

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
3/17/2010
Olin 304

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

Members present: Tom Bengtson, Anne Earel, Kristin Douglas, Alli Haskill, Dan Lee, Margaret Farrar, Carrie Hough, Mariano Magalhaes, Ashley Booth, Randall Hall, Karin Youngberg, Virginia Johnson, Josh Morgan, and Amanda Beveroth

AGENDA ITEM I: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes from the 3/10/10 meeting; 1- Mariano, 2- Anne; APPROVED AS REVISED

Revision: For item II A; revise as follows: Kristin was directed to ask for more information regarding the COMM384 syllabus.

AGENDA ITEM II: NEW BUSINESS

A. I suffix approval: Cooking is Chemistry CHEM110- Jensen

Motion to approve CHEM 110 for an I suffix; 1- Virginia; 2- Josh Morgan APPROVED

B. Augie Reads selection, *Bottlemania*

Motion to approve *Bottlemania* as the 2010-2011 Augie Reads selection; 1- Dan; 2- Virginia APPROVED

Discussion:

Katie Hanson provided a written rationale for the selection of *Bottlemania*.

Is it the case that LSFY 101 instructors could use *Bottlemania* as a model for writing or does it need to be taught in each course?

Response: Yes; the thought is that the book can be used in LSFY 101 for its content or as a tool for developing LSFY core skills. However, this is a discussion that the LSFY 101 instructors should continue to talk about in future planning.

The author will speak at a convocation next year.

C. Update from Academic Affairs

Interviews for the Director of Institutional Research have been taking place. This position will be key for Gen Ed because the Director will assist in assessing the AGES program.

Margaret provided a handout about needs for next year's AGES program. We need 27-28 sections of LSFY 102 (we currently have 22 staffed, plus 2 with ENG fellows) and LSFY 103 (we currently have 21 staffed, plus 4 additional with ENG fellows), respectively, for class sizes of 22 students. The outlook for LCs is even more promising. Next year will have a variety of LC offerings (traditional LCs, service intensive options, and several new models). Note that one section of Peters and Mahaffey's LC will be reserved for sophomores.

AGENDA ITEM III: OLD BUSINESS

A. Learning Perspective approval: Adventures in Neurophilosophy (PH) APPROVED

Motion to approve the Adventures in Neurophilosophy LC for a PH suffix; 1- Tom; 2- Mariano

Discussion:

The initial concern with the PH suffix approval for some members related to clarity about paper/portfolios/reflection/presentation requirements in the courses; it is not clear if there is a position paper or formal presentation requirement as is typical in most PH courses.

This course will incorporate a new pedagogy, so it may be a challenge to fit typical suffix requirements of a more established model into a newer model.

There seems to be sufficient evidence that the course is in the spirit of a PH even if a formal presentation or substantial position paper is not required.

Motion to approve the Adventures in Neurophilosophy LC for a PP suffix; 1- Mariano; 2- Virginia
APPROVED

Discussion:

The language of the PP guidelines document allows for some flexibility.

Though the values element of the course is clear (PH), it is not clear if there is a historical context as intended (see #s 1-3 of the PP guidelines). Guideline #4 is very well met.

Are we risking being unfair in asking instructors who advance new pedagogies to adhere strictly to existing models of suffixed courses?

One important element to historians for PPs is the use of primary and secondary sources, which clearly is covered in the proposed LC.

B. A new look to AGES? Ranking possible models

Discussion:

We have had time to consider survey data (from the Summer Survey 2009), staffing realities, and possible new formats for our LSFY program. What's next?

One member asked, would we be having these conversations if we did not have staffing concerns for our first year courses?

Response from Kristin: Yes because there are several faculty members who are concerned with the current LSFY courses.

Are there really 2 main questions?

- 1) Should we change the structure of our LSFY program?
- 2) Should we shrink the LSFY program?

A question to consider is, what has happened since the current gen ed program has been implemented? Other elements have been added (e.g., senior inquiry, expansion of foreign study opportunities). Have the circumstances changed? Do we need to put other things on the back burner until we get gen ed figured out?

Response: Perhaps, but it is unlikely that senior inquiry or other major curriculum additions/changes will not be going away so instead we would be well advised to consider the gen ed program.

In the assessment data, one area of disappointment was that our students fail to appreciate diversity; therefore, is it a risk to eliminate 103 courses in which diversity is covered.

Perhaps a move to a 2 class model would work:

- 1) First year seminar (could be in the spirit of 102 or 103)
- 2) First year writing course (similar to current LSFY 101)

How can gen ed support new programs such as senior inquiry and major coursework? If we consider this question, perhaps we can revamp gen ed to better prepare our students for these undertakings.

We should revisit the skills matrix in whatever revisions we ultimately advocate.

There are data to suggest that depth of the progressive skills addressed in AGES are working. Perhaps there should be more administrative pressure for departments to participate in AGES.

We have not been as successful in having majors emulate skills progression as we have been in the AGES sequence. Again, revisiting the skills matrix would be critical in any revision of the gen ed program. If LSFY were to be reduced, then perhaps LPs would need to be sure to address some of these skills. SI also seems like a possible source for nurturing current AGES skills sets.

If we were to reduce the LSFY sequence to 2 courses, diversity could suffer; if we were to recommend a reduction, we may need to revisit our G and D requirements.

Many faculty members value the original intent of the historical aspect of AGES with equal enthusiasm as the diversity aspect.

Homework for next week: think of options on the working document that we may be able to eliminate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08.