

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**3/24/2010**  
**Olin 304**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

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

**AGENDA ITEM I: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to approve minutes from the 3/17/10 meeting; 1- Mariano, 2- Anne; APPROVED

**AGENDA ITEM II: NEW BUSINESS**

A. LC Course Approval for WGS303/RELG323

Motion to approve WGS303 and RELG323 for an LC; 1- Dan; 2- Virginia; APPROVED

B. Update from Academic Affairs

Margaret next week will be sending out an update on our record number of LCs for next year. Be on the lookout for new models and exciting happenings.

**AGENDA ITEM III: OLD BUSINESS**

A. Continuing AGES Discussion

*Discussion:*

Our goal for today is to determine which, if any, options may be eliminated from our most recent draft of our possible options for revising general education document.

Committee members supported the name change of “first year inquiry” to bookend the senior inquiry project.

Should we get student feedback before we proceed with major changes? Informal student feedback has revealed some enthusiasm from students (e.g., students finding majors from their LSFY offerings). Other feedback has indicated that it would be beneficial from the students’ perspective for LP credits to count toward their LSFY courses.

There was committee support for the LSFY courses being interdisciplinary (as they originally intended) for the benefit of both students and faculty. If there is strong committee support for retaining or reintroducing an interdisciplinary emphasis, we may need to revise our course development documents to reflect this intention.

There seems to be some disagreement across faculty about the function of LSFY courses- are they a gateway to disciplines or are they interdisciplinary?

This is a complicated issue: there are several LSFY courses are gateway courses to interdisciplinary majors such as WGS and Africana Studies, which may be valuable. We also need to consider the instructor pool if we were

to make a move toward the courses becoming more interdisciplinary – we need to think about how well prepared our newer faculty members would be to be purposefully interdisciplinary.

When the skills emphasis was introduced a few years ago, the initial interdisciplinary intent (perhaps) may have subsided.

A skills focus and an interdisciplinary focus do not need to be mutually exclusive; perhaps using the language of “first year inquiry” could be helpful in merging the two emphases.

There is a possibility in a course reduction model for FY inquiry where one of the two courses could (similar to the “G” model on the “Options for Gen Ed That Have Been Suggested” document) focus on liberal education and the other on diverse inquiry/gateway to major sort of courses.

Would it be possible to pair in fall term of first year a writing FY course and another inquiry type course, like a modified LC? Response: scheduling would be a challenge and it would be difficult to convince first time college students that their schedule would be completely predetermined for their first term of college.

Concerns about option “H”: making LSFY into a two trimester single course. It is doubtful that this would be appealing to students and it may present logistical challenges.

“D” and “H” appear to be highly similar. The rationale for these suggestions was to ensure continuity for a longer period of time for our students. Many of our students like our shorter terms, so 20 weeks with a single instructor may not be well received.

“I” was confusing to some committee members (a complete overhaul of AGES). Perhaps we should eliminate the foreign language portion of “I.” Administrators have suggested that perhaps now is time to revisit the question of Christian Traditions vs. Religious Traditions. The campus wants us to take this opportunity to rethink the entire AGES package. Dropping 102 and 103 may limit our ability to develop the skills set that we value.

The notion of extending elements of the LSFY program to other aspects of AGES is appealing to some. We may need to consider how we reinforce skills introduced in LSFY 101 in other areas such as LCs or senior inquiry.

An e portfolio system has been identified as problematic and it was recommended that this model be omitted from the document.

Concerns were expressed about “J,” which seems similar to “H.” It may add a layer of complexity for coordinating instructors. Though interesting pedagogically, it may be impractical in terms of time and logistics. It may also be the case that our new LC guidelines may allow for a “J” type option.

Conclusion: “D,” “H,” “I,” and “J” will be placed on the backburner for now.

“A” and “G” overlap somewhat. Could they be combined? Others are skeptical about “A.” One of the concerns with AGES is that we have not done a consistent job of assessing how skills are developed beyond the first year sequence in the LP courses (even though LPs are vetted carefully when the courses are proposed.) With the “A” model, would adding an LP complicate already complicated course development? If we retain the current skills development aspect of the LSFY courses, it simply may be too much to ask instructors to meet criteria for LPs as well. It may instead be preferable to keep the interdisciplinary integrity of LSFY courses and reduce the number of LP requirements students have. An alternate view was presented that at least some current LSFY faculty may believe their courses already meet perspectives requirements.

“E”- if it doesn’t address the staffing issue, why are we considering it? Is it okay to emphasize to students that there is inherent value in interdisciplinary courses, that not all courses need to lead to a major? “E” seems almost more of a marketing option than anything. There may be options of interest to particular majors for option “E,” but not prerequisites?

Again, it may be valuable to consider where else in the curriculum we may be working on skills sets currently being targeted in LSFY courses.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 31, 2010.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.