

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
March 10, 2011 Minutes

Meeting Began 12:34 p.m.
Meeting Adjourned 1:20 p.m.

Present: Jon Inglett, Mary Turner, Greg Gardner, Dr. Janet Perry, Dr. Max Simmons, Dawn Ladiski, Tamala Zolicoffer, Ernest Gobert, Randy Hopkins, Catherine Kinyon, Doug Gregory, Valerie McCarthy, Lori Farr, Linda Cowan, Jay Ramanjalu, and Jeff Cleek.

Absent: none

Valerie made a motion to approve the November 10 minutes. Jay seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

New forms have been developed for the approval of general education courses. Greg discussed the fact that the committee had drifted away from the process as it had been historically conducted. We have returned to the original process. The Curriculum Committee doesn't necessarily have to be involved in the process of approval if the course has already been approved by them, but is now being added to the list of general education courses.

There was some discussion regarding what general education means. OCCC has based general education competencies on the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) required courses for graduation listing. At some point, we need to address the difference between courses required for graduation and general education competencies. The latter is a broader term that should encompass skills demonstrated across the curriculum.

The next item of business addressed history courses that were recently approved as general education courses. The added courses are:

HIST 1713, Survey of World Civilization to 1500 C. E.
HIST 1723, Survey of World Civilization since 1600 C. E.
HIST 2013, History of Russia

These changes will be reflected in the 2012 Catalog but were made too late to be included in the summer and fall printed schedules. There was some question about the timeline for submitting information and making changes in these publications.

The next discussion regarded how to best evaluate outcomes. There will be no changes in the process until after the Fall 2011 site visit by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). At some point, the General Education Committee needs to find a way to separate outcomes from courses. Currently, competencies are course-specific and they need to be more global. Some of the broader categories that were suggested include critical thinking, communications, problem-solving, global awareness, and technology.

Greg posed a question about the difference between critical thinking and problem-solving. What do we expect our students to be able to do and how can we incorporate that expectation into more courses? With respect to communications, Mary asked if we wanted students to demonstrate internal and interpersonal communications (can they think about things and can they communicate that thinking to others).

Lori suggested that we might create some type of chart similar to what Tulsa Community College has done to show all of the courses that lead to a degree and where certain competencies are currently being taught so that we can fill in any gaps.

Max brought up the point that in the past, not everyone has embraced the idea that competencies are not course specific. He suggested that some faculty would be resistant to the idea in part out of fear that they would not be able to justify the existence of their courses.

It was mentioned that we have developed a list of courses without regard to the reasons why these courses are a part of the general education list. Max suggested that each course could embody skills, knowledge, and critical thinking although some would be resistant to that idea.

Jon brought up the fact that his tenure as chair of the committee officially ended in January. He said that he was willing to stay on as co-chair until another person could be recruited. That would allow him to help that person transition more easily and to know the history of where we are and how we arrived here.

Greg said that next year will be a year of transition for the General Education and Educational Outcomes committees.

The next meeting will take place on either April 21 or April 28 after the HLC meeting. Lori then made a motion for the committee to adjourn. Max seconded the motion. The committee adjourned at 1:20 p.m.