

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY
GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL
Meeting of May 6, 2004 Minutes

PRESENT:

Faculty: Peg Camp, Valerie Cisler, Sandy Cook-Fong, Randall Heckman, Allan Jenkins, Sonja Kropp, Larry Kuskie, Marta Moorman, Janet Steele

Ex officio members: Mary Daake, Kristi Milks, Tanis Saldivar, Kim Schipporeit, and Bill Wozniak

Absent: John Lillis, Karen Malmkar, Chuck Peek, Glen Powell, Alicia Spelts, Kenya Taylor, Ed Walker

Wozniak called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. in the 2122 Founders Hall.

1. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2004

- a. Moorman (Jenkins) moved approval of the minutes of the April 8 meeting. The motion passed.

2. CD/WI COURSE SUBMISSIONS

a. **Writing Intensive:**

- a. HIST 474, American Constitutional History II (Cox)
- b. PSCI 170, Intro to Political Thought (Blauwkamp)
- c. HIST 479, Nebraska and the Great Plains (Ellis)
- d. ECON 499, Independent Study and research in Economics (Jenkins, Bridges)

All of the above courses have been reviewed and approved by the WI subcommittee. *Camp (Kuskie) moved approval of items a - d. Motion passed.*

b. **Cultural Diversity:**

- a. PSCI 140, Introduction to Comparative Politics (Aviles)
- b. VOED 434, Introduction to Students with Special Needs (Lear)

Both of the above courses have been reviewed and approved by the CD subcommittee. *Cook-Fong (Moorman) moved approval of items a and b. Motion passed.*

3.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a. **WI Cleanup:**

- i. none

b. **CD Cleanup:**

. none

c. Notification of New WI Course-Instructor Assignments:

. none

d. General Studies Assessment Update

. Wozniak distributed copies of an annual general studies assessment schedule. The schedule indicates the annual assessment is on a 16-month cycle, with the beginning of the assessment activities overlapping with the final writing stages of the previous year's report. The overlap occurs during the summer months, when most of those activities can be completed without a General Studies Council meeting. He also distributed copies of preliminary 2003-2004 General Studies Assessment Report (not included in the minutes because it is 34 pages in length.) He asked that Council members review the report over the summer and prepare recommendations for consideration at the August meeting. He noted that the student outcomes assessments for Math, Psychology, English composition, and Chemistry used very different methodologies and produced very different results. More discussion of this item will be scheduled for the next meeting.

e. Proposals from WI subcommittee

. To include a general prerequisite for all WI courses of a "C" or better in ENG 102 (Review of pertinent data)

The relevant data (a distribution of course grades for ENG 102) concerning this proposal were included in the assessment report. Other relevant data included a listing of WI courses typically taken by freshman students. Over the last 4 semesters, between 107 and 157 freshman students have taken WI courses. The majority of these are in TE 100. Any possible action was postponed until fall.

f. Liberal Studies at UNK

. Continued discussion of schedule for discussing recommendations
Wozniak distributed a [revised schedule](#) that included previous Council actions. *(It is linked.) Jenkins (Cook-Fong) moved that the Directors of General Studies and the Center for Teaching Excellence develop a workshop for faculty that will address item 2-5. Motion passed.*

i. Review of recommendation concerning review of the Fine Arts & Humanities category (Jenkins)

Jenkins expressed concern over a motion passed at the last meeting. (Quoted from the previous minutes: "Kropp (Cisler) moved to send the following recommendations to the College of Fine Arts and Humanities for review by a committee of representatives of all Fine Arts and Humanities departments so that discussion can occur and comments be forwarded to the General Studies Council by October, 2004: Recommendation 2-1, requiring students complete ENG 101 and 102 during the first

two years; Recommendation 2-2, adding foreign language as a strand of the Humanities category; Recommendation 3-2, status of Philosophy in the Humanities category (i.e., not required); and Recommendation 3-6, status of History in the Humanities category (i.e., rather than in Social Sciences.)") He was concerned that the CFAH would put in a lot of work on a proposal that ultimately might not be passed by the General Studies Council. He did not want the College faculty to assume that their proposal would become policy automatically. Kropp said that the CFAH has no such presumption, and that they understand that the Council and the other Colleges must approve such changes. The discussion then centered on whether the Council was "passing the buck" concerning the GS program. Wozniak said he understood his job was to establish a venue for proposals and their consideration, but not to provide the proposals. He said the actual motions should come from the faculty members of the Council. Kropp said she was reluctant to present such motions because the implications of such motions for other potential changes to the GS program were not clear. The discussion then centered on the history of the changes made to the General Studies Program and how major changes had usually accommodated political and practical agendas. The dilemma of how to change the present GSP was considered.

- g. Proposal concerning Governance of WI and CD courses
Action on this item was postponed until the fall.

B. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review of meeting schedule for 2004-2005 academic year
GSC members were reminded of the August meeting scheduled below. The complete schedule for the 2004-2005 academic year will be constructed at that meeting.

C. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. Wozniak apologized for the unprofessional tone the last two meetings may have had.

D. NEXT MEETINGS:

- a. The next General Studies Council meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2004 in 2122 Founders Hall.

 - i. This meeting has traditionally been held at this time clean up any last-minute problems caused by new hires and schedule changes.

E.

Attachment: [Revised Assessment Schedule](#)

Attachment, May 6, 2004

Proposed General Studies Assessment Schedule

Approximate Date	Year X	Year X + 1
April/May	Initial Contact with Department	
Summer	Preliminary work on assessment device and procedures	
Early Fall	Finalize Process, Select Courses	
Nov/Dec	Collect data	
Jan - Mar	Analyze data	
Spring Break	Preliminary Report	
April	Report to Departments by the Director	
April/May GSC Meeting	Full Report distributed to GSC for Review	Initial Contact with Department
Summer	Review Data	Preliminary work on assessment device and procedures
Aug/Sept	Finalize Action Plan based on Data from Year X	Finalize Process, Select Courses
October 1	Assessment Report Deadline	
Nov/Dec		Collect data
Jan-Mar		Analyze data
Spring Break		Preliminary Report
April		Report to Departments by the Director
April/May GSC Meeting		Full Report distributed to GSC for Review
Summer		Review Data
Aug/Sept		Finalize Action Plan based on Data from Year X
October 1		Assessment Report Deadline

	General Studies Schedule
Date	Recommendation
	Recommendation #1: the University should develop and publicize a more comprehensive rationale for the General Studies Program structure, purpose, and student learning outcomes.
Sent to CFAH for review & proposal, 4-8-04	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. requiring students to complete English 101 and 102 during the first two years.
Sent to CFAH for review & proposal, 4-8-04	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. adding foreign language as a strand of the Humanities category.
	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. encouraging departments to limit the size of their classes
	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. adding upper level courses to the GSP.
GS Director and CTE Director develop a workshop to address, 5-6-04	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. encouraging faculty to make connections between their GSP courses and classes in other academic disciplines.
	Recommendation #2: the University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. resolving the future of Category VIII: Capstone Course.
	3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied

	General Studies Schedule
Date	Recommendation
	<p>1. is a liberal education best achieved via a small number of courses focusing on the most fundamental aspects of academic disciplines? Or is a liberal education more likely to be realized by offering students multiple options to meet the individual GSP requirements?</p>
Sent to CFAH for review & proposal, 4-8-04	<p>3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>2. why is philosophy the sole discipline within the Humanities category that students may avoid? Students are currently required to complete Humanities' course work in literature, aesthetics, and history -- but not in philosophy. What are the justifications for marginalizing philosophy in this manner?</p>
	<p>3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>3. why is economics the sole discipline within the Social and Behavioral Sciences category that students may not avoid?</p>
	<p>4. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>4. why are the structures of the Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences categories different? On a related note to points #2 and 3 above, why are choices in Humanities prescribed, but not so in the Social and Behavioral Sciences category?</p>
	<p>3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>5. why are most of the GSP categories arranged according to "perspectives," but the Natural Sciences category is structured by "department?"</p>
Sent to CFAH for review & proposal, 4-8-04	<p>3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>6. why is the historical perspective considered part of the Humanities category when the Department of History is housed in the College of Natural and Social Sciences?</p>
	<p>3. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <p>7. why are some areas of the GSP under the control of a specific department while others are not?</p>

	General Studies Schedule
Date	Recommendation
	Governance & Assessment, Recommendations IV - VII
Considered and accepted, 4-8-04, Director will report	<p>8. Structure of the GSP: Issues to be Studied</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommendation #8: the University should emphasize the importance of advising in the General Studies Program.
Considered and rejected, 4-8-04	Recommendation #9: the University should reconsider the name of the General Studies Program.