

Minutes

March 30, 2007

Attendees: Jeff Berglund (presiding), David Best, Donald Carter, Brandon Cruikshank, Katie Desmond, John Doherty, Jack Ferrell (via phone), Dayle Hardy-Short, Louise Lockard, Anne Medill, Shelly Pleasants, MaryLynn Quartaroli, David Sherry.

I. Welcome

Jeff welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order

II. Minutes

The minutes from the 3-9-07 meeting were approved.

III. Proposed policy

- Jeff distributed a handout entitled “DRAFT Proposed NAU Policy on Completion of Liberal Studies Foundation Courses” dated January 26, 2007. The document, from the Academic Standards Committee, was only recently brought to his attention, and he wanted to share it with the Liberal Studies Committee. The focus of the document is to encourage students to take their English and Mathematics foundations courses earlier, rather than later, in their academic career, with the intent that these foundations will enable them to be more successful in their other courses.
- A motion was approved that Jeff will write a brief letter to the Academic Standards Committee, expressing the Liberal Studies Committee’s endorsement of the proposed policy. The letter is to include a sentence about the committee’s hope that transfer students’ needs and concerns will be taken into consideration.

IV. Next year’s L.S. committee chair

Jeff informed the committee that he is unable to be the chair of the committee next year. The members are encouraged to send nominations, including self-nominations, to Shelly, via email, and she will compile them. Elections will be held at the 4-27-07 meeting.

V. Essential skill definition and outcomes

Critical Thinking was approved as follows

Definition

Critical thinking includes the skills - particularly as applied to one’s own work - of 1) articulating the meaning of a statement, 2) judging the truth of a statement, keeping in mind possible biases, 3) determining whether a conclusion is warranted by the evidence provided.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- Convey, to an intended audience, the meaning of a statement.
- Assess the validity of a claim, taking into account different conceptual schemes, contextual factors, and evidence.
- Evaluate an argument by determining whether the conclusion would be probable if the premises were true.

VI. Timeline for L.S. proposals

- There was discussion of preparing a timeline document that clearly shows the flow of L.S. course proposals, through the L.S. committee, to the UCC committee. The intent of the document is to make the process more transparent to departments and colleges.
- Shelly will prepare a draft document for consideration at the 4-13-07 meeting.

VII. Rubrics for L.S. course assessment

- There was discussion about using student learning outcomes from the skills to develop rubrics for assessing courses. Faculty should submit their own rubric with their syllabus, but templates (including instructions that not every learning outcome must be measured in the rubric) should be available for them to use if needed.
- Katie will draft some possible rubric templates for discussion at the 4-13-07 meeting.

VIII. Alignment process

- Jeff distributed a handout he drafted, compiling our discussions to date regarding our goal, rationale, and plans to align the current L.S. courses with the new program. Committee members are encouraged to email any comments or concerns about the document to Jeff.
- This alignment process will not include foundation, junior level writing, or capstone courses.
- We need to compile all the information we approved this year and disseminate it to the faculty before the end of this semester so they will have time to get acquainted with it before it goes into effect in the fall.

Adjourned