

**Academic Foundations Committee
Minutes**

February 20, 2007

Present:	Oliver Chen Mark Hardt Abbas Heiat	Dan Gretch Connie Landis Jane Howell
Absent:	Susan Baack – <i>excused</i> James Ellis (student) – <i>excused</i> David Garloff – ex-officio Gary Young – ex-officio Karen Heikel – ex-officio George White – ex-officio	Barb Pedula – <i>excused</i> Alicia Esteves (student) – <i>excused</i> Tasneem Khaleel – ex-officio Mary Susan Fishbaugh – ex-officio John Cech – ex-officio Stacy Klippenstein – ex-officio
Presiding:	Mark Hardt, Chairperson	

Mark Hardt called the meeting to order at 3:46 p.m. in the Bridger room of the SUB.

The minutes of February 6 were accepted as presented.

I. Discussion/Action Items

A. Writing, Technology, and Experiential Learning Requirements Catalog Copy Revised

Jane Howell, Connie Landis, and Brent Roberts propose the following for the Technology Requirement:

Students who intend to graduate with a baccalaureate degree are required to have passed at least three (3) courses which include a strong component or emphasis on using information and communication technology.

Technology intensive courses are designated TN in the course descriptions.

Graduating students will engage in emerging information technologies. Every student will:

- demonstrate proficiency in the use of appropriate software applications for writing, email, presentations, and numerical information;
- utilize discipline-appropriate software and hardware;
- show the ability to find, evaluate, organize, disseminate and internalize information from a variety of sources;
- develop the skills necessary to be independent, lifelong learners.

It was noted that the old requirement “encouraged” students to take two TN courses, and the proposed **requires three** TN courses. It was cited that almost all COT programs require their introductory computers course, CMP 105.

It was cited that the group also suggested standardizing the advisor statement for the Writing, Technology, and Experiential Learning sections, to one statement at the beginning:

Students should consult with their advisors, major departments or faculty in their programs for guidance in selecting appropriate writing, technology intensive and experiential learning courses.

It was observed that there may be a BOR Policy which prohibits prerequisites in general education courses. It was noted that this may not be true because other campuses offer upper division general education courses, which most likely have prerequisites.

- Motion by Dan Gretch, seconded by Abbas Heiat to forward to the Academic Senate a recommendation to revise the Technology Requirements as stated above for inclusion in the Fall 2007 catalog, and to add the advisor statement to the section.

- Motion carried.

Jane Howell stated that she would speak with Gary Acton of English and Philosophy about whether the Writing Requirement needs revision.

- Motion by Connie Landis, seconded by Jane Howell to recommend to the Academic Senate the Experiential Learning Requirement as revised (below) for inclusion in the Fall 2007 catalog.

Experiential Learning Requirement

Students who intend to graduate with a baccalaureate degree are required to take and pass at least one course of experiential learning. Examples are student teaching, internships, undergraduate research, cooperative education experiences, practica, **experiences abroad, and senior projects.** ~~courses such as MGMT 458 requiring special experiential learning projects. A&SC 105, 107, 295, 297, and 298 are also designated experiential learning courses.~~ Students should consult with their advisor before enrolling in courses to fulfill this requirement because some of the majors include specific experiential learning courses within the degree requirements.

- Motion carried.

It was noted that since the AFC has reviewed the TN and WR requirements for undergraduate degrees, perhaps the Graduate Committee should review the requirements for graduate students, if there are such requirements.

B. Introductory Paragraph for Email to Instructors (who are missing an assessment instrument)

It was noted that the email can cover both the questionable submissions and those which have not yet been done. This email should go to faculty members, but also copied to Deans and the Provost. It was noted that the Deans would probably appreciate a list of which courses are still missing an assessment tool.

As you know, the General Education Program at Montana State University-Billings will be replaced in Fall 2007 by the Academic Foundations Program, and annual assessment of courses will be implemented. In order to ensure minimal problems in the transition to assessment when Academic Foundations begins, and to prepare for accreditation site visits during Fall 2007 and Fall 2008, assessment of current General Education courses is being done this semester, Spring 2007. The assessment data collected this semester will be among the material reported to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Your General Education course has been selected for the first round of assessment this semester. When your course was submitted for inclusion in the Academic Foundations Program, a matrix was filled out. From the matrix at least six items were selected by faculty members last fall semester for assessment. In addition, four bullet point objectives had to be addressed in material submitted when your course was considered for the program. The matrix items and the bullet points are as follows:

(insert matrix points and category-specific outcomes here)

Each of these items must be assessed. An assessment tool involves any graded work in the course, including (but not limited to) exam questions, written work, oral presentations, and class projects. Any given assessment measure may gauge more than one item. **It is imperative that the assessment tools be articulated and forwarded to the Academic Foundations Committee (via email to rrabemeduna@msubillings.edu) by March 16, 2007.** Assessment results for each student will be forwarded to Information Technology by the end of the Spring 2007 semester.

On behalf of the Academic Foundations Committee, I thank you for your efforts.

C. Minimum Course Grade for Academic Foundations – Recommendation to Academic Senate (C instead of C-)

It was noted that the BOR requires that students earn a C- or better in their general education core. However, the BOR allows any program to create a higher requirement, such as a C. In 2005, the Academic Senate voted that students must earn a C- or better in our general education program, but they must also achieve a 2.0 GPA or better in the gen ed core. That means that students cannot get a C- in all of their general education courses.

It was noted that in previous meetings the student members agreed that a C would be a better requirement than a C- in Academic Foundations.

It was noted that ultimately a C versus a C- is arbitrary because of differences in grading among instructors.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.