

Approved Minutes of the Carolina Core (General Education) Committee Meeting

April 13, 2010
12:30-2:00 p.m.
204 Thomas Cooper Library

Members Present:

Cheryl Addy, Pam Bowers (ex-officio), Jim Burns, Mary Ann Byrnes, Helen Doerpinghaus (ex-officio), Susanne Hicklin, Mary Hjelm, Carolyn Jones, Sheryl Kline, Gene Luna, Michael Matthews (co-chair), David Miller (co-chair), Susan Parlier, Joseph Rackers, Rick Stephens, David Tedeschi, Irma Van Scoy, Virginia Weathers

Members Absent:

Elise Ahyi (ex-officio), Kris Finnigan (ex-officio), Kimberly Glenn, Stuart Hunter, Phil Moore (ex-officio), Patrick Nolan (ex-officio), Terrie Smith, Jennifer Vendemia (ex-officio)

Faculty Content Consultants Present: Claudia Benitez-Nelson, Erik Doxtader, Lacy Ford, Andrew Graciano, Jerry Hackett, Sam Hastings, Ken Kelly, Doug Meade, Marja Warehime

Minutes of the March 16 meeting were approved, with corrections.

The University Forum, held on March 30 at 11:00-12:30 in the Russell House Theater, was well attended. Helen commented that the discussion provided through the Forums is important to increase understanding among faculty of the work of the committee, and to receive faculty comments that shape the work of the committee. An audio file of the forum will be posted on the general education website. Helen noted that some students submitted comments online.

David Miller will be on sabbatical during the Fall semester. Lacy Ford will represent Arts and Sciences on the committee in his absence, but will not serve in an administrative role with the committee.

The three working groups of the committee met independently for about 45 minutes.

Reports of Working Groups

Mike reported that his group recognized that had previously oversubscribed the number of hours for the various learning outcomes they were considering. They raised the following points for consideration:

- Don't students across the university already have a larger-than-32 hours 'de facto' core now? (Don't most already take more than 32 hours of general education, including college requirements?)
- Program faculty should be encouraged to examine each degree curriculum holistically, consider what general education requirements (university and college) are in place, and re-examine what's occurring in existing courses (how do they all fit together).
 - o For example, is calculus really the minimum needed for general education in every major? (currently calculus is the lowest-level course that meets the general education requirement)

David reported that his group discussed innovative ways of incorporating the new outcomes into a number of course hours similar to what is currently required. Two possibilities they discussed:

- A new course – created to achieve foundational learning outcomes for *oral communication*, and *values, ethics and social responsibility* within one course. Information literacy might also be a part of this course or could, conceivably, be addressed in some combination of this new course and freshman composition courses.

- The notion of freeing up some learning outcomes now identified as part of the core, to be integrated into the major curriculum rather than separate from it. The group will create a model or example of how this might work, for the committee's further consideration.

Helen's reported the following from her group's discussion:

- Comments at the Forum indicate that faculty do not seem to think of the core as "foundational."
- They encourage threading the core learning outcomes throughout the curriculum.
- They emphasized the need for effective assessment of student learning; reminding that the point is not the content of the courses, but what students learn in the courses.
- They had differing views on the idea of a new course intended to meet multiple outcomes.
 - o Logistics would be difficult – should be carefully considered.
 - o Course could be taught by many departments, not just a "super-department"
 - o Technology might make it easier to implement such a course.

Summary discussion included the following points/questions:

- Are we willing to have "non-traditional" courses – not discipline bound?
- There is a need to "map" learning in the major, rather than focusing just on the first two years.
- Core learning outcomes should be integrated into each discipline's plan of study.

The Carolina Core committee will continue to meet monthly during the summer; content consultants will rejoin the group when the Fall semester begins in August.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, May 11 at 12:30-2:00 p.m., location to be determined.