

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 8, 2012
Evald 305**

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

Members Present: Tom Bengtson, Lendol Calder, Anne Earel, Mike Egan, Margaret Farrar, Alli Haskill, Carrie Hough, Rick Jaeschke, Virginia Johnson, Brian Katz, Jason Koontz, Emil Kramer

Guests Present: Mary Koski

AGENDA ITEM I: Approval of Minutes

The February 1, 2012 minutes were not presented for approval.

AGENDA ITEM II: NEW BUSINESS

Alli Haskill announced the visit from Cathy Goebel will occur at the next Gen Ed meeting: March 7, 2012 instead of this meeting as revisions to Cathy's proposal arrived too late for committee to review.

AGENDA ITEM III: OLD BUSINESS

"Intended Student Learning Outcomes at Augustana College" Feedback

Alli Haskill reported that she discussed with Mike Wolf/EPC what EPC's expectations are for Gen Ed regarding submitting work on the Intended Student Learning Outcomes document. EPC has no clear indication of the two committee's roles. EPC does not expect Gen Ed to redraft the document. Both EPC and Gen Ed will pass on any outcomes that are missing or could be more directly addressed, such as the health and wellness and creative thinking. Rowen Schussheim-Anderson submitted her rationale to include the creative problem solving, artistic qualities (aesthetic quality of life, appreciation in visual arts, artistic values) in the document. Alli Haskill received the Gen Ed committee's approval to submit the "body" part of mind, body and spirit as well as some information about the creative on Gen Ed's behalf.

Finalizing Gen Ed Proposal for RISE Committee

The committee discussed what information to give to the RISE committee, especially about the integrative learning piece. Margaret Farrar indicated RISE wanted to know if Gen Ed would consider a Learning Community where two instructors team-teach and each instructor would get 2 credits, which would be especially amenable to the J-term experience. Margaret indicated to Pareena Lawrence that it appears logical and reasonable given all of the configurations that have been considered. Margaret's concern with faculty only receiving two loads of credit for the course is that the other two credits have to be made up somewhere else, and this solution does not address that problem. This does not guarantee that more learning communities would be developed either. Margaret asked the committee for their perspective. Members felt that it could be added in, but would more learning communities really materialize? An option like this already exists, and yet we are still short on learning communities.

At the recent Gen Ed-sponsored faculty forum and Friday Conversation, Gen Ed presented two possible options if it was to omit course-based learning communities as a requirement. Option #1) Integrative Learning would remain a college-wide learning outcome that is managed entirely at the department level. Option #2) Integrative Learning would remain a college-wide learning outcome that is managed

largely at the department level, but overseen by an external faculty committee (i.e., Gen Ed). Feedback at the two events was minimal regarding the two options, however at least one comment given was an admission that the last thing departments need is something else they have to do. Other comments from faculty:

- If a reduction needs to be made, drop Senior Inquiry, rather than learning communities (learning communities are more liberal arts, while SI is focused on the major)
- Push back on the one-third and go higher
- The AGES package is the liberal arts; otherwise students go toward their major
- G and D should not have a learning perspective attached

Margaret Farrar commented that the reason for the one-third rule is to maintain the ability for students to double major. There must either be one-third, one-third, one-third, or that has to be expanded; we cannot have both. One option for Gen Ed is to keep the integrative learning requirement at the department level provided departments indicate they can offer some sort of integrative learning component. If they do not, Gen Ed could push back in the way Dave Dehnel suggests and not allow for double dipping with the G and D, and then those become independent. If we do double dip, there is overlap and it is likely going to be smaller than Gen Ed has suggested. Tom Bengtson stated that if Gen Ed does not allow double dipping, then it should re-discuss the PN and I. Anne Earel added that if double dipping is no longer allowed, then the advising process will be much more frustrating.

Rick Jaeschke asked if departments are given ownership of the integrative learning piece, isn't Gen Ed losing part of its charge? Margaret Farrar replied that a great resistance to departments having ownership of the integrative learning piece was sensed at the two conversations; this reaction was unexpected.

Emil Kramer suggested Gen Ed consider what integrative learning really means. The Latin roots indicate it means somehow combining what one has learned into a whole knowledge. How does a learning community do that? Is there some other mechanism or something else that we are doing that addresses that goal better than two classes that people take that could be anything? Margaret Farrar expressed her sense from GEWG's original intent was about the ability of students to make connections for different ideas. We justify expanding to these different forms because it is still about making connections. She feels we have a very specific understanding of what integrative learning has been in regards to the learning community. She added that instructors continue to like learning communities and they are objectively good courses. What we see in the data that Mark Salisbury presented on SRI forms is that the impact they may have on students does not come through in SRI data. The instructors who have taught these courses separately score lower on things like clarity and presentation as well.

Margaret Farrar said that if Gen Ed feels strongly about including integrative learning, then it should be included in the document to RISE. Anne Earel feels that it is Gen Ed's responsibility to try to promote integrative learning.

Brian Katz supports the idea of integrating what students learn over four years. He offered an idea of incorporating integrative learning in a one-course-unit, all of which carry an LP and occurs toward the end of the students' time at Augustana (junior or senior). The course could be a version of an old learning community; wouldn't have to be taught by two people but could become 2 + 2 interdisciplinary courses. This would be similar to a Gen Ed Capstone course, but it would have an LP. Current learning communities could convert if they desired or they could stay in their same format. Single instructors could teach interdisciplinary courses that are intended for upper class students that explicitly fit into this role. Study abroad could be a version, and likely the service learning courses could be converted to fit as well. If an instructor is allowed to teach the course by themselves, it alleviates the stress of coordinating heavily in the term with another person.

Emil Kramer suggested that the campus-wide symposia that are being implemented next year may be a good way to incorporate integrative learning. Addressing the issue with just one or two classes sends the wrong impression to the students. The larger context like the symposium would have more impact than one or two courses. If we approached these college-wide symposia with that particular goal in mind, he feels it would be an appropriate vehicle to help incorporate integrated learning over four years. Carrie Hough expressed her support for using the symposia as well. Virginia Johnson added that if the first term symposium was connected to the first-term LSFY it could make common reading all the way across the campus more palatable.

Margaret Farrar asked for feedback on the idea of leaving integrative learning off the proposal to RISE and making a statement that Gen Ed is leaving it off because we understand it is a complicated topic, a big goal which is necessitated by a serious discussion. Gen Ed will come back to this topic and revisit it after the 4-1-4 decision has been made. Comments in response to this were related to conversations in the past where departments have announced that need to know what Gen Ed's proposal is before they can make final curricular decisions for their department; and if Gen Ed indicates that they will work on this later, departments will read that as this discussion will lead to nothing.

Margaret Farrar asked the committee what direction to take. Although no consensus was reached, comments made :

- going forward with no proposal
- if we indicate NO integrative learning, Gen Ed cannot go back and add it in later
- revisit it after the vote
- integrative learning deserves more intentionality on the part of the college as a whole, but not to simply OK learning communities

Margaret will bring a statement back to the Gen Ed group for the first week of spring term.

AGENDA ITEM IV: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Koski,
Academic Affairs