

General Education Committee Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2018

Ventress Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Noel Wilkin, Lee Cohen, Co-chairs; Holly Reynolds, Secretary; Danielle Ammeter, Ashley Bodie-Jones, Katie Busby, Robert Cummings, Maurice Eftink, Rich Forgette, Kate Kellum, Stephen Monroe, Deborah Mower, Hunter Myers, James Reid, Jason Ritchie, Mindy Sutton, Nancy Wiggers

Members Absent: Ginny Chavis, Jon Moen, John Chappell.

In the fall 2017, several subcommittees were formed to evaluate the current state of the general education competencies and make recommendations for improving student learning and assessment. In this meeting, two subcommittees provided their reports – Written Communication and Ethical Reasoning. See attachments for full reports and official summaries.

1. **Written Communication Subcommittee.** Angela Green and Chad Russell, co-chairs of this subcommittee, provided a summary of their report. They reviewed the accomplishments and improvements to written communications since the implementation of the last QEP, and the current writing assessments.
 - a. 37 programs have specific writing outcomes, and 70% met their criteria for success.
 - b. Writing enrichment programs: faculty writing and graduate writing fellows programs are working to get writing out into the majors.
 - c. Online versus in-class instruction. They do not see any significant difference in the outcomes based on mode of instruction.
 - d. Much more consistent instruction across the writing course sections
 - e. Recommendations – going to do more assessment of LIBA 102; modifying writing evaluation rubric and shop it across campus.

Maurice Eftink asked about the outcomes on the first page. He suggested that the subcommittee make a conclusion with recommendations about how to best operationalize the general education competencies. He also asked how we know faculty opinion on student writing?

Some committee members liked the longer term suggestion of courses being designated as being writing-intensive, for example. There are logistical issues to work out. The group also suggested that a CETL lunch topic could be oral and written communication. And, a bank of rubrics could be shared with faculty for evaluation of communication.

2. **Ethical Reasoning/Responsibility Subcommittee.** Deborah Mower presented the subcommittee's report.
 - a. The concepts of reasoning and responsibility have been combined in such a way that it does not allow neat assessment or understanding. The subcommittee discussed using different benchmarks for each. That way, the department or instructor can more easily assess student progress. Dr. Eftink gave some historical context about how responsibility was originally thought of as behavior.
 - b. 2017 chair survey indicated that 84% said that greater than 90% success rate. Except for a couple of classes, mostly these are upper-level students/courses covering the topics.

- c. She discussed the logistics of the faculty survey, with 22% responding. The data show that we tend to do a good job reaching lower level competency levels.
- d. Recommendations included:
 - i. Split reasoning and responsibility concepts in our general education statement.
 - ii. EDHE 106 and poverty simulation. The committee discussed this simulation in depth.
 - iii. Nation-wide there aren't really good assessments.
 - iv. Alumni survey – maybe we can have alumni bring in career/professional context of ethics.
 - v. Ethics Across the Curriculum programs.
 - vi. Ethics Center. A fair number of R-1 institutions have those kinds of centers to help faculty and students.

Dr. Eftink led some discussion about how we tend to assess performance in classes. We will have to look to Department of Philosophy and Religion to help with how to teach and evaluate ethics. There was a small discussion about the UM Creed.