

Minutes for the Called *Carolina Core Meeting*

August 24, 2016, 9:00-10:30 pm

Thomas Cooper Library, Room 204

Members Present:

Sabrina Andrews (ex-officio), Joseph Askins, Susan Beverung, Pam Bowers, Sara Corwin, James Cutsinger, Rob Dedmon, Helen Doerpinghaus (Administrative Co-Chair), Kris Finnigan (ex-officio), Daniel Freedman, Brian Habing, Chris Holcomb (Faculty Co-Chair), Mackenzie King, Cliff Leaman, Manton Matthews, Douglas Meade, Chris Nesmith, Ginger Nichols-Osborne, Claire Robinson (ex-officio), Kathy Snediker (ex-officio), Andrea Tanner, Jennifer Tilford (ex-officio)

Members Absent:

Ron Cox, Andy Gillentine, Augie Grant (ex-officio), Kathleen Kirasic (ex-officio), Gene Luna, Alfred Moore, Ed Munn Sanchez

Specialty Team Chairs Present:

(Joseph Askins), (Chris Holcomb), David Hitchcock, Judy Kalb, George Khushf, Adam Schor, Shelley Smith, Jeff Wilson

Specialty Team Chairs Absent:

Mindy Fenske

Guests: Nancy Buchan

Welcome (Chris Holcomb)

Chris welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Announcements (Chris Holcomb)

1. The search for an AIU specialty team chair is still in progress.
2. We now have the data for students coming in with AP and IB exam credit for ENGL 101 and 102 and POLI 201. George thinks the AP exam for POLI 201 satisfies the VSR component in overlay. Joe and Chris looked at the AP English exams and agreed that it did not satisfy the overlay for INF. 984 students came in with exam credit for ENGL 101 and 102. The results when looking at transfer credit for ENGL 102 was reassuring, in that it showed that the majority of students had received INF training. The number of students with AP credit for ENGL 101 and 102 was expected to be much lower, so this will need to be discussed further.
3. The draft minutes from August 10 were approved with the amendment of Ginger Nickles-Osborne as member.

Assessment Discussion (Chris Holcomb and Sabrina Andrews)

Sabrina, Donald, and Chris met last week to talk about the ongoing assessment of Carolina Core. There are four outcome areas to be assessed this fall. Two issues came up: 1) how to share assessment results (post on CC website or somewhere else) and 2) the role of specialty team members in the assessment process. The primary role of specialty team members primarily had been to review course proposals to be added to the Carolina Core, but when the assessment process started, it shifted to developing a rubric for assessment. Meetings are scheduled with specialty teams over the next couple of weeks.

Sabrina provided a handout (created by Donald) on the Carolina Core and Assessment Best Practices. The handout describes the role of the Carolina Core Committee in determining mastery of learning goals, reporting of results, and making recommendations to improve student learning. Best practices for the path forward, including ways to publicize targets being met and what to do when targets are not met, are also covered in the handout. When targets are met, this information needs to be shared and celebrated. When targets are not met, the process must be evaluated and changes and improvements must be made. The "Questions to Consider" section on page 3 of the handout can help us in the process for setting goals and developing our strategies. Sabrina also explained that internal stakeholders are our faculty and students, those that we're serving, and external stakeholders are those to whom we are accountable—SACS, parents, and employers. Adam Schor added that providing guidance in designing and implementing assessments to the specialty team chairs is necessary during this process.

From his previous experience with evaluations for the VSR component, George Khushf was concerned about how objectives for evaluation are determined, rater reliability, and the validation of instruments used in assessment. Ultimately, are the results measuring and addressing the competencies that were originally identified? Sabrina responded that in order to proactively approach these issues, she and Donald are meeting with the various departments with the rubric, the data collected so far, and some guiding principles in hand. Pam Bowers added that the clarity of the assignments and the instruction are also very important factors in the assessment process. It was agreed that the rubrics are not fixed and that we may find some items

included in the rubrics aren't measurable. Qualitative reflection, including the validity and accuracy of the instruments being used, and revision of the rubrics based on the data produced are a necessary part of the process.

The Committee recognized the limitations of the tools and the assessments in evaluating overall learning outcomes in a holistic way due to simplification of the rubrics and the data produced. It was suggested that weaknesses and goals be listed at the top of any results that are shared. Helen expressed that although skepticism is always present during the process, many of the Committee members have learned a lot from the process. Skepticism can help improve the evaluation tools that we use, and in the end, this entire process benefits the students. However, skepticism can also make it difficult to find people to serve on the specialty teams. The current list of specialty team members was passed around to be reviewed and edited for accuracy.

Chris Holcomb initiated a discussion of the specialty team members having a greater role in finding raters. Previously, Nicole Spensley had gathered the raters. The Committee was in support of specialty team involvement in the recruitment of raters due to their close ties to the various content areas. It was suggested that strategies be put in place to recruit raters and that Sabrina and Donald create a template for the report to identify important points.

Update on Bulletin Change for Transfer Equivalency (Kris Finnigan and Doug Meade)

Kris drafted a memo to the directors of the affected departments to inform them of upcoming Bulletin changes. Doug sent out the memo and received only a few questions. Doug will use the APPS system to submit changes on Friday for each of the courses affected.

Updates on INF and VSR (Chris Holcomb, Joe Askins, and George Khushf)

It was discussed in previous meetings that additional courses be identified that could easily incorporate INF into the curriculum to provide additional instruction for those fulfilling the INF component through ENGL 102 transfer, AP, or IB credit. Speech 140 was identified as such a course. Pat Gehrke has already submitted a proposal for SPCH 145, an online communications course that covers both CMS and INF, which he plans to pilot with nursing students in a 7-week format in Spring 2017. He has a very detailed sample syllabus that has been sent out to the specialty team for review, and SPCH 145 is already in the APPS system to be approved for Carolina Core before the pilot begins. In the past, shortage of instructors has been an issue for SPCH 140, but this online format will not have to be taught locally. This flexible format also works well for students in the Palmetto Programs and in Nursing. It is planned that SPCH 145 will be offered regularly (including summer).

Concerns were shared about the cost, standards, and whether we are planning to break down the evaluation results of an online course versus an in-person course. Helen responded that the Provost's office is engaged in the national discussion of cost for an online course versus a traditional face-to-face course. Additionally, there are national "Quality Matters" standards for all courses that must be met. Any course approved to include a Carolina Core component will cover all outcomes of the component and show how those learning outcomes will be met in the course proposal and in the syllabus.

The decision to allow fulfillment of the INF component through AP ENGL 102 credit, even though it was found that INF is not covered on the AP exam, is of great concern to the Committee, with 984 students receiving this credit. Because only the AP exam is evaluated, it is unknown whether the INF component is covered in the actual course content. It is also possible for a student to take the AP ENGL test without ever having taken an AP ENGL course. Therefore, it is uncertain if INF is covered through AP and IB credit. The suggestion was made to raise the score required to receive credit from the exams, but this may be governed by CHE. Kris will check on the CHE requirements. The possibility of obtaining reports on syllabi of the courses that transfer in was also mentioned. Data Warehouse will also have the ability to create reports for AP and IB credit, making data collecting easier in the future. Once Doug Meade submits the proposed changes for transfer equivalency through APPS, AP and IB credit will fulfill both the CMW and INF components of the Carolina Core. George added that these same issues do not exist for POLI 201, as the VSR component coverage is evident.

Other Business

Joe talked to David Lankes (Dean of Library and Info. Science), and he is eager to participate in the specialty team for INF. Joe will remain as interim chair until further notice.

Conclusion (Chris Holcomb)

Next meeting is September 13. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Tilford.