

General Education Committee Minutes from May 17, 2017

Members present: Pearson Cross, Fabrice Leroy, Robert McKinney, Alise Hagan, Emily Deal, Carolyn Dural, Jonathan Goodwin, Burke Huner, Jordan Kellman, James Kimball, Ashok Kumar, Michael McClure, Lana Rodriguez

The meeting opened with a quick discussion of the tasks facing the committee over the summer and the urgency of the charge. These included the following items from the Agenda:

Which classes are Gen Ed? Who decides?

Should GenEd classes make adoption of goals and outcomes explicit?

What is an appropriate assessment strategy for GenEd classes?

And finally, what to do about the humanities requirement?

The Committee then turned to Jimmy Kimball to discuss the GenEd Math requirements of the University's departments. A spread sheet showing which math classes were required by which departments and degree programs was distributed and led to a discussion.

Differences between programs and the rationale for various requirements were discussed. This discussion focused principally on whether programs could allow any 6 credits of math as their GenEd requirement, or were compelled by accreditation or some other reason to require higher-level courses. In the case of Architecture it was noted that the requirement was 109 and 110 for example. The reasons for this and other different requirements were debated, and the option of allowing for a waiver was weighed. It was stated that 10,000 of 16,000 UL undergraduates were in programs with accreditation requirements and that the trouble of unlocking the GenEd electives might not be worth the bother. Others pointed out that anything that opened up electives and hastened the path to graduation for undergrads was worth pursuing.

Math Assessment program was discussed. Jimmy K discussed the current procedure, the number of classes assessed, and the expectations for student success. He noted that while assessment had been limited to 103, 105, it was now being expanded in the fall to include STAT 214. The discussion broadened to talk about what might be desirable in terms of assessment, how many classes, how many sections, what standards and so on. It was speculated that there may be national standards for GenEd assessment that could be of help. At this point, it was noted that the various departments and majors at UL had formulated the Goals and Objectives which guide assessment and hence were in the best position to decide the implementation of assessment.

In terms of immediate action it was suggested that the working groups that originally put together or currently oversee the Goals and Outcomes that guide GenEd Assessment meet (potentially with Alise Hagan and/or Pearson Cross) to decide which courses will retain GenEd status in their fields and also which courses they plan to assess for GenEd. Pearson and Alise are going to contact the various workgroups and request that they begin this task, with a deadline, if possible, of the **next GenEd meeting which was set for June 7 at 1 pm.**

The meeting was adjourned.

General Education Committee Minutes from June 7, 2017

Members present: Pearson Cross, Fabrice Leroy, Alise Hagan, Christie Maloyed, Carolyn Dural, Jonathan Goodwin, Jordan Kellman, James Kimball, Ashok Kumar, Michael McClure, Lise Anne Slatten, and Sue Ann Ozbirn.

The roll was taken, the Agenda was passed out and the meeting began with a review of the progress made in the different disciplines beginning with Social and Behavioral Sciences, followed by Math, Natural Sciences, FYE, Fine Arts, and Humanities. English was deferred until the next meeting. Most of the disciplines had made good progress towards identifying courses that would be designated GenEd and were moving on towards creating rubrics for assessment.

During the discussion of GenEd requirements in Fine Arts, it came to the committee's attention that some disciplines were allowing their students to use courses in their major field to fulfill GenEd requirements, while others were not. For example, Visual Arts students may use VIAR courses to meet the GenEd Fine Arts requirement, but Anthropology majors are prevented from using ANTH courses to fulfill the Social and Behavioral Science GenEd requirement. This disparity was debated and the merits of both approaches were weighed. Any decision addressing this incongruity was postponed for a later meeting to attend more closely to the assessment progress.

Fine Arts discussed their "GenEd Council" and its operation which most thought a good practice that might be copied elsewhere where relevant and useful. Then the discussion turned to the storage of GenEd documents, rubrics and data. Different methods of storage were discussed including Moodle, LiveText, and others. The question of what should be saved and what could safely be recycled was discussed as well, without final resolution.

Following the Fine Arts discussion, Humanities presented some possibilities for the 9-hour requirement imposed by the Regents for Humanities GenEd classes. Two options were introduced: leaving the fulfillment of the 9-hour requirement entirely up to the student; or locking this requirement down in some specified way, as it the current practice. It was noted that the original intent of the Regents appeared to assume that different institutions would formalize some requirement with regard to this question.

The discussion of the different possibilities and ramifications of changing the current policy with regard to Humanities' 9-hours focused on the majors that might be impacted by a change (English, History, CMCN, and MODL). It was also noted that changes to the Humanities GenEd core could have sweeping ramifications on staffing in the impacted departments, and curricular requirements across the university. The question is one that will be the subject of further meetings within the Humanities group headed by Jordan Kellman, leading to a recommendation by that group to the general committee.

The focus of the discussion then turned to the importance of alerting and educating advisers across the university of any changes in the GenEd core and also of aligning proposed changes with the University Strategic Plan.

The meeting was adjourned after setting the next meeting date and time:
Monday June 26 at 1 pm.

Minutes

GenEd Meeting of June 26, 2017

Present: Pearson Cross, Fabrice Leroy, Robert McKinney, Alise Hagan, Christie Maloyed, Emily Deal, Jonathan Goodwin, Burke Huner, James Kimball, Sue Ann Ozbirn, Ashok Kumar, Lana Rodriguez, Lise Anne Slatten

After a brief introduction the meeting began with a discussion of the various Gen Ed Assessment plans in the disciplines. The draft plan for Social and Behavioral sciences was distributed and discussed. Comments focused on the insufficient attention to critical thinking, problems with the rubric, and with the outcomes themselves. The question was raised about the rationale for assessing 3xx level classes for GenEd. A further question concerned whether majors in a field should be excluded from GenEd evaluation. It was the will of the committee that once efforts had been made to select classes taken by students for GenEd credit that the question of major/not-major was of lesser importance.

The second area taken up was Math assessment. The Math plan was explained. There was some focus on the rubric and the question of whether the objectives contained more than one thrust, leading to confusion in the assessment portion. Somewhat detailed discussion of the artifact used to assess Math classes for GenEd. Discussion of Math 109/110 and whether they should be assessed. It was pointed out that two colleges (Engineering, Sciences) were likely not assessed for Math in terms of GenEd.

A discussion of the Sciences GenEd assessment followed. The Sciences GenEd structure was noted for praise. However, the question of whether or not the Sciences should have or employ a formal rubric was discussed at some length. It was felt that the creation of a formal rubric might allow some nuance in the evaluation of results with a consequent improvement in efforts to “close the loop.”

Following Sciences, First Year Experience presented a rubric and also a multiple choice exam containing questions solicited from various instructors. The rubric and questions were examined in some detail, with regard to areas covered.

Finally, English presented a First-Year Writing Assessment Report, which detailed the current GenEd Assessment process in English. Results from assessment in six sections were detailed (5 Engl: 102; 1 English 115). It was suggested that future assessments would be conducted in random rather than utilizing entire sections of a class. It was noted that English assess 5% of the students in its sections, which constitutes a significant time commitment from department members.

Questions about Humanities and Arts were deferred until the next meeting of the Committee, which was scheduled for **Monday, July 17 at 1 pm in Griffin 109b**. Work groups were encouraged to continue their good progress with an eye towards instituting the assessment beginning in fall 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35

Minutes

GenEd Meeting of July 17, 2017

Present: Pearson Cross, Fabrice Leroy, Alise Hagan, Lisa Broussard, Jordan Kellman, Carolyn Dural, Christie Maloyed, Jonathan Goodwin, Burke Huner, James Kimball, Michael McClure, Ashok Kumar, Lana Rodriguez, Lise Anne Slatten.

After a brief introduction the meeting began with a discussion of the various Gen Ed Assessment plans in the disciplines starting with Humanities.

Jordan Kellman introduced the work underway in the Humanities GenEd requirement (9 hours). A chart was distributed. He discussed the separation, as much as possible, of structural issues in the humanities requirement with assessment issues. He discussed the creation of the learning outcomes in the workgroup and how they lent themselves to the scheme already in place, to some extent, with regard to Humanities requirements. Kellman discussed the grouping of LIT and HUMN, HIST and PHIL, and CMCN and MODL (and creative writing) as being arrived at quickly within the workgroup.

This led to a discussion of the classes that would (likely) be assessed in the various sub-disciplines, they were LIT: 201, 202, 205, and 206; HIST: 101, 102, 221, 222 plus PHIL; and CMCN 100 with MODL to be added. This led to a discussion of which humanities courses would be counted as GenEd and which would not, complicated by the requirements set down by the Regents, which were consulted by the committee. The question was raised about creative writing classes that had, for one reason or another, been excluded from GenEd consideration.

Various stratagems were discussed on this head including practical and philosophical concerns, with the interrelation of SACS versus Regents requirements. The question of "skills" classes was discussed. It was noted that even if a student took what had previously been a skills class for part (3 credits) of the humanities requirement very likely the other (6) hours would be Humanities in the broader sense. The possibility of Banner providing some practical solutions to this vexing problem was discussed, along with the idea of deferring any solution until the fall.

Ashok Kumar then presented the revised Science Rubric. Comments were made on the rubric and suggestions for various revisions. Discussion swirled around the terms in use in the Rubric and also the criterion of success/failure e.g. 50%, 60% etc, with suggestions for a more uniform standard being offered. Kumar talked about a GenEd assessment workshop meeting in sciences in the fall with all those instructors and others who teach GenEd.

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for **Monday, July 31 at 1 pm in Griffin 109b**. Work groups were encouraged to continue their good progress with an eye towards instituting the assessment beginning in fall 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00

Minutes

GenEd Meeting of July 31, 2017

Present: Pearson Cross, Alise Hagan, Lisa Broussard, Jordan Kellman, Carolyn Dural, Jonathan Goodwin, Lise Anne Slatten, Robert McKinney, Sue Ann Ozbirn.

After a brief introduction the meeting began with a discussion of the various Gen Ed Assessment plans in the disciplines starting with Humanities. Jordan Kellman introduced the work underway in the Humanities GenEd requirement (9 hours). A chart was placed on the overhead. Jordan Kellman explained the Humanities workgroup's efforts to edit the list of student learning outcomes and ideally arrive at one shared learning outcome and three more specific ones. A long discussion centered on the various terms listed in the objective for the first 3 credits of Humanities, and in particular the idea of "creativity" was noted. It was not clear that all classes would satisfy this requirement. Various issues with teaching strategies, class size, variability of instructors and others were noted in this regard. Dr. Kellman agreed to take all these issues up with the Humanities work group.

The possibility of Banner providing some practical solutions to this vexing problem was discussed, including some progress made by Kellman's discussion with Elizabeth Daigle, who had suggested the ability of Banner to offer recommended Gen Ed courses to students while still accepting a larger list to fulfill requirements if students such as transfer students took them instead.

There was also a discussion of the kinds of classes that might pose questions for inclusion or exclusion in a humanities core, including VIAR 120 (121, 122). There was also a discussion of technical writing (ENGL 365) and its place in the GenEd structure, with a longer discussion about technical writing as a field and its place in the discipline and also at UL. This built on the previous discussion of "skills" classes.

Pearson Cross gave a brief update on progress in the Social and Behavioral Sciences working group, which included a complete rubric, and setting of criteria for success. Discussion of various points followed.

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for **Wednesday August 31 at 1 pm in Griffin 109b**. Subsequent meetings were scheduled for the second Wednesday in each month at 1 pm where possible, starting with September 13, and continuing to October 11, November 8 and December 13.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40