

**General Education Curriculum Committee 2004-05
Meeting of April 8, 2005 - 2:00 p.m.**

Minutes

Voting Members Attending: Karen Black, Lynn Boyd, Richard Dugger, Karen Gray, Carol Holloman, Anna Marie Johnson, Avery Kolers (Chair), Babu Nahata, David Schultz, Larry Tyler, Bronwyn Williams, Wiley Williams

Others: Dale Billingsley (non-voting), Kathy Carden (staff), Julia Dietrich (non-voting), Dan Mahony (non-voting)

1. The minutes of February 25, 2005 were approved.
2. Logistics Report: The Logistics Subcommittee met on April 4, following the review of both the LiveText and Blackboard electronic portfolio systems. During the initial year of assessment, they decided to reduce the scope of the data collection to departments of general education courses with a high number of advanced students and to use the more familiar paper format. This method will require students to submit one chosen paper/assignment in duplicate (one for the instructor and one for assessment). Fall 2005 was designated as the pilot term, and only Humanities and History courses would serve as the data source.
3. Rubrics Report: Using rubrics, the assignments for these programs would be assessed for each of the three competencies: Critical Thinking, Written Communication, and Cultural Diversity. Mahony suggested that a trained assessor look for all three components in one reading. Dietrich thinks it's important to see integrated skills, such as WC and CD across the curriculum (long-term goal). Although it may be good for faculty to know what is expected, they will not have to change their assignments for the initial assessment (only required to identify current assignments). Written Communications courses in English are already being evaluated; however, the method of assessment must be workable across the curriculum (demonstration of writing and critical thinking skills in math, chemistry, economics, and other programs may not involve portfolio papers). Assessment in these areas may require a refining of the current rubric. Bronwyn Williams and Lynn Boyd commented that the general categories of the rubrics (I-IV) need to be the same (to avoid variables in comparing and drawing conclusions), but that allowances can be made for different methods of demonstration (separate out the A, B, C one-sentence demonstrations for specified programs - as a point of reference). Gray suggested looking at common questions used across the board by other institutions. Also, suggestions were made to change some of the terminology in the rubrics.

ACTION: Kolers will revise the rubrics.

ACTION: Mahony will obtain information from Georgia Tech regarding their model for assessing natural science programs, etc. (future stage of assessment).

Summer preparations at Uof L will include the following actions:

- define the job and design the assessment project
- identify and train the readers/assessors
- hire graduate student assistants
- estimate costs
- develop or refocus assignments
- refine rubrics
- do a test run in the summer, using anchor papers to train the readers
- work with Roselle Taylor Re: the timely assignment of courses for fall assessment

Prior to summer (and prior to the design of fall course syllabi), it will be important to inform A&S chairs (especially in History and Humanities) of the assessment plans through the Dean. Drs. Kolers, Billingsley, Dietrich and Mahony could explain the non-negotiable mandate and pressing time frame to begin assessment and to discuss the proposed stages, goals, current assessment efforts, and global rubrics to evaluate the overall competencies. The program-specific rubrics will continue to be developed. Mahony recommended an across-the-board rubric for Natural Sciences (characteristics that could be found in any NS course, not a specific rubric for biology, etc.). Bronwyn Williams suggested that the WC rubric also serves as a model for OC.

***ACTION:** Kolers will make a request to present the plan at the next A&S Chairs meeting. A separate departmental rubrics workshop or informational meeting with all GER faculty was deferred.

4) GER Course Equivalency Decisions for Transfers: Billingsley reported that a subgroup of the Undergraduate Council is meeting with A&S and Admissions to address the overall transfer equivalency issue, which impacts general education. Discussion of the proposal from Admissions was tabled until the next meeting.

5) General Education Outcomes and Course Evaluations: Dietrich submitted a proposal for adding general education outcomes to the course evaluations to determine if courses are meeting the outcomes (an indirect supplemental assessment of elaborated, visible outcomes). It was suggested that an identical form be developed for all courses that meet the designated general education requirements (SB, etc.). Since it's important that students know why they are learning, perhaps the outcomes could become a question in terms that students can understand.

***ACTION:** In an attempt to focus on more direct assessment at this time, this proposal would be revisited in the fall.

6) Billingsley announced that IT is in the process of adding links to the GER main page in prominent locations. AAC&U conference and resource information was distributed.

Kathy Carden, recorder