

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY  
GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL  
Meeting of October 7, 2004  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:**

**Faculty: Valerie Cisler, Sandy Cook-Fong, Randall Heckman, Sonja Kropp, Larry Kuskie, Marta Moorman, Chuck Peek (for Marguerite Tassi), Kenya Taylor, Vern Volpe, and Ed Walker**

**Ex officio/non-voting members: Jeanne Butler, Kristi Milks, Glen Powell, Tanis Saldivar, Kim Schipporeit, and Bill Wozniak**

**Students: Anne Drinkwalter, Tom McCarty**

**Absent: Debbie Bridges, Peg Camp, Mary Daake and John Lillis**

**Wozniak called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in Room 2122 in Founders Hall.**

**A. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2004**The September 2, 2004 minutes were approved via e-mail.

**B. CD/WI COURSE SUBMISSIONS.**

**1. Writing Intensive:**

**a. GEOG 440 - Special Topics in Regional Geography: Great Plains (A. Steele Becker)**

**b. PHYS 499 - Problems in Physical Science (1-3 credit hours) (J. Mena-Worth)**

***Randall Heckman (Moorman) moved to approve the above courses. Motion carried.***

**2. Cultural Diversity:**

**a. none**

**C.**

**D. OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Writing Intensive Cleanup:**

**a. none**

**2. Cultural Diversity Cleanup:**

**a. none**

**3. Notification of New Writing Intensive Course-Instructor Assignments:**

a. BIOL 420 - Biology Research (W. Hoback)

4. Notification of New Cultural Diversity Course-Instructor Assignments:

a. none

5. Update on General Studies Assessment:

Powell reported on the recently-published report from the North Central Association Review team. He presented a written synopsis of their comments. (Attachment 1.) He reviewed the comments in the NCA and presented an action plan to address their concerns. In general, the cooperation of every faculty member will be needed to implement the plan. He also indicated that the Assessment Subcommittee has met and prepared a revised plan which will be presented later in the meeting.

6. Update on Proposal to move WI/CD Course Governance:

Wozniak reported that Debbie Bridges, Faculty Senate President, has prepared a set of recommendations regarding the governance of WI and CD courses for review by the Faculty Senate tonight. The Council should assume that the status quo will remain until the Senate takes action, which may take another month or two.

7. Liberal Studies at UNK:

Peek (who was substituting for Tassi), Kropp and Cisler submitted a proposal from the CFAH regarding the offerings in the General Studies Program. (Attachment 2)

Peek stated that the proposal was modeled after other sections of the General Studies Program. In particular, the Fine Arts are separated from the Humanities, as the Natural Sciences are separated from the Social Sciences. In addition, all departments in CFAH have signed off on this proposal. He also noted that the English Department is considering reducing the minimum hours in the Literary Perspective to zero as a portion of changes--in the spirit of creating equivalent risk across the perspectives. He expressed hope that this proposal will begin a collegial discussion of the General Studies Program. Kropp suggested the Council take the proposal to their respective colleges and get feedback from their department and bring the information back to the Council.

E.

F. NEW BUSINESS

a. Proposal To Pro-Rate WI Requirements for Some Health Science Majors:

A proposal from Peggy Abels was reviewed by the WI subcommittee and recommended for approval. It is Attachment 3. Wozniak reported many of the Health Science Programs (These four in particular) have been a persistent problem for students because it is very difficult to find enough WI courses. Since the WI courses have mostly become a part of the advanced study within students' majors and minors, these students are at a disadvantage since they finish their advanced coursework in various clinical settings. Wozniak also pointed out the fourth program (Allied Health) also serves a population of students who may not have set foot on this campus and thereby can get a UNK degree in two

semesters. He discussed the matter with Abels and she agreed verbally that the Allied Health major can be removed from the proposal.

*Randall Heckman (Cook-Fong) moved to approve the proposal for three of the programs, Radiography Comprehensive Major, Respiratory Therapy Comprehensive Major, and the Medical Technology Comprehensive Major. Motion carried.*

**b. Revised Assessment Plan for General Studies Courses:**

Wozniak distributed a revised General Studies Assessment Plan and schedule for implementation of the plan. He highlighted item 9 and asked the General Studies Council cooperation in collecting data from faculty and student focus groups. These discussions were suggested by the SVC and adhere to some of his ideas concerning how the discussions should be carried out. The assessment subcommittee will begin acting on the plan this month.

**G. MISCELLANEOUS**

**H. NEXT MEETING**

The next General Studies Council meeting will be November 4, 2004 at 3:30 p.m., in Room 310 in the Nebraskan Student Union.

**I. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- [Attachment 1](#), Analyses of Assessment Topics Addressed in the North Central Accreditation Team Final Report
  - [Attachment 2](#), College of Fine Arts and Humanities Proposal to Implement Recommendations of the 2001 Academic Program Review
  - [Attachment 3](#), Proposal to Pro-Rate the Writing Intensive Requirement For Health Science Majors
  - [Attachment 4](#), Revised Plan for General Studies Assessment
  - [Attachment 5](#), Matrix of Assessment Components
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## **Attachment 5: Analyses of Assessment Topics Addressed in the North Central Accreditation Team Final Report**

Glen Powell

Director of Assessment

Date: 11/12/04

The final report developed by the North Central Association visiting accreditation team was received in early October. I have been engaged in identifying and analyzing the topic areas and the concerns expressed regarding assessment at UNK. The review and analysis that is presented reflects my analysis of their findings and recommendations regarding the Assessment Program at UNK. This analysis was conducted by comparing their findings with our records in comparison to the performance indicators in the 1997 edition of the Handbook of Accreditation and the 2002 Addendum to the Handbook of Accreditation (2nd ed) in order to determine the situational context against which the evaluation and recommendations were made. This analysis and the subsequent recommendations are meant to facilitate planning that addresses their concerns. The accreditation team recommended that a follow-up visit be conducted in 2007-08 with the specific purpose of monitoring our progress with implementing student assessment of academic achievement. This is a working document that is being shared with the intent of facilitating discussion and planning and is not a "finished" product.

### **Topic Areas and Concerns**

- a. [General Studies Assessment](#)
  - b. [Continuing Education Assessment](#)
  - c. [Graduate Program Assessment](#)
  - d. [Administrative Infrastructure](#)
  - e. [Faculty Culture](#)
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Attachment 2, Minutes October 7, 2004

### **College of Fine Arts and Humanities**

#### **Proposal to Implement Recommendations of the 2001 Academic Program Review October 7, 2004**

Background:

During the April 2004 meeting, the General Studies Council unanimously approved that recommendations and concerns of the 2001 General Studies Academic Review Report pertaining to the College of Fine Arts and Humanities would be referred to the college for discussion, and that suggested changes be presented to the Council during the 2004 October meeting.

Specific issues to be addressed are the following:

- Recommendation II.2: The University should make several immediate modifications to the General Studies Program that will enhance student learning: add foreign languages as a strand of the Humanities category.
- Structure of the GS Program - Issue III. 1: Why is philosophy the sole discipline within the Humanities category that students may avoid? Students are currently required to complete Humanities' coursework in literature, aesthetics and history-but not in philosophy. What are the justifications for marginalizing philosophy in this manner?
- Structure of the GS Program - Issue III.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?

Following an extensive study of the FAH offerings in the General Studies Program by GS representatives and members of the College Council, the group supports the following configuration (italics represent proposed changes):

I. English language (9 hours)

a. ENG 101

-Students with an ACT score of 30 or above do not have to take ENG 101.

They may take a Fine Arts or Humanities elective in its place. (Rationale 1)

-Students with a grade of B or above in ENG 101 may take a foreign language instead of ENG 102

b. ENG 102

c. SPCH 100

II. Fine Arts ~ Aesthetics (3-6 hours) (Rationale 2)

a. Art (0 - 6)

b. Dance (0 - 6)

c. Music (0 - 6)

d. Theatre (0 - 6)

III. Humanities (9 - 15 hours from at least three separate categories) (Rationale 3)

a. Literary perspectives (0 - 6)

b. Foreign languages (0 - 6)

-Students taking a beginning language other than the one they studied in high school may count a 5-hour introductory course and a 1-hour cultural component toward general studies. Students taking intermediate level language may count up to two 3-hour courses toward general studies.

c. Historical perspectives (0 - 6)

-Students may select courses from History or historically -based courses offered in the College of Fine Arts & Humanities.

d. Philosophical perspectives (0 - 6)

Rationale:

(1) Since the implementation of placement strategies to assign composition courses effectively, students with an ACT score of 30 or above are able to substitute any course in the GS program as an elective. The suggested change guarantees that students maintain a minimum of hours in the Fine Arts or Humanities categories.

(2) The creation of a separate Fine Arts category allows for its four disciplines - Art, Dance, Music and Theatre - to be presented as a significant component of the College of Fine Arts & Humanities. The category receives emphasis in a manner similar to the division of the College of Natural and Social Sciences into three distinct categories: Category IV Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science 36 hrs; Category V Natural Sciences 7-15 hrs, and Category VI Social and Behavioral Sciences 9-15 hrs.

(3) As recommended by the APR report, significant proposed changes in Category III Humanities include the insertion of Foreign Languages as a strand as well as the elimination of specific requirements within the category. Students would be able to select the nine hours according to their interests or requirements for the major, with the only restriction being that a minimum of three sections would be covered.

Facilitating equal representation (0-6 hrs.) for four disciplines - Literature, Foreign languages, History and Philosophy - also addresses concerns by the APR which questioned why certain departments were favored for requirements while others marginalized. The suggested format change presents the Humanities category in a format parallel to Category V Natural Sciences and the proposed Category II Fine Arts.

The proposed format also accommodates the curious position of History (housed in the College of Natural and Social Sciences) in the Humanities category. Since it is reasonable for courses (regardless of the originating department) offered in the categories representing the College of Fine Arts and Humanities to conform to the purposes, guidelines, and methods of the "humanities," this understanding is the condition for accommodating courses from a department or departments outside the college.

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Attachment 3, Minutes October 7, 2004

**Proposal to Pro-Rate the Writing Intensive Requirement  
For Health Science Majors  
September, 2004**

**I. Background Information**

The University of Nebraska at Kearney offers four degree programs in the Health Sciences in which students spend either two or three years on our campus and spend the remainder of their undergraduate time in a clinical program at an affiliated hospital or in professional school. Upon completion of their clinical/professional training, they are awarded a degree through UNK. These degree programs are as follows:

#### Radiography Comprehensive Major:

Students complete 70-76 hours of pre-radiography courses and then apply to a 24 month clinical training program at an affiliated school/hospital. The clinical program is worth 60 credit hours. The vast majority of these majors are on our campus for two years.

#### Respiratory Therapy Comprehensive Major:

Students complete 90 semester hours (3 years) of pre-respiratory therapy requirements at UNK. The student then applies to a 12 month clinical training program at an affiliated school/hospital. The clinical program is worth 35-37 credit hours.

#### Medical Technology Comprehensive Major:

Students complete 90 semester hours (3 years) of courses at UNK. Students then apply to an affiliated school/hospital for a 12 month clinical training program worth 35 credit hours.

#### Health Science Major:

This degree is a special program that allows students who have gained an early acceptance into a professional school in one of the health sciences to receive a B.S. degree from UNK if the following requirements are met:

- a. completion of 90 hours towards one of the pre-professional health science programs
- b. completion of all UNK general studies requirements
- c. completion of 32 hours of coursework in a health science professional school (the first year)
- d. not less than 32 hours shall be UNK credits

The majority of these students are at UNK for three years.

The courses required for each degree program are from a variety of disciplines but the majority of courses are in the biology, chemistry and physics departments. Like any other degree program, these students have been required to complete all the general studies, writing intensive, and cultural diversity requirements.

## **II. The Problem**

Since the inception of the writing intensive requirement, students in these majors have continued to have problems completing the full 12 hour WI requirement for a variety of reasons. The primary reason is that these students are simply on our campus for a reduced amount of time. They are expected to complete both Expository Writing courses before they begin their WI courses and therefore, most do not start taking WI courses until their sophomore year. This leaves the students trying to complete the full 12 hour requirement in one to two years. A second reason is that these programs primarily consist of lower level courses in the natural sciences such as Anatomy & Physiology and General Chemistry. These types of courses are typically not writing intensive due the larger class size. A third reason is that these students are often not able to get into the writing intensive sections of courses required by their degree program or general studies because they are registering as underclassmen and the classes are closed.

The combination of these factors has resulted in numerous requests to the General Studies Director for writing intensive waivers. It was originally thought that the situation would improve as more writing intensive courses were developed across campus. However, this has not been the case because the problems mentioned above still exist. The General Studies Director continues to receive numerous such requests. With the development of so many cultural diversity courses, especially in the general studies program, very few students now have a problem meeting the CD requirement.

The problem with these students and the writing intensive requirements is somewhat different than the problem with transfer students and the fact that they also spend a reduced amount of time on our campus. UNK advertises these degree programs and students are attracted to UNK to pursue one of these health science degrees, in part, because these programs are offered at few other institutions in the state. Yet once the students begin the program, they often have an extremely difficult time fulfilling these requirements. The students do not feel that the institution is being fair to them and feel that they have a legitimate complaint.

Over the past several years, this problem has been looked at numerous times and many ideas to improve the situation have been brought to the table. Meetings were held with the Allied Health Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, and the NSS Department Chairs to discuss these options. Following is a list of some of the ideas that were explored:

- a. Ask the natural science departments to increase their WI offerings in lower level courses.
- b. Explore the possibility of developing science laboratories for WI credit.
- c. Select the most commonly required courses for these students and "require" that they be WI.
- d. Consider developing independent study courses to meet the WI requirement.
- e. Consider allowing individual students to sign up for specific courses for WI credit (as is done with Honors courses).
- f. Work with the community colleges to increase the development of more of their courses as WI courses.
- g. Consider approaching clinical and professional schools to determine whether any of their courses would meet our WI requirements.
- h. Consider decreasing the requirements for these students on a pro-rated basis.

After much discussion at that time, it was decided to wait and see if the problem improved as more courses were developed. The science department chairpersons and the Dean of Natural and Social Sciences recently met with the Health Sciences Director to re-visit some possible solutions to rectify this problem. The issue has recently been brought up for discussion again for two reasons. First of all, the situation has not significantly improved and students are still encountering difficulty in fulfilling these requirements. Secondly, the General Studies Director recently received a WI proposal from the Radiography Program at Mary Lanning Hospital in Hastings. In an effort to help their students fulfill our requirements, they are requesting that six hours of their program be considered for writing intensive credit. Most involved in the discussion up to this point do not feel that this is a viable option. Mary Lanning is only one of many schools/programs that is willing to do this for their students. Many also feel

that the original goal or purpose of the WI requirement may not be met by the type of writing done in a clinical program. It would very difficult to evaluate the quality of the WI credit hours. The general consensus of the group was that the situation would be better corrected if handled internally.

### **III. The Proposal**

The Dean, the Chairs, and the Health Science Director came to the agreement that probably the best possible solution would be to pro-rate the WI requirement for health science majors based upon the number of years of pre-requisite courses required by the degree program. The group proposed that for each year of required courses, the students would be required to complete 3 hours of WI credit.

Therefore, the requirements for each program would be as follows:

Radiography - 2 years of courses - 6 hours of WI required

Respiratory Therapy - 3 years of courses - 9 hours of WI required

Medical Technology - 3 years of courses - 9 hours of WI required

Health Sciences - 3 years of courses - 9 hours of WI required

All students pursuing these majors, even those transferring into these programs, would be held to these requirements. There would be no change in the cultural diversity requirement.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

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Attachment 4, Minutes October 7, 2004

### **Revised Plan for General Studies Assessment October 7, 2004**

At the request of the Director of Assessment (Dr Glen Powell,) the Coordinator of Assessment and the Director of General Studies (Drs Butler and Wozniak, respectively) developed this plan in consultation with the General Studies Assessment subcommittee. The plan involves 9 data collection activities listed and described below. The activities and a timeframe for each are summarized in the Matrix toward the end of this narrative. Most of the activities listed are the responsibility of the General Studies Office with the exception of the assessment of specific General Studies courses which is the responsibility of the Departments offering those courses.

The first rounds of General Studies assessment have suggested that the objectives written for the General Studies Program may be inappropriate for student outcome assessment.

1. Individual Course Analysis. A survey will be constructed in a similar form to the Dixie College Survey but based on UNK General Studies objectives. Each question will address a specific General Studies Objective appropriate for the course. Students will respond by indicating how well the objective was incorporated into the design of the course and how well the objective was accomplished over the semester. For example:

Statement/Objective	The degree that it was incorporated into the course design.	The degree that it was accomplished by the course this semester.
This course requires that students think critically about an issue or problem.	1 2 3 4 5 not very at all much	1 2 3 4 5 not very at all much

The survey will be administered on-line to students in sample of General Studies courses. A similar survey will be constructed for the instructors of the courses. The results of particular interest is how well the students' views match the instructor's.

2. Standardized General Studies Test. UNK will purchase a test designed to assess the student outcomes for general education programs. It will be administered to a sample of students (N = 200) who are at or near the end of their general studies program. Perhaps an additional sample of beginning students could also be selected. The selection of the test and the procedure for sampling students will be reviewed by the Assessment subcommittee.

3. Department Contributions. Assessment of individual General Studies courses will become the responsibility of the departments. The manner and frequency of the assessment will be left up to the department, but any assessment of General Studies courses should be reported annually to the General Studies Council. Since an assessment of General Studies courses will included in their Academic Program Review, departments should assess their General Studies courses annually and begin building a data base to strengthen their self-study in the APR.

4-5. Writing and Speech Samples. This is a continuation of the writing assessment that was done last year. It is possible to assess students' speeches by video taping their speeches and applying a rubric to their performances. The writing assessment would also continue with some modifications based on last year's data. Given the prospect of the governance change concerning WI courses , some of this assessment may migrate to the unit responsible for WI courses. At the least, the Director of the UNK Writing Center should have a significant role in the process.

6. Registrar's Exit Questionnaire. We review the Registrar's questionnaire and consider adding other relevant questions. The current questions in the Registrar's exit questionnaire are:

1. I have been challenged academically to do my best in my UNK General Studies courses.
2. I have been able to integrate material learned in UNK General Studies classes into other classes.
3. I was satisfied with the advising in my major department.
4. I was satisfied with the instruction in my major courses.
5. I have been challenged academically to do my best in my major.

7. Sampling of standardized test scores from the Educational Testing Service. For example, ETS provides summary data of students who take the Graduate Record exam. This could be expanded to include the Law Boards, etc.

8. Diversity Attitude Surveys. We will assess the incorporation of an appreciation of diversity into the students' attitudes by using a survey that is administered to a sample of students who have finished their CD requirements. The assessment of diversity values can be accomplished via an on-line survey. Given the prospect of the governance change concerning CD courses , some of this assessment may migrate to a different academic unit.

9. Focus Groups. Members of the General Studies Council will lead focus groups that work through a set of programmed questions concerning the GSP. For example, the GSC faculty from Natural and Social Sciences would lead a focus group comprised of faculty from the College of Education. Likewise, they would lead a focus group comprised of students from the College of Education. A summary of the plan for this data collection is attached to this document.

**Attachment 6: GS Assessment Components with Deadlines**

Type	Level	Method	Deadlines	Responsibility
Individual Course Analysis (indirect)	Course	Online surveys for student and faculty in GS courses	Students 4/05 Faculty 4/05 (need to determine sample size)	GS dir/counsel
Standardized General Studies Test	Program	Sample of freshman and juniors complete test	Pilot with students and get input from departments by 4/05 Implement 9/05 with Freshman	GS dir/counsel
Departments' assessment of GS courses (direct)	Course	Departments provide assessment data for their general studies courses	GS Plan 5/05 GS Report 10/06 Begin collecting data 9/05-12/05	Departments
Writing Assessment	Program	Writing samples collected and evaluated	Completed by 12/05	English Dept and Writing Center
Oral presentation Assessment	Program	Presentations collected and assessed	Completed by 12/05	Communications Dept.

Exit Survey	Program	Recommend items and collect and analyze data from student exit surveys that pertain to General Studies.	New items 4/1 Collect first data 4/05	Registrar's Office and GS dir/counsel
GRE & other Institutional Data	Program	Analyze GRE and other institutional data to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses.	Identify sources 4/05 Collect data by 5/05	GS director/counsel
Diversity Attitude surveys	Program	Administer diversity attitude surveys to students and faculty	Develop Spring 2005 Administer Fall 2005	CD committee
WI Attitude Survey	Program	Administer WI attitude survey to students and faculty.	Develop Spring 2005 Administer Fall 2005	WI committee
Survey of current GS program	Program	Online survey of faculty and student perceptions of current GS program	Faculty 2/22-3/5 Students 3/1-3/15	GS director/counsel
Focus Groups	Program	Focus questions based on online survey results will include Faculty and student groups	4/1/05-4/15/05	GS director/counsel
Other:	Program	NSSE and other data being collected is analyzed to identify relevant GS items.	Spring 2005	GS director/counsel
General Studies Assessment Plan	Program	Plan of all assessment activities for GS with discussions of each type, responsible parties, and timelines for completion	5/1/05	GS Directo