

**General Education Curriculum Committee 2004-05
Meeting of October 8, 2004 - 2:00 p.m.**

Minutes

Voting Members Attending: Karen Black, Susan Crim, Richard Dugger, Karen Gray, Sarah Hester (student), Carol Holloman, Avery Kolers (Chair), Mark Kull (student), Babu Nahata, David Schultz, Bill Weinberg, Bronwyn Williams, Wiley Williams
Others: Dale Billingsley (non-voting), Kathy Carden (staff), Dan Mahony (guest)

1. New members of the committee were introduced: Bronwyn Williams (new Composition rep) and Mark Kull (additional student representative).
2. The minutes of September 13, 2004 were approved.
3. Kolers announced that there would be a "hold" on the CRT-based report on Unmet Course Demands. The issue will be discussed in the subcommittee meeting.
4. Kolers proposed that Kathy Carden convene the *Course Proposal Subcommittee*; that Dale Billingsley convene the *Assessment Subcommittee*; and he would convene the *Course Demands Subcommittee*. The GECC had no objections. Volunteers for subcommittee service were taken and assignments were made. It was suggested that the Assessment and Course Demands subcommittees meet prior to the next full committee meeting and that they periodically share information due to overlapping issues. The Course Proposal Subcommittee would not meet until all course proposals were collected and distributed in advance for review. Before proposing a university-wide general education assessment plan, the Assessment Subcommittee would begin with obtaining information from units that already have assessment strategies in place.
5. Dan Mahony, Assistant University Provost in charge of institutional assessment, shared information about the new standards for SACS accreditation - specifically related to general education (*standard 2.7.3 under the institution and 3.5.1 under undergraduate programs*). **Evidence must be shown that graduates have attained the established competencies within the university-wide general education core (arts & humanities, social & behavioral sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics).**

The accreditation process is in two phases: 1) Compliance Certificate (required to be in compliance in terms of what the institution is supposed to be doing and what it is actually doing - must present evidence) and 2) Quality Enhancement Plan (like the former accreditation, with a SL emphasis). The university is currently out of compliance under 3.5.1. UofL **must** have an assessment plan in place by the time the Compliance Certificate is submitted (September 2006 external deadline; May 2006 internal deadline). This gives the university one year to implement

the plan and one year to collect data. The university's report will be reviewed on line in November 2006, and the site visit will be conducted in March 2007.

Although general education assessment must be done in a consistent manner (same rubric) university wide, it might be helpful to look at the current practices in Composition, Math, Nursing and other units. The university could also review outside assessment plans to see if there's a fit. Additionally, tests that are used nationally assess certain skills (CPA exam, ABET, etc.). A sample of the Texas Tech University Certification of Compliance was distributed, but the outcome is currently unknown.

*Billingsley requested a copy of the results of the six pilot institutional visits, once completed.

In the case of bad outcomes, the university would be required to correct the problems - required to make improvements to meet the goals and show value added.

The task is challenging. Institutions are hit the hardest by the following failures:

- not assessing student outcomes in the programs
- not assessing general education outcomes
- faculty not meeting the teaching qualifications

Mahony stated that direct assessment of student learning is required, and a certain level of competency must be demonstrated. For example, one requirement is to assess student writing (exam or grading of a written project). A "random sampling" of writing is permissible. QMS assessment and student satisfaction surveys are not enough, nor indicating that students are being hired. Billingsley commented that assessment is done in the senior year for the "program" – not course specific (Example: for "CD" courses, it's important that attitudes be assessed). Concern was expressed over the assessing of seniors who may not have completed all requirements. Schultz inquired about the possibility of some students "testing out" of courses -another kind of assessment, and a practice that may help remedy the course demand problem.

*Kolars suggested that a "trial run" be conducted either in the upcoming spring semester or for students graduating in the fall 2005.

The approval process for a university-wide assessment plan and the decision on a tool to assess "all of the outcomes" will take time. Also, obstacles such as "who owns the general education courses" and how to get a random sampling across units will need to be overcome. Another issue is the funding to both devise the plan and keep ongoing assessment in place.

*Mahony will consult the Provost on the budget concern.

Kathy Carden, recorder