

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

December 9, 2003

Present: Randall Gloege
Michael Dennis
Squy Wallace
John Cech – *ex-officio*

St. John Robinson
James Nowlin
Cathey White – *ex-officio*

Absent: Mark Hardt – *excused*

Sandie Rietz – *ex-officio*
Randy Rhine – *ex-officio*
Joe Michels – *ex-officio*
Curt Kochner – *ex-officio*

Dan Zirker – *ex-officio*
George White – *ex-officio*
Janie Park – *ex-officio*

Presiding: James Nowlin, Vice Chair

James Nowlin called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. in the Missouri room of the SUB.

I. Presentation Regarding Gen Ed at the COT – Dean John Cech

Dean Cech noted that the initiative to move the COT to a comprehensive community college has been in the process for 3 years now. The COT began 35 years ago as a VoTech Center which was part of School District 2. Since then, the VoTech Center has merged with the Montana University System, becoming a college of MSU-Billings.

A community college has certain requirements, including the technical core already offered at the COT and Gen Eds for transfer degree opportunities, so the students can move into a 4 year degree. Currently, the COT offers many AAS degrees, which do not transfer to a regular 4 year degree, but rather to a BAS, in which the student finishes his or her Gen Ed requirements and then moves into a specialized area.

Nationally, 42% of post-secondary students are at a community college. In Montana, that percentage is only 17%. The emphasis here is on 4 year degrees. We are missing a huge market that may be interested in a degree from a community college.

The Chancellor created a community college steering committee, and that group noted that the COT should develop transfer degrees with the other colleges on the east campus. Because the students should not have to take more Gen Eds on the east campus, the Gen Eds they take at the COT have to be the same offerings. This will slowly be phased in, using faculty chosen in consultation with the departments on the east campus. The first offerings of these courses will be this spring. ENGL 150, HIST 205, and MATH 121 will be offered, some of which will be offered at night. The COT is also working on degrees that can be

completed entirely at night. Right now, the Human Resources program is offered almost entirely at night. A night track for other programs could be developed that will be faster than getting a degree through some of the east campus night programs.

It was noted that the connections and needs of Gen Ed need to be more clearly articulated in the proposal from the COT.

It was cited that the Gen Ed Committee is trying to raise the quality standards for Gen Ed. This will include making sure that all Gen Ed instructors have appropriate degrees, and may involve monitoring classes for quality.

Dean Cech concluded by noting that MSU-B and Rocky combined are about 5000 FTE. There is still a large number of people out there in the community that could be interested in a community college program. Perhaps people are more comfortable going to a community college instead of a big 4 year institution, and we need to tap that market.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna