

## **LIBERAL STUDIES COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**January 20, 2006**

Liberal Studies Committee attendees: Jeff Berglund, Rebecca Cole, Cynthia Conn, Brandon Cruikshank, Katie Desmond, John Doherty, Jack Farrell (via phone), Bruce Fox, Paula Garcia, Dayle Hardy-Short, Anne Medill, Marcia Metcalf, Laura Michael-Blocher, Tom Paradis, Karen Pugliesi, Blase Scarnati (presiding), David Sherry, and Aregai Teclé.

Faculty Senate Liberal Studies Review Committee attendees: Virginia Blankenship, Charles Connell, JeanAnn Foley.

#### **I. Welcome and introductions**

Blase Scarnati welcomed members of the Liberal Studies Committee and the Faculty Senate Liberal Studies Review Committee.

#### **II. Discussion with the Faculty Senate Liberal Studies Review Committee**

Virginia Blankenship, Chair of the Faculty Senate Liberal Studies Review Committee (FS LSRC), was invited to present their recommendations for changes to the Liberal Studies Program.

The following Power Point outline of the direction that the FS LSRC was moving in its deliberations was used for discussion between the two Committees.

I. Three thematic foci be eliminated

II. Mission of the NAU Liberal Studies Program:

To prepare students to live responsible, productive, and creative lives as citizens in a dramatically changing world. NAU provides a Liberal Studies Program that challenges students to gain a deeper understanding of the world's peoples and problems, explores the traditions and legacies that have created the dynamics and tensions that shape the world, and enables students to examine their own place in and potential contributions to that world.

(Liberal Studies Committee will develop student learning outcomes based on this.)

III. No changes made to Foundations: ENG 105 (4) and Math (3)

IV. Distribution blocks to total 28 hours as follows:

- Science (to include one Lab Science) 7 hours
- Social and Political Worlds (add the word 'cultural') 6 hours
- Aesthetic and Humanistic Inquiry 6 hours
- Diversity (Global and US Ethnic) 3+3 hours
- One more LS course 3 hours

Liberal Studies stays as a 35 hour program.

Simplified for students and advisors (2 courses per block +1)

## V. Skills

- A. Each LS course should focus on a single skill so that student learning outcomes for the course are aligned with the specific skill and that a direct relationship between student learning outcomes and assessment is apparent.
  - B. The current list of 9 essential skills be reduced to just 4:
    - critical thinking
    - effective writing
    - effective oral communication
    - technological literacy
- ## VI. Freshman Seminar
- Optional
  - Start with a small pilot. Expand from there
  - Small capacity, seminar style courses that count within Liberal Studies Distribution
  - Use numbers such as FSN 111 (Science), FSN 121 (SPW), FSN 131 (AHI), FSN 141 D-Global, FSN 151 D-USEthnic.
  - Participating faculty to be provided with incentives and/or rewards
  - Managed by a Freshman Seminar Coordinator
- ## VII. Oversight and Governance
- Liberal Studies Committee continues to function as with current by-laws.
  - Expanded role in the management and on-going review of the Liberal Studies Program.
  - University Diversity Subcommittee in charge of the Diversity block will report to Liberal Studies Committee.
  - Faculty position be established to assist the Liberal Studies Committee in the management of the Liberal Studies Program.

It was reported that the Faculty Senate would like to complete this process by March or April. The FS LSRC is soliciting input from faculty and will prepare a final set of recommendations for the Senate.

Meeting adjourned.