

**General Education Committee  
Minutes**

February 25, 2013

<b>Present:</b>	Mark Jacobson Melinda Tilton Mike Havens Tom Regele Leanne Gilbertsen Michael Scarlett Elizabeth Fullon Matt Redinger (ex-officio)	Bernie Quetchenbach Kurt Toenjes Jennifer Lynn Mark Fenderson Patricia Nichols Scott Harris TyRee Jenks Becky Lyons (ex-officio)
<b>Absent:</b>	Rhonda Dillman ( <i>excused</i> )	Daniel Barnhart (student) ( <i>excused</i> )
<b>Guests:</b>	Kirtlye Schuman	Stephanie Cowen

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Mike Havens called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the LA Building 8<sup>th</sup> floor lounge.

The minutes of January 28 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

**A. Reducing Gen Ed to 30/31 Credits**

“Option C” to remove 3 credits from I.B. English, Combine III. Social Sciences and IV.A. History for 3 credits of each, and Cultural Diversity becomes a single category for 3 credits

There were many good discussions across campus, and the general consensus was that the number of credits is not particularly important to many faculty, but rather the quality of our Gen Ed courses. There was also agreement that we might as well align with the MUS Core now, rather than being told to do so two or three years down the road.

Next, we will need to have thoughtful discussion about how many courses are in our categories, and the vetting of those courses, as well as what categories have science and what that means.

It was noted that freeing up six credits does leave room for discipline-specific writing courses.

Students in the COB used to take both Intro to Business and Economics, and now they will only take Economics. No real issues with accreditation. Students in COE will still be required to take certain courses, whether they are in Gen Ed or not. It was noted that some students need a second Social Sciences course for their intended master's programs. The issue at City College will be the possible elimination of the 100-level writing courses, since that is all they have. It was suggested that a new writing course will likely need to be crafted.

- Motion by Kurt Toenjes, seconded by Scott Harris to **send the above “Option C” as our recommendation to the Academic Senate, including a short recommendation of what to do with the freed six credits and a short history of the GEC’s decision.**

- Motion carried.

## **B. MSUB Membership in VSA Ending and ETS Testing**

The Chancellor’s Cabinet has decided that MSUB will no longer participate in VSA, which is a company collecting data for parents to use in deciding which college is best. Their collection practices were quite draconian and many universities have already withdrawn, because VSA is forcing their hands regarding assessment practices. Although she had no knowledge of this decision, President Cruzado called the same week and said we need to talk about VSA at the next Board of Regents meeting. Most likely, she will state that Bozeman is also withdrawing, but even Bozeman is not withdrawing, MSUB will be out. There was a concern that the ETS test would not meet VSA standards, but since we are no longer going to report to VSA, it’s no longer a concern.

Departments have sent in the capstone or other upper-level courses they would like used for the ETS test. If all goes well with this test, we may be able to get rid of the assessment system we have now, which, all agreed, does not work.

The question of IRB approval for the ETS test was raised. It was noted that the IRB rules state that tests done in class for academic purposes are not under IRB authority.

## **C. Report: Consulting with City College Gen Ed Department**

Dr. Havens stated that he and Vice Provost Redinger met with the City College Gen Ed faculty, but the main focus of the conversation was whether they needed a second representative on the committee, especially to represent those Gen Ed courses which students in A.A.S. and Certificate programs take. It was agreed that another representative is not needed right now, as City College develops into a community college, but this issue can be revisited in the future.

## **D. Removing Technology Requirement (TN Courses)**

It was noted that the TN designation is to indicate courses with a technology intensive focus. The catalog lists a requirement that all bachelor’s students must take three TN designated courses. This designation has not been updated in years, and is irrelevant to today’s students.

- Motion by Scott Harris, seconded by Melinda Tilton to **recommend to the Academic Senate that the Technology Requirement and TN designations be removed from the catalog.**

- Motion carried.

### **E. Vetting Gen Ed Courses**

This is a very controversial issue, but it needs to be done. We currently have the Department Chairs reviewing their Gen Ed offerings every other year, but more needs to be done. If we are going to argue for the effectiveness of Gen Ed, we need to vet the courses. If we can come up with criteria that we can all agree on, and hold to them, we will be way ahead of other universities.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita J. Rabe Meduna.