

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
REVISED MEETING MINUTES  
September 12, 2012  
Hanson Hall of Science 109**

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

**Members Present:** Richie Benson, Stefanie Bluemle, Joe Bright, Lendol Calder, Patrick Crawford, Kristin Douglas, Mike Egan, Margaret Farrar, Janene Finley, Meg Gillette, Carrie Hough, Rick Jaeschke, Virginia Johnson, Brian Katz, John Pfautz, Eric Pitts, Rowen Schussheim-Anderson

**Guests Present:** Mary Koski

**LSFY 102 APPROVAL**

**Motion-Katz, Second-Pfautz**

**“To approve LSFY 102: The Making of the Modern Subject from Montaigne to Miss Piggy” [France]**

Comments:

- Title should be changed to the “From \_\_\_ to \_\_\_” format
- Add more about *They Say, I Say* or talk about how instructor will structure the process of writing the paper
- Course pitched too high for second-term students

There was discussion about historical parameters of LSFY courses: Ancient through Early Modern. Committee members were not clear if the ancient part had to be before 1932, or if the modern ended before 1932. Margaret Farrar felt that the instructor was using those examples as a kind of identity that had been established during this modern period and that seemed OK to her.

It was suggested that all LSFY course proposals should go through Meg Gillette for feedback prior to being sent to Gen Ed for approval. Meg Gillette indicated she would meet with Margaret France to discuss what the Gen Ed committee recommends she address with her: name of the course, incorporating *They Say, I Say* /structure process of writing the paper, and the wording in the proposal is at too high a level. After revision, the course proposal will go to GPG for a one-time only approval, as the deadline for submission to get courses approved through governance for winter term of this academic year has passed.

**Motion-Hough, Second-Pfautz**

**To remove the motion to approve Margaret France’s LSFY 102 course from the table.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**DISCUSSION OF GEN ED’S DIRECTION AND FOCUS FOR 2012-13 WITH REFERENCE TO STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES DOCUMENT**

It was suggested that a brainstorming issue Gen Ed could begin with is looking deeper in to the interesting statistics identified in the senior survey about how male students are less engaged than female students in areas such as international study, the number of men versus women entering training professions, and if the college is addressing this in an intentional way. Margaret Farrar noted that these traits are not unique to Augustana. Retention at Augustana, as with most other colleges, is less with men than with women. Brian Katz promised to share an article about masculinity in college with the Gen Ed committee. Augustana is offering an all-male LSFY course, now in its second year, and the male students have indicated they like the course.

Rowen Schussheim-Anderson asked the committee if this topic intersects with general education, and if so, how? A comment was made about having heard an argument that the kinds of things students are asked to do in LSFY are “female” things, i.e., focusing too much on texts, too much on reading, too much on writing, and that there should be a higher premium on experiential learning in the first year to better engage our young men. This does affect general education if there is a perceived gender bias. Would the general education program do well to have more experiential elements in the first year? Would it be good to get people (not just men) engaged more thoroughly? Mike Egan shared that he and Umme Al-Wazedi were intrigued by questions surrounding this last term and feel that it does have an impact on intrinsic motivation to read and write. He may discuss with Mark Salisbury about making their teaching sections a dataset to see if men in these service LS courses have a better experience or get more enthusiastic about reading and writing. A point was made that the vast number of LSFY 101 sections are taught by women. Do students perceive that this is women’s work?

Regarding number of males and females choosing international study, most people agree that female students are more interested in doing this. It was also brought up that those who get to go may be chosen on a grade point basis, concluding that grade point is more important than gender balance. Is this something that should concern the committee? It was stated that a 3.0 is a proxy for being engaged, which is important for study abroad.

Male students are more likely to try new experiences if they are part of a peer group (others they are bonded to), so unless “their group” as a whole does not choose the same experience, individuals will not choose it on their own. Recruiting for international study could be done co-curricularly (through fraternity meetings, sports, etc.). Sports may play a role as to why male students do not seek out these opportunities. Men feel that their schedules are inflexible, whereas females try to work their conflicts out. It was suggested that the Gen Ed committee could distribute some sort of document to gen ed faculty that details proven ways of engaging both males and females. This could encourage people in a more effective way.

Rowen commented that this discussion could be handed over to the International and Off-Campus Committee to pursue. John Pfautz offered to bring this discussion to that committee, as he is a member. No resolution came from the discussion.

Rowen suggested having the committee members vote to choose which big topics Gen Ed should begin discussion on. She reviewed the list of topics. As an alternative, Margaret Farrar suggested the committee begin work on a narrative, a compelling vision about what Augustana’s general education program should be. She indicated that the committee would find difficulty addressing individual pieces of general education unless it is articulated what general education should accomplish, e.g., talking about learning communities in isolation of a conversation about integrative learning and what that means for general education; talking about LSFY staffing without talking about what it is that we want LSFY to accomplish. A committee member once asked in a past meeting ‘what does AGES mean anymore?’, which is a great question to consider.

The committee agreed with Margaret’s suggestion and decided to begin this discussion by looking at the learning outcomes document Ellen Hay has drafted and to think about how general education fits in. The committee will look at all nine outcomes and figure out which ones most affect gen ed. The committee members were asked to bring the document with them to the next meeting.

It was asked if the LSFY Skills Matrix could be one piece that could be looked at sooner rather than later. Margaret agreed it would be useful to review the skills matrix, as people are using that now and the skills matrix will still be a useful piece for general education in the future.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion-Pfautz, Second-Jaeschke**

“To adjourn the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Koski, Academic Affairs