

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

April 13, 2004

Present:	Mark Hardt Connie Landis Amanda Mears (student) Sandie Rietz – <i>ex-officio</i>	Randall Gloege James Nowlin Connie Summers (student)
Absent:	Michael Dennis – <i>excused</i> Cathey White – <i>ex-officio</i> Tasneem Khaleel – <i>ex-officio</i> George White – <i>ex-officio</i> Carl Hanson – <i>ex-officio</i> Curt Kochner – <i>ex-officio</i>	Squy Wallace – <i>excused</i> John Cech – <i>ex-officio</i> Randy Rhine – <i>ex-officio</i> Joe Michels – <i>ex-officio</i> Janie Park – <i>ex-officio</i>
Guest:	Steve Coffman	
Presiding:	Mark Hardt, Chair	

Mark Hardt called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. in the Lewis & Clark room of the SUB.

The minutes of April 6 were accepted as presented.

I. Discussion with Steve Coffman, Chair, Communication and Theatre Department

Dr. Coffman noted that speaking and listening are not the same as reading and writing. Students studying to be teachers have an effective communication requirement, and all students need some kind of speaking course.

It was noted that communication courses still have a place in the Academic Foundations structure and in the matrix.

Dr. Coffman also noted that performance of communication (as a skill, not performance art) has to be *judged*, not measured.

It was cited that we can't squeeze much more into a baccalaureate degree even though we want to, and double counting will make that more difficult.

Regarding the "usurping" of the UCC, it was noted that the Gen Ed Committee reports to the Academic Senate, just as the UCC does. However, the focus of the Gen Ed Committee is much more narrow. The UCC reviews the academic merit of all undergraduate programs and courses, while the Gen Ed Committee only considers how and why a course fits into the Academic Foundations/general education program.

II. Unresolved Issues with the Proposal

It was noted that double counting, credits, the capstone, and ENGL 150 are all still up in the air. It was cited that the proposal could be broken down and parts passed, as the Board of Regents sometimes does.

It was cited that it was never agreed the six unbound credits would be called electives. Those were just free-floating, and need to be assigned to a category. The term “elective” is misleading in this case.

The idea of a capstone is a good one, but administering it properly will be difficult, if not impossible. It was suggested that students collect their work into a portfolio report that would not require faculty consent on every single entry. The students would enter, hopefully in an electronic form, what they feel was their best work from Academic Foundations courses. An electronic portfolio would be simpler for the faculty as well. Some courses, such as labs, would not have work to be included, and that will be fine. We need to emphasize to the students they should preserve their scholarship.

It was noted that it is not worth it for the student to put this portfolio together if no one is going to read it. At some point, someone needs to read it.

It was cited that some students will see this as busy work, and not bother putting anything of quality in their portfolio. The idea is to have them realize it is important to keep their work and reflect on the nature of their learning.

It was noted that the writing proficiency project may fit well into this portfolio system, since the students are already collecting their work. Bozeman and Missoula are doing exit exams after the second year, which are from ACT. If the students don't pass, they cannot progress in their programs. We don't want to do that if at all possible.

It was stated that the Committee definitely wants to encourage students to finish up their general education program in their first two years, rather than spreading it over four years.

It was noted that if the entire proposal is not approved by the Senate, perhaps it can be broken down: the less controversial portions passed and the problematic areas held back for more work.

It was noted that if the proposal is approved, Senate will need to expand the Committee as soon as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.