

LIBERAL STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes

October 29, 2004

Attendees: Blase Scarnati, Karen Pugliesi, Pat Muster, Gayle Houser, Kapri Saunders, Cynthia Conn, Jeff Berglund, Laura Michael-Blocher, Bruce Fox, Aregai Tecle, John Doherty, Rebecca Cole, Jack Ferrell, Margaret Conger and Dean Pielstick

Absent: Marcia Metcalf, Anne Medill and Eileen Mahoney

Guests: Paula Garcia and Federica Barbieri

I. Welcome and Introductions—Blase Scarnati

- Blase Scarnati will be at a conference during the next meeting. The Vice Chair will need to be on board so they can chair the November 5 meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes—Blase Scarnati

- Deferred to the November 5, 2004 meeting.

III. Vice Chair Election Report—Blase Scarnati

- Election will be extended until 5:00 PM on Monday, November 1 to allow more time for voting.

IV. Subcommittee Assignments—Blase Scarnati

- Blase Scarnati distributed Subcommittee assignments.

V. Liberal Studies Program Issues—Blase Scarnati

- The results of a recent survey of General Education practices, assessment, and program change that was compared with similar surveys from a decade ago was reviewed. The article presenting the information in detail will be distributed to the Committee. NAU and its practices are often in the main stream of general education practices.
- Bruce Fox reiterated his experience at the AAC & U conference last year. Universities in general had ideas on how to change their general education courses but none had been implemented. NAU is ahead of the game. Many small liberal arts college conference attendees stayed after a session and asked many questions as to how we had implemented our liberal studies program.

VI. Assessment Issues Update—Cynthia Conn and Brice Fox

- Liberal Studies Assessment Timeline document was distributed and discussed.
- Details of the LS Program Assessment and Research Plans were discussed.
- The LSC Assessment Subcommittee will be collecting assignments from currently approved syllabi to see which courses fall into the prescribed definitions.
- Communication with deans, chairs and faculty will be important so they understand that the process will not add to their workload and that the results will not affect individual faculty evaluations, promotion or tenure (or even made available).

- Rubric scores will be used and the Subcommittee will make a formal report to the LSC. This process may help with future liberal studies policies.
- Mode of delivery will need to be assessed, as there are on-line courses. If the course was approved several years ago we may not know it is an on-line course and the syllabi may have changed. This is why syllabi will need to be reviewed every few years.
- Blase Scarnati, Karen Pugliesi, Joe Boles (UCC), Pat Muster, Ron Pitt and Nicole Morrow are collaborating on streamlining the process of course approvals by the University Curriculum Committee and the LSC.
- Departments could also use the data from the assessment of these courses for their academic program reviews.
- A new component of the on-line course evaluations will be available in the future that can incorporate questions relating to specific liberal studies concerns. Faculty buy-in will need to be addressed prior to adding questions.
- Reservations were expressed that implementing the plan appears to be a full-time job. A potential funding source may be the Learner-Centered Education grant process. Faculty may also be interested in this as a research project.
- Discussions are continuing to find a funding source for the project.

VII. Syllabi Review Process—Cynthia Conn

- A draft liberal studies syllabus review rubric was distributed to Committee. The rubric will help committee members assess new course proposals. The Committee as a whole made editing suggestions to the rubric. Additional comments and concerns are to be sent to Blase Scarnati and Cynthia Conn by email.
- The Committee in full discussed the ANT 105 course submission.
- Committee members to review FOR 240 and finish reviewing ANT 105 in advance of the November 5 meeting
- The Committee will break into their Syllabi Review Subcommittees at the November 5 meeting and review the remaining course submissions.

Meeting adjourned at 5 PM