose that a specific study abroad trip qualify as fulfilling the MSUB Cultural Awareness Requirement in General Education.

The course instructor will indicate how the following will be addressed and incorporated into the study abroad trip:

- The trip will involve a minimum duration of ____ days in the country or cultural area.
- Students will identify milestone historical and cultural events and relate them to the current political and social institutions, traditions, customs, values, and mores in the host country— either in general or within the context of a subset of disciplines.
- Students will be involved in immersion activities with people from the host country.
- Students will analyze specific instances of differences between their home culture and their observations in the host country or area and will be able to communicate a coherent rationale for those differences.
- Assessment method for certifying competency necessary to fulfill the Cultural Awareness requirement of MSUB General Education.

Mechanism for approval: _____
