

General Education Committee Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2012

Meeting began: 12:30 p.m.
Meeting Adjourned: 1:16 p.m.

Present: Dr. Courtney Vahlberg, Dr. Max Simmons, Charles Myrick, Dr. Kathy Wheat, Mary Turner, Sherry Ray, Doug Gregory, Dr. Janet Perry, Dr. Jennifer Allen, Jay Ramanjulu, Catherine Kinyon, and Pam Stout

Absent: Greg Gardner, Dr. Glenne' Whisenhunt, and Yuthika Kim

The committee first reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. Catherine pointed out a correction that needed to be made. Pam made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction. Max seconded the motion. The minutes with the correction were unanimously approved.

Next was an update on the charter for the General Education Committee. It was presented to Dr. Aquino and was immediately approved. Catherine has uploaded it to the website. Thank you, Catherine.

Next, the critical thinking assessment was addressed. With the current outcome statements, critical thinking is only officially addressed in the Science Methodology outcome. There was discussion regarding broadening critical thinking to be reflected across disciplines. Pam reported that the Division of Arts and Humanities universally accepted this idea when it was presented at the October division meeting. Kathy indicated that the idea was accepted by the Division of Health Professions, as well. Many of those programs already require students to work on case studies and engage in other activities that reflect critical thinking.

Max made a motion to change the Scientific Methodology outcome to Critical Thinking. Pam seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

The next discussion focused on the fact that the committee must still grapple with the collection of artifacts. There will also have to be at least one assessment group to evaluate the artifacts for critical thinking. Scientific Methodology artifacts were evaluated by Max, Steve Shore, Ron Scribner, and Courtney. It was suggested that Darby Johnsen, Steve Morrow, and Kathy Wheat be invited to join the assessment team for critical thinking artifacts.

A question arose about how these assessment teams operate. A concern was raised about whether team members were responsible for acquiring and preparing artifacts for assessment. Courtney explained that that was not the case. Artifacts will be submitted directly to her. She will forward the course and section information to Janet, who will return a list of students from each of the sections submitting artifacts who meet the criteria of 35 hours at OCCC. Courtney will then pull the qualifying artifacts and remove any identifying information before sending them to the assessment teams.

It was stressed that there **should** be no extra work for faculty. (There should be staff available in each division who could be called upon to make the copies of the artifacts.) There is also no privacy risk for students with the possible exception of those students whose speeches were videotaped. Faculty teaching online could submit their artifacts to an e-file or shared drive. It is time to help faculty shift their focus from the physical exertion of submitting artifacts to the cognitive idea that it is appropriate for everyone to do so.

The committee briefly reviewed a critical thinking rubric from Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). It was agreed that the best way to use this particular rubric, which is in the form of a table, would be to select a row and address it per artifact. The rubric for Scientific Methodology will be removed from the website. Once the committee has decided on a critical thinking rubric, it will be uploaded for faculty to see.

Max suggested that this might be the year in which we want to break from the traditional way we have assessed outcomes for the last three or four years. We might look at possible tiers of competency. There was a question about who is using the critical thinking rubric and also about whether there were opportunities for communities of discussion. Catherine said that there already is an opportunity for such discussion. Doug suggested that we might want to expand the focus of our assessment to include external feedback.

At Johnson County Community College, there is a cohort of faculty who contribute artifacts for assessment.

As time ran down, Courtney encouraged the committee to give some consideration to possible critical thinking rubrics and to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Max encouraged faculty to bring up the topic of contributing artifacts during performance appraisal meetings each spring.

Pam made a motion that the committee adjourn. Max seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.