

GE Committee Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2007

Present: Giuliana Andreopoulos , Jerry Beal, Jonnine Deloatch, Mark Ellis , Jack Feldman, Peter Griswold, Jean Levitan, Kathy Malanga, Rob McCallum, John Peterman, Kathy Silgalis , Aaron Tesfaye, Miryam Wahrman, Mahmoud Watad, Nancy Weiner , Burt Weltman, Hilary Wilder, He Zhang
Guests: Kim Daniel-Robinson

Meeting was convened at 12:40

I. **Approval of Minutes:** minutes from October 30 meeting were approved

II. **Planning for November 29th Forum:**

A. Subcommittee Report: A pre-forum online survey will be sent out to all faculty on Monday Nov. 19 to get initial opinions and generate interest (with reminder sent out the following Monday). There was some discussion as to the questions in the survey – should they be general to elicit the broadest information or should they include information about the current GE to help guide people (e.g. the current student learning outcomes). K. Malanga will continue to take input on this from committee members up until the time that she and Sandie Miller have to put the survey up. The survey should help people think about what GE “should be” in the 21st century.

As for the forum itself, a set of PowerPoint slides which include the agenda will be projected to help keep people focused and on-topic. The forum will be a town-hall type meeting with opinions solicited from everyone, however people will only have 2 minutes in which to state their opinions in order to make sure as many people as possible are able to participate. Copies of the new GE handbook will also be distributed so that people will have the vision statement available. The forum will also let people know about the discussion groups (both face-to-face and online) which will follow-up from the forum.

It was suggested that food start at 12:00 so we can make full use of the common hour to have the meeting. Several committee members will act as note-takers to ensure that different perspectives are recorded, in addition to soliciting written comments from the participants to be used to formulate the agendas for the spring forums and discussion groups. Participants should understand that this is the beginning of a serious undertaking that will continue over the next year and a half.

J. Peterman and J. Levitan will contact the deans and chairs of departments that have conflicting meetings during the scheduled forum time. They will also contact the provost and John Martone so that professional staff can attend without losing lunchtime. It was suggested that the flyer be re-sent and will include the current GE vision statement in order to continue to drum up participation.

The question of whether students should participate was again raised but student input will be gathered later with focus groups and panel discussions, hopefully in time for the spring retreat. It was suggested that the Research group also get the data from surveys conducted by Jane Zeff, etc.

III. **Other Subcommittee Reports**

A. Community Discussion Groups: 20 discussion groups of about 30 people each, selected randomly but with a mix from across colleges and professional staff, will be set up. There will be 3 face-to-face discussion groups scheduled for the spring. J. Peterman will contact Robert Harris to set up the online discussion groups which will be moderated by committee members. This will be set up before the 29th so it can be announced at the forum.

B. Research Group: The group met and minutes were distributed.

C. Traditional GE Group: M. Wahrman, on behalf of the Traditional GE subcommittee, distributed the 2007 GE Handbook to the committee. She brought up the issue of course selection in the Arts and Communication category, pointing out that there was some ambiguity as a result of the addition of a new art course to the list (p. 9). The text reads, "You must select courses from two

different subject areas." This is interpreted to mean that a student may take both COMM 110, Communication in Action and COMM 101, Introduction to Theater to fulfill the category, as they are in two different subject areas. But a student may not select both ARTH 101 and ARTH 201 to fulfill the category as they are in the same subject area. The GE Committee concurred with this interpretation, and agreed that this is not a change in policy, just a clarification of policy.

- IV. **Report of meetings with Academic Departments:** J. Peterman and J. Levitan have been contacting department chairs to meet with them and get their buy-in.
- V. **Review of Senate Charge/ Timeline Discussion:** One of the charges from the Faculty Senate is for the committee to recommend student learning outcomes for GE by the end of the semester, however since the committee got a late start, this deadline should be revisited.
- VI. **Scheduling future meetings:** The next meeting will be on Thursday, December 13 during common hour, venue TBA.
- VII. **Other:** J. Beal reported that he has been in communication with sister colleges in New Jersey, as suggested by Sue Godar, to talk about their GE programs. He distributed a report on Ramapo College's GE program.
- VIII. **Concerns, opinions, etc. from guests:** No concerns were voiced.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Hilary Wilder