

**LIBERAL STUDIES PROGRAM**

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**Liberal Studies Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 30, 2009****Approved 2-13-09**

Present Voting Members: Betty Brown, Bill Grabe, Ryan Holder, Brent Nelson, Linda Robyn, Robert Rose, Vicki Ross, and Blase Scarnati (presiding).

Present Ex-Officio Members and Guests: Rebecca Campbell, Kathryn Kozak, Tom Paradis, Shelly Pleasants, Karen Pugliesi, John Stevenson, and Melinda Treml.

Excused Voting Members: T.S. Amer, Becky Garrison, and Todd Welch.

Absent Voting Members: Doug Brown, Alyssa McKinley, Cheryl St. George, Aregai Tecele, and Joseph Wegwert.

**I. Welcome, introductions, issues**

- Blase Scarnati called the meeting to order at 3:03p.
- He introduced Kathryn Kozak, the new representative from Coconino Community College.

**II. Acceptance of minutes**

The 1-16-09 minutes were approved.

**III. LS Assessment**

- The office of academic assessment would like to help the liberal studies committee shape the direction of the program by collecting and providing information that the committee is interested in knowing. Discussion centered around the “Employers’ Views on Learning Outcomes and Assessment Approaches” in the *College Learning for the New Global Century* report (2008 edition) from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education & America’s Promise initiative of the American Association of Colleges & Universities.
- OAA will conduct an assessment audit on our distribution blocks, skills, and principles. Once completed, the Committee can determine what further information is required to inform discussion and decisions going forward.

**IV. 2009 NAUreads book selection**

- Rebecca Campbell presented an overview of NAUreads (formerly the Summer Reading Program) to new members of the LSC and explained the yearly book selection process.

- The LSC endorsed the selection committee's 2009 recommendation of Sonia Nazario's *Enrique's Journey*.

#### **V. Discussion of the liberal studies program**

- A motion was unanimously approved to change the Essential Skill name of 'Scientific Reasoning' to 'Scientific Inquiry.' Changes will be made throughout the Liberal Studies web site and materials.
- There was a discussion about how liberal education should not be separate from the disciplines in the majors. All students should have shared experiences, tied by the liberal studies program, writing courses, and a senior capstone. Blase Scarnati discussed how we can begin to explore long-standing issues in the program, such as 'Critical Thinking,' through the national discourse on novice and expert learners. He will schedule discussions in future meetings. Karen Pugliesi also shared copies of the report, *Community Forums on General Education at Arizona's Universities* (2003), showing that the three Arizona universities were earlier thinking along similar lines.
- It was also discussed how important it is to empower faculty to facilitate these shared student experiences in creative ways in their classrooms.

#### **VI. Other**

- Tom Paradis showed the plaque from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation that he received on behalf of NAU last week in Washington, DC. It is a tremendous honor for NAU to receive this prestigious award.
- Discussion again turned to the skill of 'critical thinking' and how unsatisfied the LSC is with the definition.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45.