

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
REVISED MEETING MINUTES  
April 27, 2011  
Olin 304**

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

**Members Present:** Amanda Beveroth, Stefanie Bluemle, Meg Gillette, Randall Hall, Alli Haskill, Carrie Hough, Virginia Johnson, Brian Katz, Anna Knepler, Jason Koontz

**Guests Present:** Mark Salisbury

**AGENDA ITEM I: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes to approve this week.

**AGENDA ITEM II: NEW BUSINESS**

No new business to address at this meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM III: OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Feedback for PP learning perspective for GRMN 324**

**Discussion:** In response to Gen Ed's questions about this application for a learning perspective, David Ellis supplied the committee with further information. The committee was concerned that this foreign-term course taught by a non-Augustana instructor included only a few lessons tied to the past, and David Ellis' document addressed this concern. Taking the additional information supplied by this document into account, the Registrar requested input from Gen Ed on whether this course should be approved with a PP learning perspective. Brian Katz indicated that the course does incorporate both primary and secondary sources. Alli Haskill mentioned that two absent committee members had voted in favor of the LP. No objections were voiced by members present.

**B. 6/35 & AGES; Feedback from Dave Dehnel**

**Discussion:** Alli Haskill stated that the Gen Ed 6/35 document was circulated earlier in the week after being sent to the 6/35 committee chair, Dave Dehnel. Dehnel expressed concern that the Gen Ed reduction suggestions were too deep and would sink the entire proposal, though Alli Haskill added that Gen Ed was originally concerned that the proposed cuts would be seen as not deep enough and that she did not want to take a lot of time at the faculty forum on April 28 to discuss the Gen Ed reductions and thereby derail discussion of the overall 6/35 proposal. Brian Katz mentioned that the document did not address the rationale behind eliminating the I suffix. Alli Haskill responded that the document did not contain a lot of explanation because these reductions are contingent on any calendar changes that might happen, and suggested changes to AGES can be fleshed out after calendar has been decided. She added that these are changes that merit their own faculty for and solicitation of feedback from the faculty. Further, the AGES suggestions demonstrate flexibility and there are a lot of ways to revise the system in the spirit of promoting general education. Brian Katz stated that, as when Gen Ed was revised via GEWG, we should put forward what is critical and add other ideas via faculty fora.

Alli Haskill mentioned that the committee had not yet discussed the findings of the sub-committees that addressed learning communities (LCs) and macro-level issues. She added that Lendol Calder had told her that Mike Egan (on leave from the committee this term) has the macro issues document. The LC document was then displayed for discussion. Randall Hall stated that under the current model, LC courses are upper-level and students can't necessarily count on their LCs to meet LPs they have not yet fulfilled, and that Dave Dehnel's AGES reduction proposal assumed double-dipping of this kind. Brian Katz mentioned that he advises his students to go out of their way to duplicate LPs so this will not be an issue. Meg Gillette asked whether, under one of the LC models in the proposal, it would be possible to team-teach LSFY courses and still do all that we are supposed to do with these courses. Alli Haskill responded that LSFY would need to be restructured if we went to this model, and then asked if students still had problems registering for LCs. Anna Knepler and Amanda Beveroth replied that it seems to be less of a problem than a few years ago, but seniors who need LCs still have scheduling challenges and sometimes the LC that fits into a schedule isn't one that the student wants to take. Jason Koontz and Meg Gillette both commented that their advisees are more enthusiastic about LCs and are thinking ahead about scheduling them than they have been in the past.

Mark Salisbury discussed LC research that has been undertaken at other colleges and universities that have established learning communities. The ideal is a living LC, in which students share a residence and courses. This model is used at larger universities to create a smaller community for students, much like the environment at small liberal arts colleges like Augustana. Living LCs work well in this context. When LCs focus just in learning and not a shared living experience, they primarily are geared toward first year students and are focused on connecting students across courses and integrative learning across disciplinary perspectives. Augustana doesn't follow either of these models, and therefore doesn't benefit from their advantages. If we aim to preserve the integrative aspect of LCs in a team-taught LSFY course, there is a hitch—there is research that demonstrates that team-taught courses do not have the same impact when the instructors are largely working separately. It is when students witness the interaction between instructors and their different perspectives that the desired, integrated effect is generated. Alli Haskill stated that Augustana LCs were modeled on successes seen in Honors courses. Brian Katz added that Honors courses are 3-credits and team-taught. Randall Hall raised a question about costs and benefits of more widely applying this model—how would faculty be paid to team-teach one 3-credit course? Mark Salisbury responded that a cost/benefit analysis is fair, and asked how we can set up the system to deliver the desired outcomes based on the resources we have. Randall Hall then discussed the shift in focus from multi-disciplinarity to the skills matrix in the LSFY sequence, and how LCs have attempted to re-install that integrative learning component. Mark Salisbury added that the success of LCs depends on intentional pedagogical choices. We have 12 years of data that demonstrate that SRI outcomes in LCs are not as strong as in non-LC courses and this does not seem to be random.

#### **IV: ANNOUNCEMENT**

A. There will be no meeting during Week 9. The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 10 at 4 PM.

#### **V: ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carrie Hough