

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 5, 2012
Evald 305**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 PM.

Members Present: Richie Benson, Stefanie Bluemle, Joe Bright, 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, Mark Salisbury

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion-Katz, Second-Jaeschke

“To approve the minutes of the August 29, 2012 General Education committee meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

REPORT FROM MARK SALISBURY ON DATA FROM SENIORS RELEVANT TO GEN ED

Mark Salisbury has been sharing the 2012 Senior Survey results with as many entities on campus as possible to foster discussion and increase efforts to achieve desired outcomes of an Augustana education for our students. The report was distributed to the Gen Ed committee and its contents were reviewed. Mark stated that questions that might relate to general education are those in the “Curriculum Outside Major” and the “Overall Curricular Experience” sections. One way to use the report, he suggested, is to ignore the scores, look at the questions and ask: “What would I like the student’s response to be?” Based on that, the committee can ask itself what would need to happen in the work the Gen Ed Committee to help achieve those goals. The larger question to ask is how does a liberal arts education mesh together; how can we avoid isolating its pieces (AGES, majors, etc.). Mark suggests noticing how the scores on different questions compare and ask if that comports with anything else you know about Augustana and your interactions with students. If people pay attention at all, we have a sense of how things happen or not. Does one thing comport with other things that are happening with students? If you notice lots of double majors, how does that influence how they engage with faculty? Does that comport with anything else we’ve seen in other areas?

The committee identified questions that give them insight into what they can improve upon, for example, “The skills I learned in my general education courses helped me succeed in my major courses” and questions they didn’t know where to begin to address, for example, “The courses I needed to take were available in the order in which I needed to take them.” With the latter question, it would be interesting to know what the students’ answer meant it with regards to general education.

Mark explained that the scores do indicate variation, and across majors there is variation. The committee commented that to some extent the entire report is student perception. It could be that their general education experienced has helped them, but they do not realize it. Many students view gen ed and non-major courses as things they have to take, and don’t connect experiences gained in those courses to their overall education. The committee members were disappointed in the lower score for “About how often did you discuss ideas from your non-major courses with faculty members outside of class?” This has been a concern for the college for some time. Convocation, Augie Reads and other ideas arose from a sense of not being able to achieve a vibrant intellectual community; it goes against our perception of a liberal arts college. A comment from a student on the committee was that there is a

purpose-driven reason for students looking for outside of class relationships with majors teachers... there isn't a need to build connections with teachers from non-major courses.

Mark asked if it is time to wonder if things the College desires to promote, contradict themselves. The more students are encouraged to double major and declare second minors, the more something has to give, and that likely is classes not in their major.

It was asked if there were questions with bimodal distributions. Mark indicated he did not see bimodal distributions, but that some experiences are different, and some are statistically significant, while some are not. Students with lower socioeconomic status show several differences.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion-Pfautz, **Second**-Jaeschke

"To adjourn the meeting at 5:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Koski, Academic Affairs