

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

January 26, 2011

Present: Bernie Quetchenbach Melinda Tilton
 Kurt Toenjes Neil Suits
 Mike Havens Matt Redinger
 Mark Fenderson Neil Jussila
 Michael Scarlett Elizabeth Fullon
 Brent Roberts Nik Wong (student)
 Rita Kratky (ex-officio)

Absent: Tom Regele

Presiding: Matt Redinger, Chairperson

Matt Redinger called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m. in the Missouri room.

The minutes of November 17 were accepted as presented.

I. ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Item 34 LS 125 Research in the Information Age. Change course description

- Motion by Kurt Toenjes, seconded by Neil Suits to **accept Item 34.**

Brent Roberts noted that they have taken some of the jargon out of the course description and emphasized critical thinking skills.

- Motion carried.

II. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Enrollment Management Project Meeting with Noel Levitz Consultant Tim Culver: Lunch (12:00 to 1:00) either Wednesday, February 9 or Thursday, February 10

Vice Chancellor Klippenstein is buying lunch for as many of the GEC members as can attend. It was agreed the best date seems to be Thursday, February 10.

B. MSU Billings Core Theme Development

It was noted that the Accreditation and Assessment Council has been tasked with the first annual review as now required by NWCCU. This first year will be Standard 1, which is concerned with our mission and vision. Matt Redinger sits on the AA Council as GEC representative, and Mike Havens is also on the Council. The AA Council is asking for

faculty input on “operationally defining the following components of the MSU Billings Mission: Strong Commitment to Teaching Excellence, Support for Individual Learning, and Engagement in Civic Responsibility.”

It was cited that our commitment to teaching excellence is shown in student and peer reviews, faculty development funds, committees like the GEC and UCC which review curriculum, and engaging students in faculty research and scholarship. It was noted that engaging students in research and scholarship is also a support for individual learning. Other points to include in support for individual learning include funding for student research and travel, honors contracts, and independent study and capstone courses. Engagement in civic responsibility at MSUB covers a wide range, including community internships, the Chicks in Science and science fair events, the High Plains Bookfest, the campus art gallery, and the Library quilt show.

C. General Education Conference and/or Retreat

Dr. Redinger noted that this conference was first planned as a state-wide event in Missoula. It was then moved to Helena, and then to MSUB. The date was moved to February, and now it's been permanently put on the back burner.

D. The Purpose of General Education

It was noted that the University System has one definition and requires 27 credits. The Board of Regents has another definition and requires 30 credits. We have yet another definition and require 37 credits. Those extra credits are so difficult to defend! We do require more writing and the odd credit comes from the science lab course.

It was noted that there is still a lot of territorialism within Gen Ed. The perception has changed and Gen Ed mostly seems to be controlled by the College of Arts and Sciences. Do they run it?

The state began a discussion about the deeper purpose of general education, and they are still arguing about it. The debate between a core curriculum or a distributed system, as MSUB uses, goes on.

It was cited that those who advocate completely removing Gen Ed from the curriculum are basing their idea on a skills model. It was noted that students don't know everything they are going to need to take when they come into college. Gen Ed forces students to try new things, and our distributed model gives students flexibility.

Very few of our incoming students are ready for college. They need Gen Ed. Many also need developmental courses, as well.

It was stated that our definition of success for the Gen Ed program is going to be the MAPP test. It was noted that the test has yet to be run on a group of students.

Many of our seniors have sub-par reading and writing skills. This is not a situation unique to MSU Billings, but we can still talk about it.

The next meeting will be February 23.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.