

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

March 13, 2023

Present:	Mark Jacobson Melinda Tilton Mara Pierce Jeff Willardson Lance Mouser	Jennifer Lodine-Chaffey Paul Pope Keeara Rhoades Daniel Charlton TyRee Jenks
Absent:	Emily Arendt* Jason Comer* Debra Schoenfeld*	Ana Diaz* Daniel Willems*
		*excused
Guests:	Kathleen Thatcher	

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. in LA 627.

I. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of February 13 were accepted as presented.

II. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Announcements and Updates

The First Year Seminar group had their first meeting and will launch a pilot in the Fall. The course will be hosted by different departments to focus on a theme, but the learning outcomes will stay the same. The Center for Teaching and Learning will do a call for proposals soon, for proposed themes for the new course. The Academic Senate wants to change how Gen Ed is talked about, so be mindful of the language used with advisees. Don't call Gen Ed something to "get out of the way" before getting to major courses. The Biological & Physical Sciences Department also plans to drop the lab requirement for Gen Ed, so the First Year Seminar will use that credit in Gen Ed.

B. Test Drive with Course Artifacts

It was proposed that, for the scale on the rubrics, we use *emerging*, *progressing*, and *achieving*. It was agreed that this scale works!

Our continued theme through the assessment process is manageable, meaningful, and sustainable.

Not everyone did the test drive, and we can expect the same from our assessment in the Fall.

It was noted that assessing whether a student artifact meets the learning outcome is much more difficult to evaluate when the course is outside one's discipline. It was agreed that, rather than having only people outside the discipline evaluate, it's best to have a mix of experts and non-experts to do the evaluating. Ms. Tilton noted that, at the AAC&U conference, one group mentioned "norming parties" where evaluators were reminded that they are not evaluating a major, but rather at the General Education level.

It was cited that we all need to remember we are not grading. We are evaluating whether the student work meets the program learning outcomes. None of our work goes back to the student, either. Any comments will be for the benefit of the instructor of the course.

It's important to note that while the GEC will be starting off the assessment process, the review of the artifacts will eventually move to a rotating group of faculty. The Provost has agreed to provide some funding for stipends for faculty who participate. Also, in regards to the actual evaluating, remember that if a 12-page paper is submitted and the student has obviously met the outcome in the first two pages, the evaluator does not have to read the entire paper.

It was suggested that we ask programs to tell us how a student should meet an outcome. Further, if we end up with widely different results from evaluations of artifacts, it may indicate something is wrong with our rubric.

Committee members were asked to complete the test drive before the April meeting.

C. Respect Diversity – Sample Size

This Fall we will be evaluating the courses that fall under Respect Diversity in the curriculum map. This semester, it appears to be about 1800 students in those courses, so we need to decide a sample size. The Committee will ask Dan Willems to work with Kathleen Thatcher to decide an acceptable sample size using the software Dr. Willems has mentioned. We likely need to include a higher number than absolutely necessary since we will get some non-responses and invalid responses.

D. Invitational Letter to Chairs

We must make sure to *invite* instructors to participate in this assessment. We need to make it clear that instructors have to do very little, just provide us with assignments, and we do the work and provide data/feedback. With that in mind, the Co-Chairs have drafted a letter to Department Chairs that will be sent the week before Fall semester starts. It's basically sending them notice that we will be requesting artifacts at the end of the semester. It was noted that the letter should be personalized and should also be sent to the instructors of the courses, not just Chairs. Also, the Chairs and instructors have not seen the curriculum map, so they may be surprised that a given course is included under the Respect Diversity outcomes.

The question was raised as to whether we include part-time faculty in this request. Some courses are taught almost entirely by part-time faculty, so we cannot just exclude part-time-taught sections.

Further, it was noted that the term “artifact” may not be meaningful to most people. We definitely need to explain what we need, but the initial notice needs to be short.

We need to emphasize that these evaluations will showcase what our students are doing, and with very little additional effort from the instructors of the courses.

Finally, the question was raised as to whether we should include the Honors courses. It was noted that, for Spring, there are only about 15 of them in the 1800 students. They aren’t going to skew the data that much. It was agreed we should not exclude them.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.