

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 2, 2012
Evald 305**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM.

Members Present: Tom Bengtson, Lendol Calder, Mike Egan, Margaret Farrar, Meg Gillette, Carrie Hough, Virginia Johnson, Brian Katz, Margaret Morse, Rowen Schussheim-Anderson

Guests Present: Mary Koski

AGENDA ITEM I: BRAINSTORMING

Rowen Schussheim-Anderson reviewed topics for Gen Ed discussions for 2012-13 that have been brought up and invited further conversation:

- LSFY
- Skills Matrix
- Looking at learning communities in a different way
- D and G
- Assessment (tied in with learning outcomes)

Learning Perspectives

Margaret Farrar added examining learning perspectives to the list: what they mean, what they should be doing, how they fit into the future. They are the cafeteria portion of the program. Lendol Calder commented on how difficult it is to explain our gen ed program to people outside the institution. A way to tell Augustana's story that makes sense to people who are not professors, i.e., first-year students and parents, needs to be figured out. Margaret Farrar agreed and added that general education's relationship to the major should be made clearer.

Cross Listing

Margaret Farrar commented that outside program reviewers recently on campus were surprised that Augustana does not cross list; cross listing would benefit the department. If we think about that, what does that mean for general education and where gen ed courses belong and who owns them. For example, in smaller programs (WGS), cross-listed courses are what makes that major. Augustana does not have that; we have WGS courses and political science courses that are core courses, but are not listed on students' transcripts. This makes a huge difference as to what students perceive. This is interesting to think about as we study the majors' relationship to general education and how learning perspectives fit in. In response to Tom Bengtson's question if using cross listing would serve as a marketing tool, Margaret replied yes.

College Experience Objectives/Skills Matrix/LSFY/Assessment of LP

Brian Katz added that Gen Ed needs to help with college experience objectives, articulate its own objectives, and how they connect to the college. Also, re-assess the skills matrix, LSFY, build that for learning perspectives, figure out how to build assessment into learning perspectives, and whether or not a course can attach a learning perspective to it permanently, or if the course's learning perspectives request comes back to Gen Ed on a regular basis.

Outcome-Oriented Measures/Size of Gen Ed Program

Tom Bengtson added that Gen Ed should contemplate ways to add to outcome-oriented measures the President is striving for. Tom also asked Margaret if under the current calendar the gen ed requirement will stand or shrink one-third. Margaret replied that under our current situation, of most importance is

the student learning piece. Is it doing what we want it to do? Secondly, staffing issues persist and that needs to be thought about. If we continue with learning communities, does that mean we must shrink the rest of the program to continue with them?

E-Portfolios

Brian Katz anticipates we will hear more about E-portfolios. Rowen Schussheim-Anderson believes they will impact the majors more than gen ed. Margaret Morse added that she foresees them fitting into LSFY and eventually to gen ed.

Learning Communities

Rowen Schussheim-Anderson suggested redefining learning communities, (service learning, integrative learning umbrella), so that the definition of a learning community is not so onerous for staffing, but still a good experience. Brian Katz thinks interdisciplinary majors/minors are worth pursuing, as well as rethinking how load happens with team-taught courses. Margaret Morse suggested looking for natural ways to develop learning communities, i.e., combining SI and LCs. Margaret Farrar stated that joint SI projects could be coordinated better. Solving that and the integrative learning piece would be an interesting project. Margaret received ideas from program reviewers how joint projects and senior inquiry are put together. Margaret also believes the faculty will soon be asked to think about senior inquiry and its sustainability.

Backward Design Themes

Lendol Calder brought up that course designing should be thought of in terms of backwards design by keeping the ultimate goal centered at all times.

Leadership

Brian Katz suggests that if service learning became part of the gen ed program, leadership might become integrated into the curriculum. Leadership should be more purposeful to student life. Margaret Farrar indicated that it will become part of residential life and will be tied to learning outcomes. Meg Gillette suggests tying the Augie Reads book to leadership.

“AGES”

Does it still make sense to use the acronym “AGES”? Does the Gen Ed Through the AGES structure still make sense for LSFY? The museum is used more than the text. Mark Salisbury sent out an inquiry to LSFY teachers on how they use the Gen Ed Through the AGES text, and received very few responses. Margaret recalled that Lendol Calder once advocated for themes (God, Love, Money...) and thinks that discussion is worth revisiting.

Margaret Farrar hopes that one of the discussions at the faculty retreat could be on momentum for curricular redesign that is not linked to calendar change. This would also be good preparation for the HLC visit.

Margaret suggests that the Gen Ed committee starts the new academic year with a discussion on learning outcomes.

AGENDA ITEM III: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Koski,
Academic Affairs