

**Academic Foundations Committee
Minutes**

October 21, 2009

Present:	George Czyz Melinda Tilton Mike Havens Tom Regele Michael Scarlett Brent Roberts Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)	Bernie Quetchenbach Neil Suits Matt Redinger Neil Jussila Richard Pierce Rita Kratky (ex-officio)
Absent:	Kathe Gable Kurt Toenjes – <i>excused</i> Lorrie Steerey – <i>excused</i>	Mark Fenderson – <i>excused</i>
Guests:	Stacy Klippenstein Jenny Howie	Jessica Smothers Kathy Kotecki
Presiding:	Matt Redinger, Chairperson	

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Missouri room.

The minutes of October 7 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. First Year Experience

Guests: Stacy Klippenstein, Jessica Smothers, Jenny Howie, Kathy Kotecki

Dr. Klippenstein stated that he was happy to discuss any creative options for first year experiences (FYE), cohorts, blocks, learning communities, and one-book-one-campus programs.

Ms. Smothers noted that she teaches A&SC 101 College Success Strategies, as well as coordinates all the sections of the course. For Fall 2009, there are 12 sections and a total of 227 students involved in this course. Ms. Smothers distributed a copy of the syllabus and noted the course only covers the first 7 weeks of the semester. Several student types are now being grouped together in these courses, such as athletes, international students, COT students, and for the first time, undecided students. Ms. Smothers also handed out a retention action plan, which is just a draft at this time. She noted that the 1 credit for A&SC 101 does count towards graduation as an elective.

Ms. Howie stated that students who take A&SC 101 have a lower retention rate Fall to Fall (i.e. from first year to second year), but we have no control group to compare them to; often

students who take A&SC 101 have lower COMPASS scores. However, Dr. Klippenstein noted the students who take A&SC 101 have a higher retention rate for Fall to Spring of their first year. Ms. Howie noted that we have a 55.8% retention rate for A&SC 101 students who took it in Fall 2008 and are still here in Fall 2009. This is higher than our goal of 53%, which will be gradually moved up to the national average of 63%.

Dr. Klippenstein noted that starting about three years ago, they began investigating how A&SC 101 fits into majors and how it helps retention. They want to know if A&SC 101 works with the academic programs' goals. They are also thinking about a career exploration course for undecided students. One issue that has been discussed at the Cabinet level is making A&SC 101 a required course, perhaps as two credits instead of one and including a service learning component. The issue is, where would it fit into Academic Foundations? It would be a huge FTE generator, but where will it fit into our academic programs? One suggestion was to automatically register students for A&SC 101 as freshmen, and the students must opt out of it if they do not wish to take it. Other options include a FYE-type course with a tie to an existing Academic Foundations course to fully link new student learning experiences, Academic Foundations curriculum, and service learning.

Dr. Klippenstein noted that there is a FYE conference in February, 2010 in Denver. He would like to send a group, and would include AFC members if there is interest. It was noted that the FYE conference sounds like something the AFC should participate in.

It was noted that the biggest issue for MSUB may be where to house the FYE program. Make it part of Academic Foundations? Or does it fit somewhere in Student Affairs?

Dr. Klippenstein noted that the FYE is not really a retention strategy; it is a learning enhancement. He also noted that the instructors of A&SC 101 do not get paid, but rather \$600 is moved into an account for that instructor to use for professional development such as travel to a conference. The best model for this course is team taught: one Student Affairs staff person and an academic.

It was noted that Missoula is using the one-book-one-campus program (the entire cohort reads the same book). This could be very simple to do at MSUB since we have so many local authors. At the end of the semester the students could take a seminar with the author. Dr. Klippenstein noted that at another institution, he participated in a program where not only the students read the book, the residence hall staff did as well. There were tie-ins with resident learning activities. Dean Khaleel noted that Carroll College used to do a FYE book program in which the students read a book and wrote papers and made presentations.

The AFC thanked Dr. Klippenstein, Ms. Smothers, Ms. Howie, and Ms. Kotecki for coming.

B. Tiers for Academic Foundations Courses

It was noted that some discussion of a list of Academic Foundations courses which students need math or writing skills has taken place. It was cited that students who have difficulty with math should not be taking a course like chemistry. It was stated that we just discussed retention of students and now we're going to tell them they can't take this course and they have to take that course first. Dr. Kratky noted that the Advising Center suggests courses

that are not necessarily prerequisites to Academic Foundations courses but may give the student needed skills. There is no set rule for all students, but rather each student and his or her major comes into play so each student can build a good foundation of math, English, reading, and A&SC 101 before moving on to other courses. Prerequisites and corequisites are also explained to the student.

It was stated that the AFC could develop a set of guidelines for courses which require higher math or English skills. It was noted that instead of creating a set of guidelines, we could put prerequisites on the Academic Foundations courses that need them. The math Academic Foundations courses already have prerequisites.

It was agreed that Dr. Redinger will survey the Academic Foundations faculty to identify courses which need a higher level of math, English, or reading skills.

C. Timeline for 2009-2010

Dr. Redinger handed out a timeline of the things the AFC needs to accomplish this year. Is one hour every two weeks enough? It was suggested that the Committee meet online occasionally. It was agreed that the next meeting will be November 4 (in two weeks).

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.