

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
August 24, 2007
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Maria Basom, Ken Baughman, Jerry Caswell, Nadene Davidson, Donna Hoffman, Siobahn Morgan, Jean Neibauer, Ron O'Meara, Frank Thompson, Lori VanHooreweghe, Donna Vinton

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

II. Approval of the minutes

The minutes from the April 27, 2007 were reviewed. A few minor corrections were pointed out. Baughman moved to approve the minutes, Thompson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Announcements

- A. The group was welcomed and introductions were made around the table. New members were welcomed, and those that were absent (Adam!) were sorely missed.
- B. Category review status was discussed. The 2A review has been revised after some technical assistance was provided. The document was returned to Jerry Soneson of the 2A review team. The status of 3A has yet to be determined. The revised 3B report was distributed. The Category 4 review is underway. Thompson wondered about whether the reviews were compared to other institutions, or if there were benchmarks that are used for the assessment. Currently this is not done, since the assessments are internal. There is a working document at the LAC website which has the "purposes and goals" of the LAC. There was also discussion of the documents and questions used in the review process (also available on the LAC website). Vinton discussed other assessments used to evaluate the global qualities of the LAC.
- C. The Curriculum Review Team and the LAC Design/Dream Team were discussed. The former was put together by the Provost to look at the curriculum and programs across the university in general, while the latter is a subcommittee of the LACC to consider revamping the LAC specifically. The LAC DT will meet in the near future and will provide updates to the LACC about any ideas.

IV. New Business

- A. Meeting times for future LACC meetings were discussed. It was decided to have meetings from 8:00 – 9:30 AM on Fridays. Cheryl Nedrow in the Provost's office will

update people that use Calendar. Otherwise just mark your own personal calendars! The meetings will be in the SIAC meeting room in the Union.

- B. As mentioned previously, the 3B review was distributed and members of the committee were given their “homework” to go over the review. Committee members should come to the next LACC meeting with any points that need to be addressed and included in our own comments on the review. Due to various conflicts the next LACC meeting will be September 7, so everyone should spend their Labor Day holiday reading the review.
- C. Neibauer discussed the use of ACT scores and the grades in LAC courses/freshmen courses. ACT offers a service that will assess the data and look for correlations between ACT scores/subscores and success in courses. And of course they will do this for a fee. It is also possible that we could do such an assessment internally. This information would be useful when putting students into courses during orientation. Thompson mentioned his own study which found a correlation between ACT scores and success in the Accounting Major, such as the number that pass the CPA test on the first attempt. Various ways of looking at our own data were discussed. Neibauer is interested in finding out if there are other indicators for low achieving students. One area that could be examined is the set of students that are put on academic probation or suspension to see if there were any indicators in their background. The other aspects that can also contribute to low scores can also be intangibles such as family problems, health issues, maturity, work commitments, etc, which will not appear in our databases.
- D. There was discussion of a freshman curriculum that could be strategically set aside for students during orientation. In the past there has been a scramble for classes for the incoming students. In the past we have stressed the importance of the Category I courses during the freshmen years. Unfortunately there are not always spaces available for these students. This is an issue that should be brought up to the Provost in terms of resource allocation. By not meeting the needs of students we are almost forcing them to seek courses at other places such as Hawkeye CC. ACT scores and Major could help determine a freshman template. A complication is the fact that there are still back logs in all areas of the LAC and sophomores, juniors and seniors will also register for these courses.
- E. There was also discussion of a “Cornerstone” course that would be a freshmen experience course and would include items such as critical thinking skill, topical sessions, and supportive seminars that could provide help to students in other areas. Student groups have also asked about the possibility of a “Cornerstone” course as well. Other schools make use of the upper classmen to mentor incoming freshmen and help them along.
- F. Morgan provided a pamphlet that was put together by VanHooreweghe, that explains the LAC and includes syllabi statements. The pamphlets were distributed at the new faculty orientation session. Morgan mentioned that the Associate Provost Kopper is willing to help in any sort of mailings that would promote the LAC. A few critical eyes are needed to look at the content of any of the literature that we distribute.
- G. Upcoming activities for the year will include the curriculum packages, program reviews, other proposals (Enhanced Writing), the yearly report, etc. Basically enough activities to keep us all occupied for the next few months.

V. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Davidson, seconded by O'Meara. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

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

Addendum – The LAC Design Team will meet in the future on Tuesday mornings, 10 AM-11 AM (or to noon depending upon the amount of work we have) in the meeting area outside Morgan's LAC office 117B ITTC (old East Gym). Next meeting will be September 11, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Siobahn Morgan

LAC website: <http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/lac/index.shtml>