

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
November 16, 2007
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Ken Baughman, Adam Bentley, Jerry Caswell, Nadene Davidson, Donna Hoffman, Siobahn Morgan, Ron O'Meara, Jean Neibauer, Donna Vinton

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

II. Approval of November 9, 2007 Minutes

Davidson moved and O'Meara seconded the approval of minutes for the November 9, 2007 meeting. A few corrections were noted in the minutes, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Announcements

A. The Faculty Senate meeting on Monday dealt with current courses that had been approved by the LACC for Capstone credit. The Senate voted to approve all of these courses. On November 26 they will be looking at the entire curriculum packet, which includes several more Capstone courses as well as some other changes and additions to the LAC.

B. The naming of John Johnson as Interim Dean for CSBS has resulted in the loss of two sections of "Analysis of Contemporary Social Issues". Most other sections of Capstone have filled up. The sections for 820:140 have limits of 35 and have room in them.

IV. New Business

A. Morgan distributed a copy of the 2006-07 Annual Report for the group to look at and mull over.

B. The future schedule for the LACC was discussed. One item that should be done before the end of the semester is to have a meeting with the Category 4 Review. They need to give an oral report on their review to the LACC. It was decided that there will not be a meeting of the LACC on November 30, and the last meeting of 2007 will be December 7.

V. Old Business

A. Discussion continued on the dissemination of the material from the LAC Design Team. Morgan distributed a slightly updated version of the memo that is to go to faculty describing the background of the LACDT and the upcoming process. Morgan suggested that the material not be placed on the official LAC website, but on a website that she can create and edit quickly. This would remove any misunderstanding about the status of the documents,

which some might be confused by having them on the official LAC website. There is also the advantage of having Morgan able to quickly change the website and update the material without having to work through a second or third party. Various parts of the memo to the faculty were revised and clarified. One aspect that was confusing was the title of the “Status Report”, since some might view that as a report on the status of the LAC, not on the work of the LACDT. Further clarification on what is included in the “Status Report” would help people understand what it includes.

Various rewriting of the questions at the end of the memo were discussed, and some of the questions need to be expanded upon, or clarified. Some redundancy was also removed. Morgan will make changes to the memo to incorporate changes and will send out a revised version to the LACC. Further feedback should be sent to Morgan over the next few weeks. It is hoped that the website and the memo be ready for distribution by the week of November 26th. There will likely be two mailings of the memo, one at the end of the current semester, and one early in the spring 2008 semester. A realistic deadline for input, in all manners, would be by spring break 2008. This will provide enough time to schedule open fora, meetings with groups or departments, and methods of electronic input.

There was discussion about to which groups the memo should be distributed to and how information about the documents should be announced. Staff as well as students should be given information about what is going with the LACDT work. This can be through various electronic notices, and information in the *Northern Iowan* could also be used. Student fora could also be scheduled. There was also interest in how the proposed changes could affect other groups, such as transfer students, majors that currently include LAC courses and other groups.

A revised copy of the memo will be sent out on Friday or Saturday, and further feedback on it should be provided to Morgan.

B. The Capstone Management document was discussed. There was some discussion about ways in making the proposal process a bit easier for anyone that wants to propose a new Capstone course. Morgan did mention that she does provide detailed instructions to anyone that sends in a proposal or enquires about the proposal. It might be better to have a more detailed set of instructions posted at the LAC website, or in revising the form that is currently used to propose a course. It might be a good idea to use the form that is currently used to propose permanent courses as a basis for a new LAC course proposal form.

One area of the document that was discussed in detail concerned how to approve new instructors for Capstone courses. There was discussion on how to evaluate a new instructor for an existing Capstone course, in particular an instructor who may never have taught the course, or may not understand the goals of the course. This section (IV) of the document was significantly revised, and is need of further revision. There was discussion on how to prevent unqualified faculty from teaching a Capstone course. At the present time, it is not possible to take any actions. It may require incorporating more oversight for the Capstone category within the review process. As it is any actions would like be reactive rather than proactive. It is unlikely that individuals will send in their syllabus before the course

schedules are submitted. Probably the best way to handle new instructors for the Capstone courses is to have them meet with the LAC Coordinator to learn more about the course objectives and to find out what previous instructors had done in the course. In this way, and through careful oversight in the review process, it is hoped that any staffing issues can be avoided.

The assessment of the Capstone courses was also discussed. One aspect that was brought up concerning the Capstone assessment tool, was that the instructors of those courses were never able to view the results of the assessment. This tool does not assess the instructor, as is usually done, but assesses the course. There is also an assessment/evaluation sheet that faculty fill out. The assessment results can be made available to instructors, but individual student responses will have to be made anonymous (hand written material will have to be transcribed). The LACC should take another look at the Capstone assessment form which was used during the “experimental” phase of the new Capstone model, and determine if any revisions are needed.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the session was made by Davidson, and seconded by Hoffman. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Next Meeting – 8:00 AM, December 7, 2007 – in the SIAC meeting room.

Respectfully submitted,
Siobahn Morgan
LAC website: <http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/lac/index.shtml>