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4-13-2012

## General Education Committee Meeting : 2012 : 04 : 13 : University GE Day

General Education Committee

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## GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Agenda – Wednesday **April 13, 2012** – 1pm at Harbor Hall

**Committee Members:**

1. Kathy Arthur, Chair
  2. Erika Asano
  3. Maria Luisa Corton
  4. Morgan Gresham
  5. Thomas Hallock
  6. Hugh LaFollette
  7. Deanna Michael
  8. Phillip McCollam (absent with excuse)
  9. Adrian O'Connor
  10. Patricia Pettijohn
  11. Deby Cassil (absent with excuse)
  12. George Roy (absent with excuse)
  13. J. E. Gonzalez (Ernie)
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### **Issues in General Education: A Cross Disciplinary Discussion**

**Friday April 13, 2012 – 10 am to 12 noon – Harbor Hall Community Room**

1. Presentations (15 minutes)
  - Chris Davis, Faculty Senate Chair
    - Introductions
  - Kathy Arthur, General Education Committee Chair
    - The General Education Curriculum today
    - Schedule to address Senate Charge
    - Committee Philosophy Statement
    - Table Discussions
2. Table Discussions (1 hour)
  - Critical thinking (across all disciplines)
    - What does or should GE do to promote critical thinking
    - What intellectual virtues do you try to instill or promote and how
    - What has/has not worked in your GE courses to promote this skill
  - Writing/Communication (including Gordon Rule)

- What does or should GE do to promote writing/communication
  - What intellectual virtues do you try to instill or promote and how
  - What has/has not worked in your GE courses to promote this skill
- Quantitative literacy
    - What does or should GE do to promote quantitative literacy
    - What Intellectual virtues do you try to instill or promote and how
    - What has/has not worked in your GE courses to promote this skill
3. Brief presentation of each table's findings and questions (45 min)

### **2011- 2012 Faculty Senate Charge**

As noted on the Faculty Senate website, the current charge of the committee is:  
 The General education Committee is responsible for the ongoing development, implementation, and assessment of an effective general education program. Responsibilities include the evaluation and approval of courses for the liberal arts curriculum as well as the periodic evaluation of the general education policies. This committee shall advise the Regional Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and report to the Faculty Senate on the development of future general education programs at the university and provide continuous assessment of the general education.

It is proposed that for AY 11-12, the committee be asked to address this charge by:

1. reviewing the philosophy of the General Education requirements at USFSP
2. evaluating the existing list of student learning outcomes (SLO);
3. examining the suitability of GE courses and the rationale for how these courses support the learning outcomes;
4. making suggestions to improve GE assessment.

The committee would be asked to prepare a report that would include recommendations for proposed change.

Bearing in mind that the institution was recently on probation for not doing a particularly good job of documenting activities relating to assessment of GE, the rationale for this charge is to offer a structured opportunity to refine the SLOs, continue to refine the number of course offerings that address SLOs, and establish a institutional solution for facilitating the collection and reporting of assessment data.

## **General Education Committee 2012 Philosophy**

The faculty of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg commits itself to helping our students achieve the broad liberal arts education they deserve and need. General education is a cornerstone of academic life at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and is the foundation upon which our commitment to provide a quality education rests.

A liberal arts education provides students with broad knowledge of major areas of human learning, it instills and refines reading, understanding, reasoning, and communication skills, and develops and strengthens essential intellectual virtues: curiosity, a healthy skepticism, intellectual honesty, the imagination to understand and fairly consider the perspectives of others, and the willingness and ability to constructively evaluate of one's own ideas and arguments. A liberal arts education allows students to appreciate the cultural and biological diversity of an increasingly inter-connected world and provides them with critical thinking skills to take up the issues that shape our global economy, environment, and lives. The General Education curriculum at USFSP is founded upon the principles of a liberal arts education.

General Education courses – covering mathematics, social sciences, humanities, communication, and the natural sciences – lay the groundwork for a quality university education. Students explore a range of subjects, many outside their anticipated field or major, and these courses encourage the development of a habit of inquiry that is at once flexible, disciplined, and able to grasp many perspectives; that is scholarly, yet grounded in the belief that the world of ideas extends beyond the classroom walls. Students' work in General Education courses will give them the basis for the pursuit of a liberal arts education and prepares them to flourish in their collegiate and post-collegiate lives. General Education courses endow students with foundational knowledge and skills in preparation for the coursework in their majors and in other more specialized pursuits. Those more specialized courses build upon, reinforce, and expand that knowledge, boost those skills, and strengthen students' intellectual integrity.

The USFSP General Education curriculum gives students a critically important body of knowledge as well as shared educational experiences, thereby fostering a sense of purpose and identity among current USFSP students as well as among our graduates. It enriches students' lives by improving their understanding of the world, the diversity of perspectives and lifestyles shaping that world, and their place within their communities—local, national, and global. The USFSP General Education program also prepares students to continue their intellectual, cultural, and personal development well beyond their years at college, and contributes to their becoming responsible citizens in the broadest sense of the term.

## General Education Day 2012

## Table Comments

### Critical Thinking    Communication    Quantitative Literacy

- What does or should General Education do to promote...
- What intellectual virtues do you try to instill or promote and how ....
- What has/has not worked in your General education courses to promote this skill

### CRITICAL THINKING

#### CT Table 1: Adrian O'Connor

- Promote:
- 2 Challenges
  - Remedial Needs vs. Pedagogical Ambitions
  - Prompting vs. "Leading"
- Shared Goal: to show shared processes/analytic goals across/within disciplinary norms and boundaries (different idea of "conclusion," but shared process)
- Socialization
- Intellectual Virtues: Diligence; Creativity; Identify and Assess Evidence; Openness to alternative analyses (Recognition of Reasonableness); Self-criticism
- Successes/Failures: Constructive Confusion; Provocation; Comparative formal models; Devil's Advocate; Disciplinary "Mixing"; Group Work?

#### CT Table 2: Patricia Pettijohn

- How GE Promotes Critical Thinking Knowledge Skills- Research
- COE → Standards – NCTE
- Based on National Boards
- All → Digital resources present problems – Needs critical thinking
- Teacherly/critical disposition towards texts
- Reflexivity
- Response-ability/transformation
- Stasis/agnon intellectual integrity
- Multiple but manageable SLOs each unit
- "Need more time" – Cancel last unit- Repeat 1<sup>st</sup> to assess student progress
- Portfolios
- Inquiry as argument
- Critical Reading
- Focus on Narrative
- "Pick 2 SLOs" (evaluating sources)
- Attitude of professor towards text

- Engagement Ideas vs. Digesting Content

### **CT Table 3- Hugh LaFollette**

- Often need background knowledge
- Engagement/Overcoming Apathy (different ways)
- All a process
- Respect for ideas, differences, and persons
- Intellectual honesty
- Seek Mental Engagement
- Evaluation and informed judgment
- Writing Assignments
- Encouraging charity and self-reflection
- Focusing on language and context
- Think for themselves- Informed

## **WRITING AND COMMUNICATION**

### **WC Table 1- Morgan Gresham**

#### What Has Worked:

- Involve students in discussions; Highlight the skills (i.e. music, sports, language) they already have and demonstrate how those can be applied to study.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Allow students to work collaboratively where discussion often flows more freely.
- Share teaching strategies that work with instructors.
- Involve student organizations.

#### What Hasn't Worked:

- Assigning readings
- Asking open-ended questions to the entire class.
- Giving students abundant options.

## **WC Table 2- Deanna Michael**

### Work/Not Work

- Quoting the Gordon Rule ?
- @ students doesn't work
- Direct Discussion of Transfer
- Directed Self-Reflection

### Promote:

- Include writing in communication and emphasize digital
- More clearly defined in the philosophy statement ← (Writing, Civic Engagement, Research Skills)

### Virtues:

- Critical reading, writing, and thinking
- Metacognition- thinking about thinking
- Knowledge Transfer
- Collaboration/Agreement
- Upper and Lower Division

### Outside Classroom

- Critical for many GE classes
- Back up Assignments
- Class activities/discussions
- Mostly Non-Majors → Broad issues/practice skills
- Bias → Research Embodies → Current Cultural Beliefs
- No time for basic skill remediation- i.e. writing
- Significant differences in student performance
- Conflict between critical and foundational in GE

### WC Table 3- Tom Hallock

- Communication:
  - Writing in disciplinary courses
  - Writing intensive programs
  - Writing center awareness
- Virtues:
  - Audience awareness
  - Language awareness
  - Habit of inquiry/life-long learners
  - Questioning and probing without dismissing
- Has/Has not worked:
  - Hard to teach writing with large classes
  - Requiring professional standards has helped

### What Should Gen Ed Do?

- Multidisciplinary, Active Engagement, Global Perspective (foreign languages), Grammar/Linguistics
  - \*\* Verbal + Written + Visual + Creative Communication\*\*
- Intellectual Virtues...
  - Confidence + Curiosity!
  - Visual Literacy
  - Thirst For: Competence in Research
- Successes and Failures
  - Understanding communication outside one's time and place
  - Resources in an age of increased online courses
  - Instilling student confidence and curiosity
  - Trusting one's ability and intuitions

### Fine Arts Matter

- Yeah we're "Global" So.... Languages?



## QUANTITATIVE LITERACY

### QL Table 1- Ernie Gonzalez

@ Competency Matrix

@ Requirements: Meeting Days/Wks  $\geq 2$  standards

- College Algebra
- Statistics
- Formal Logic
- Microeconomics
- Macroeconomics

### QL Table 2- Erika Asano

- Promote By:
  - Promote the idea that a Gen. Ed education involves “interdisciplinary exposure.” The different disciplines are inter-related.
  - Foster a more interdisciplinary approach and promote communication between departments. Shape curriculum with this in mind.
  - Define “Quantitative Literacy.” Identify in classes how students use these skills in school and in their everyday lives.
- Intellectual Virtues:
  - Curiosity is good.
  - Critical thinking skills are valuable in school and life.
  - Hard work is involved in an education.
  - Communication skills are required in school and life.
  - Integrity and honesty are not optional characteristics of a worthwhile education.