

**Liberal Studies Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2008**

Approved 10-3-08

Present Voting Members: Betty Brown, Becky Garrison, Ryan Holder, James Leve, Alyssa McKinley, Brent Nelson, Linda Robyn, Robert Rose (via phone), Vicki Ross, Blase Scarnati (presiding), Aregai Teclé, and Joseph Wegwert.

Present Ex-Officio Members and Guests: Don Carter, Greg Glau, John Hagood, Eileen Mahoney, Tom Paradis, Shelly Pleasants, Karen Pugliesi, and Melinda Treml.

Excused Voting Members: T.S. Amer and Todd Welch.

Absent Voting Members: Doug Brown

Prior to the meeting, elections for officers were held via email, where Blase Scarnati was elected as chair and Rebecca Garrison was elected as vice chair.

I. Welcome, introductions, and issues

- Blase Scarnati called the meeting to order at 3:05p. There were a few new members so everyone introduced themselves.
- Blase stressed the importance of attendance so that the Liberal Studies Committee (LSC) can function optimally. He also made clear that if an item has been discussed and the Committee has moved on, we will not go back and re-discuss issues that absent or late members missed.
- A ‘parking lot’ will be used to document tangential ideas and concerns that cannot be discussed at the current meeting, but that can be addressed at another time.
- Finally, Blase reminded the committee that Liberal Studies (LS) is the largest academic Program on campus with nearly five hundred courses and faculty. He said that we need to begin to think as a Program, to speak like a Program, and to interact with our faculty as a Program. He proposed that we develop a series of events to bring the LSC and the LS faculty together to discuss issues and the Program. He will begin organizing such events for the Fall and Spring. Blase also suggested that the LSC will need to begin to function throughout the summer. Models for summer faculty committees at NAU, such as the University Assessment Committee and Summer Faculty Senate, were mentioned.

Approval of minutes

- The 4-25-08 minutes were approved.
- The 9-5-08 minutes were approved with one minor addition.

II. Subcommittee Structure

- Based upon the decision of LSC in the September 5, 2008 meeting to begin again to use a subcommittee structure, a plan for subcommittees was discussed. Blase stressed the need to trust the work of our colleagues, working both within the LSC's subcommittees and in the College and Department committees. He also stressed that we are facing a huge task in dealing with the remaining unaligned courses. Blase said that as the work flow increases, we may need to subdivide our Review Subcommittees and supplement them with other LS faculty serving on an ad hoc basis.
- Four course Review Subcommittees were formed consisting of four voting members each. The purpose of these Subcommittees is to process new, change, and realignment course proposals.
- One Assessment Subcommittee was formed for the purposes of developing a Program assessment plan for Liberal Studies.
- One Program Subcommittee was also formed for the purpose of looking at foundation courses in conversation with the Math and English departments and looking at Junior Level Writing course issues. (This Subcommittee will be staffed at a later time).

III. Alignment process issues

In light of the number of LS courses that have yet to be aligned, a motion was passed stating that

If courses have not been aligned by the LSC in time for inclusion in the 2009-10 Catalog, the courses will continue their current Liberal Studies designation into the 2009-10 Catalog. If courses have not been aligned for the 2010-11 Catalog, the courses will lose Liberal Studies designation with the 2010-11 Catalog.

Karen Pugliesi and Blase Scarnati will continue to actively engage chairs and deans to try to prevent the latter from happening.

Review Subcommittees

- Using Review Subcommittees should increase the efficiency of the review process and reduce the amount of time that the Committee as a whole will need to dedicate to review issues.
- Blase distributed a handout entitled “Liberal Studies Committee Course Review Process” (see Appendix A) that was previously adopted by the LSC on September 9, 2005 which will govern the course review process for the LSC and its Review Subcommittees.
- The LSC will use a Master Syllabus model, where we are reviewing only those sections listed in bold in the LS Syllabus Template. Corollaries to this are 1) that the University Curriculum Committee screens for the other elements of the standard syllabus template and the LSC will not do so and 2) that Departments are charged with insuring that their faculty adhere to the particulars of the syllabi adopted into the LS Program.
- A motion was passed to alter the LSC Syllabus Review Rubric as follows:
 1. *Under ‘Clarity of General Information’: delete bullet 2: ‘Standard information clearly articulated’*
 2. *Delete ‘Timeline Schedule’ section, including its bullet 1 : ‘Timeline/Schedule for course’*
 3. *At the conclusion of the rubric,*
 - a. *Check box 1 should read ‘Approved’*
 - b. *Check box 2 should read ‘Approved with minor revisions requested of faculty and/or chair of department (please specify:)’*
- The Committee broke into Review Subcommittees to work on norming reviews and developing consensus rubrics. This exercise may be repeated at the next meeting.

IV. Parking lot items for future consideration

- Subcommittee discussion options (Vista, SharePoint, etc.).
- Who reports committee decisions to faculty and/or department chairs?

Meeting adjourned

APPENDIX A

To bring this document in line with the needs of the 2008-09 LSC, two modifications were discussed and appear below in [brackets] in items 1 and 5.

Liberal Studies Committee Course Review Process

Adopted by the Liberal Studies Committee with changes (September 9, 2005)

1. There will be three [four] standing Course Review Subcommittees organized by the LSC Chair from the voting members of the Liberal Studies Committee (LSC). Each Subcommittee will have an appointed Subcommittee Chair.
2. Proposals are assigned for review in rotation to each Subcommittee by the LSC Chair who will try to avoid assigning proposals to Subcommittees with members from the same department.
3. All proposals are reviewed by each Subcommittee using the rubric adopted by the LSC:
 - New course rubric
 - Junior-level writing rubric
 - Senior capstone rubric
4. After each member of the Subcommittee evaluates the proposal using the appropriate rubric, the Subcommittee meets to discuss and reach a consensus on a rubric for the Subcommittee as a whole.
5. The Subcommittee will determine, based upon the consensus Subcommittee rubric, whether the proposal falls into one of three categories:
 - a. approved
 - b. approved with minor revisions requested of faculty and/or chair of department
 - c. continued work with faculty and/or chair of department
 - [d. denied]
6. The Subcommittee Chair will contact the faculty and/or chair of department about necessary changes and establish a date for completion of revisions within a period of thirty days.

If needed, the consensus Subcommittee rubric may be forwarded to faculty or chairs by the Subcommittee Chair. No individual Subcommittee member's rubric should leave the Subcommittee.
7. Revisions within thirty days that address the concerns of the Subcommittee are reported by the Subcommittee Chair to the LSC Chair who will report the submission as approved by the LSC. Subcommittee Chairs must forward final copies of all proposals to the LSC Chair.

Approved submissions are forward by the LSC Chair to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) for approval as a consent item in its next meeting. No courses are officially approved until final acceptance by the UCC. Subcommittee Chairs should remind faculty or chairs of this policy.
8. If revisions that address the concerns of the Subcommittee have not been completed within thirty days, the faculty or department chair will be invited to meet with the full LSC at the next possible LSC meeting.
9. As an outcome of a meeting with the full LSC,
 - a. further revisions may be agreed upon to be submitted by an established date
 - b. a vote is taken to not approve the proposal
10. Proposals that are not approved may be revised and resubmitted to the LSC.