



**General Education Committee  
Minutes**

September 17, 2021

**Present:** Tien Chih  
Melinda Tilton  
Emily Arendt  
Scott Jeppesen  
Sarah Friedman  
Cori Day  
Lance Mouser  
Bernie Quetchenbach  
Josh Hill  
Mara Pierce  
Jason Comer  
Jeff Willardson  
Brian Gurney  
Megan Thomas

**Absent:** Leanne Gilbertson\*  
\*excused

**Guest:** Anne Cole

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The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. in Banquet A&B, with some members attending via webex.

**I. ELECTION OF CHAIR/CO-CHAIRS FOR 2021-22**

Melinda Tilton and Emily Arendt were nominated as co-chairs, and the Committee agreed by unanimous consent.

**II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The minutes of April 20 were accepted as presented.

**III. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Vote on final program outcomes and forward to Academic Senate**

Last year we reduced our 30 outcomes down to 9, a pretty manageable number! The program outcomes will not be replacing the category outcomes. Instead, the program outcomes will be what we use for a better assessment than we've had in the past.

In consultation with Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment & Accreditation, the Co-Chairs have revised the second outcome (under Respect Diversity) to remove language that amounted to examples. The revised program outcomes are thus:

<b>General Education Programmatic Outcomes</b>			
Upon completion of the General Education Program at MSUB, students will successfully be able to:			
Respect Diversity	Problem Solve	Think Critically	Communicate Effectively
1. Express the impact of inequity on the human experience 2. Synthesize multiple perspectives in contemporary and historical contexts	3. Use statistical or mathematical methods to solve problems 4. Use scientific methods to solve problems 5. Use quantitative and qualitative information to provide solutions to social and/or ethical problems	6. Locate and evaluate information from multiple sources 7. Synthesize evidence to construct logical arguments	8. Apply effective communication strategies for specific purposes and audiences 9. Produce scholarly projects or creative works conforming to appropriate disciplinary methods

- Motion by Cori Day, seconded by Tien Chih to **approve the modified program outcomes.**

- Motion carried.

The question was raised as to whether courses currently in Gen Ed will need to be modified to meet these program outcomes. It was responded that since the category outcomes remain, courses do not have to make changes in response to the new program outcomes. In fact, our course mapping, which we will be taking on later, will address what courses go under which program outcome, and there will be overlap. The primary purpose of the program outcomes is assessment.

**B. Roll out/messaging for new Gen Ed program outcomes**

After we get Senate approval of the program outcomes, who should we contact in the rollout process? It was agreed that department chairs of Gen Ed departments should be contacted, including instructors of Gen Ed courses, as well as informing the Provost & Chancellor. Possibly ASMSUB should be included.

What should our message be? What are the biggest advantages of fewer outcomes? The program is streamlined and should ease registration for students.

**C. Revisit criteria for new Gen Ed courses**

As we think about criteria for our courses, it's good to know what other institutions are doing. These are some criteria used by others:

- Course level? (At or below 200 level?)
- Prerequisites? (Preferably none?)

- Provide students with an introduction to an academic discipline or a primary subdivision of that discipline?
- Be open to all students and service significant numbers of students from different academic programs?
- Transferability?
- Frequency of offering?
- Taught by single faculty or multiple (if more than one, do we need syllabi/assessment examples from more than one?)

It was noted that the previous administration wanted a limit on the number of Gen Ed courses. Do we want to cap the number? Perhaps this could be considered after we map the courses to the 9 program outcomes.

It was cited that we don't want to create competition or stifle innovation, so capping numbers could be problematic. Within departments, new courses are often replacing other courses, but across departments, that's not necessarily the case. Competition is really implicit, so we should make it explicit.

It was suggested that part of our criteria would be a new course must be able to explain and perhaps defend its impact on other courses in the Gen Ed category. It was noted that our criteria should be less about stopping a glut of courses and more about making sure the courses proposed fit the category.

Course proposals should probably also submit sample assignments.

Aside from required criteria, we have discussed having favorable or preferred criteria, like using High Impact Practices. Transferability may be a preferred criteria, rather than required.

Course sustainability may also be an issue. If the faculty who propose a course are the only ones who can teach it, and they then leave the University, the course is not sustainable.

#### **D. Program assessment: determine work groups**

The Committee will break into four groups, one for each category of the program outcomes. Please start brainstorming for the next meeting.

#### **E. Curriculum mapping**

Director Thatcher created a spreadsheet for the Committee to use to map each course to as many of the program outcomes that apply in three levels: introduced, developed, and achieved.

The courses in each of the categories will be handled by these groups:

Global Academic Skills: Tien Chih, Bernie Quetchenbach, & Melinda Tilton  
Natural Sciences: Jason Comer, Sarah Friedman, & Jeffrey Willardson  
Social Sciences & History: Josh Hill, Emily Arndt, & Brian Gurney  
Cultural Diversity: Mara Pierce, Cori Day, & Lance Mouser  
Arts and Humanities: Scott Jeppesen, Leanne Gilbertson, & Megan Thomas

Director Thatcher will be at our next meeting to map with us.

The meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.