

**General Education Committee
Minutes**

September 30, 2003

Present:	Mark Hardt St. John Robinson Sandie Rietz	Randall Gloege James Nowlin
Absent:	Michael Dennis – <i>excused</i> Cathey White – <i>ex-officio</i> Dan Zirker – <i>ex-officio</i> Randy Rhine – <i>ex-officio</i> Joe Michels – <i>ex-officio</i> Curt Kochner – <i>ex-officio</i>	Squy Wallace – <i>excused</i> John Cech – <i>ex-officio</i> George White – <i>ex-officio</i> Janie Park – <i>ex-officio</i>
Guest:	Joe Howell	
Presiding:	Mark Hardt, Chair	

Mark Hardt called the meeting to order at 3:43 p.m. in the Library 3rd floor Conference Room.

The September 23 meeting minutes were accepted as presented.

I. Meeting with Mathematics Department

It was stated that the Committee has been discussing putting English Composition and Math into one category, worth 6 credits. There is also some concern from the Provost that all MSU-Billings math courses listed in Gen Ed meet Board of Regents requirements that they are not remedial.

It was noted that there are two courses in Gen Ed that are not offered by the Math Department and so it is possible they do not meet the BOR requirements. All the courses offered by the Math faculty do meet the BOR requirement. The requirement, decided a few years ago, is that all college level students should have the proficiency of College Algebra (MATH 105), so all of the non-remedial math courses currently offered at MSU-Billings have MATH 105 as a prerequisite. Students can then test out of MATH 105 where necessary. Some students test into MATH 101 and 105, while others can test well above MATH 105. The Personal Finance course (FIN 201/202/203) has no prerequisites and it is a way around the BOR requirement.

It was also noted that although all students have to go through the College Algebra hoop, students don't actually need algebra for many upper-level math courses, as well as courses in the students' majors. Students need MATH 105 not to have the skills to pass upper-level courses, but because it is BOR entry requirement.

It was suggested that STAT 141 Introduction to Statistics (or MATH 141 Contemporary Mathematics) could be the main math course(s) that all students take. STAT 141 would be a good Gen Ed math course, because students don't learn just math necessarily. They learn to gather evidence, base conclusions, use probability and logic, and many other valuable skills that don't necessarily relate directly to math. Anyone can come into STAT 141 without previous Math or Statistics course experience. The course is relative to the students' lives.

It was cited that MATH 105 used to be in the Math Department, but was gradually only taught by part-time faculty. It has now been moved, along with MATH 101, to the Academic Support Center, where the Math Department has no control over it. However, many of the instructors are those part-time faculty who taught it before, or graduates of MSU-Billings from the Math Department. The Math Department does occasionally meet with Gwen Braun, Director of the Academic Support Center, and they discuss what skills the students will need to enter into higher level math courses.

It was noted that if STAT 141 were the only Gen Ed math course, there would be some difficulty in teaching it to so many students, but it would still be a worthwhile course. STAT 141 lends itself to a lecture course, while MATH 141 would lose something in the lecture format.

It was also noted that Mathematics as a department has always thought that Gen Ed courses should be taught by your best teachers who best exemplify your department.

II. Letter of Support

It was noted that if the Academic Senate is to sign off on the letter as well as Dr. Park, it should be reviewed by the Senate. It was decided to take the letter to this Thursday's Senate meeting (October 2).

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna