

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
March 30, 2007
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Maria Basom, Ken Baughman, Cyndi Dunn, Brian Larkin, Siobahn Morgan, Jean Neibauer, Jerry Smith, Lori VanHooreweghe, Donna Vinton

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

There was a minor correction to the minutes concerning the math course taken by biology students. Smith moved to approve the minutes of March 23, 2007. Larkin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Announcements

A. Morgan mentioned that the next meeting will be in the Old Gold room.

IV. Writing Enhanced Course proposal

The previously distributed proposal to extend the writing enhanced courses program was discussed. Baughman discussed the status of the program, including enrolling students into the courses, and properly advising students during the summer. There are several courses that are currently being offered as writing enhanced, including 620:031, 640:024, 680:023. There are some complications in this program with the loss of some English department faculty. The possible re-design of the entire LAC may factor into this program, but that remains to be seen. Therefore a continued “pilot” program is appropriate for now – this will also enable the program administrators to monitor the courses and gather data for the time when they are ready to propose it as an integral part of the LAC.

Smith moved to approve the proposal, Basom seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

V. LACC representation on the UCC

Neibauer mentioned that Teacher Education proposed that they have a voting member on the UCC. Neibauer thought that it would be a good idea to have someone from the LAC also on the UCC. Basom mentioned that the Teacher Education proposal will be acted on in a future Faculty Senate meeting. There was discussion about the possibility that perhaps the UCC would want representation on the LACC. In the past there was

discussion about more information sharing between the UCC and the LACC, and Morgan noted that the minutes for the LACC are freely available and very up to date – this is no doubt due to the excellent work of Cheryl Nedrow (thanks Cheryl!). Membership lists for other university committees are generally very out of date.

While Morgan was out of the room, the discussion continued and stayed on topic for the most part. In some cases it might help to have representation on the UCC, particularly for issues that have LAC impacts. However, any change to the LAC goes through the LACC, so the need for a representative on the UCC may be redundant.

In general it was decided that representation is not needed at this time, but if in the future there is a need for representation, perhaps due to the work of the Curriculum Taskforce, then we may ask for representation. So basically, stay tuned.

Basom suggested that it might be a good idea for the UCC to provide their minutes on a website.

VI. Update from the LAC Design Team (LACDT)

Smith discussed the draft statement of the LAC Purposes and Goals, and the preliminary report of the LACDT that will be presented to the Curriculum Taskforce. The preliminary report discussed the plan to address “core knowledge” of the students through the use of multi-disciplinary courses. These multi-disciplinary courses would replace some of the current “menus” of courses that are currently now available. This would also shift ownership of courses away from individuals, departments or even colleges to the entire university.

Concerning the size of the LAC – the current plan of the LACDT will not significantly change the size/length of the LAC, though it is possible to change the length by dropping some courses. The very ambitious LACDT hopes to get a proposal put together by Fall 2007.

There was discussion about course development, the ability of current faculty to teach the newly proposed “core knowledge” courses, the willingness of faculty to teach these courses, and how the courses could be developed. There is also the aspect that this type of design would also provide for “learning communities” since students would have very similar experiences. It is also important that there is management of these “core knowledge” courses to maintain quality and check that course objectives are being met.

There was also discussion that to properly maintain the quality of the LAC, the position of the LAC Coordinator may need to be enhanced (hopefully with a large salary bump). While Morgan thought the idea was enticing, it might be better to enhance teaching (through workshops for faculty) than paying for another bloated administrative position.

Comments from Davidson were also provided by Morgan – these included the use of the word “teach” in the Purposes and goals document. Perhaps “learn” would be better.

Also there was input about having “something added about ‘understanding the value of personal wellness in fully achieving the goals of a liberal education’ ”. And with respect to the LACDT preliminary report, there is discussion of content, but could we also talk about delivery strategies, high expectations for great teaching... how the courses are delivered – engaging, student focused, real world based, problem solving..” There has been discussion by the LACDT about the place of Personal Wellness in the preliminary LAC revision, but no formal vote has been taken on that issue. There are aspects of PW that could be discussed in other areas of the LAC, particular global health issues, economic issues (cigarette marketing overseas), health issues in biology, etc.

VII. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Larkin, seconded by Basom. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Next Meeting – April 13, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
Siobahn Morgan