**FHSU General Education Committee**

**Minutes**

Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

Date: Monday October 23, 2017

Time: 3:30-4:30

Location: Rarick 205

Members

Douglas Drabkin (AHSS)

Marcella Marez (AHSS)

Jessica Heronemus (BE)

David Schmidt (BE)

Kevin Splichal (Ed)

Teresa Woods (Ed)

Trey Hill (HBS)

Glen McNeil (HBS)

William Weber (STM)

Tom Schafer (STM)

Robyn Hartman (Lib)

Helen Miles (Senate)

Adam Schibi (SGA)

Cheryl Duffy (Goss Engl)

Kenton Russell (FYE)

Tanya Smith (Grad Sch)

3:32 (1 minute) All members were present with the exception of McNeil and Weber. Paul Lucas returned as an observer.

3:33 (2 minutes) Chair reported back to the committee that he has spoken with Denise Orth, faculty senate president, and the word is that we don’t need to take our current work to faculty senate for approval just yet.

3:35 (7 minutes) Chair distributed a handout, “General Education Committee Process for Identifying Outcomes for Objectives,” which had been drawn up by Splichal and Woods. (See Appendix A.) This draws together in a formal way things we more or less agreed to last week. Highlights include: coming up with a list of 10-20 “stakeholders” for each of the modes of inquiry, appointing a member of the general education committee to lead in formulating outcomes for the mode, drawing together a subgroup of 3 or 4 people from the stakeholder list, coming up with a draft of up to three measurable learning outcomes for that particular mode of inquiry, sending this draft set of outcomes to all the designated stakeholders for feedback, taking the feedback to the full general education committee, and making adjustments to the list of outcomes as needed. In explaining this task to the stakeholder group, the lead should use the document, “Measurable Learning Outcomes for the Modes of Inquiry,” which is a combination Hill’s document and Drabkin’s document from last week. (See Appendix B.)

3:42 (1 minute) Woods was appointed “data analysis officer” for the committee. She will receive the stakeholder feedback and organize it for discussion at our committee meetings.

3:43 (6 minutes) The question arose about how much time should be allotted for stakeholders to give feedback on the proposed measurable learning outcomes. We decided upon 5 business days. In discussing this, and the reasoning behind drawing up multifarious stakeholder lists, and, in general, the political process we are trying to set up here, Schafer reminded the committee of LBJ’s “big tent” philosophy: “It’s probably better to have him in the tent pissing out, than outside the tent pissing in.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

3:49 (8 minutes) For the ***social scientific*** mode of inquiry, Hill (psychology) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: Gary Andersen (advanced education programs), Sue Boldra (teacher education), Keith Bremer (geosciences), Gordon Carlson (communication studies), Tim Davis (social work), Reade Dowda (advanced education programs), Larry Gould (political science), Chris Jochum (teacher education), Paul Lucas (criminal justice), Jenny McRay (leadership studies), Brooke Moore (advanced education programs), Paul Niencamp (history), Kenton Olliff (student support services), Dosse Toulaboe (economics, finance, and accounting), Valerie Yu (nursing), Valerie Zelenka (teacher education), and Brett Zollinger (sociology).

3:57 (5 minutes) For the ***natural scientific*** mode of inquiry, Schafer (geosciences) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: James Balthazor (chemistry), Gavin Buffington (physics), Clyde Cranwell (agriculture), Grady Dixon (geosciences), Loretta Dorn (chemistry), Eric Gillock (biological sciences), David Fitzhugh (health and human performance), Brittany Howell (agriculture), Brian Maricle (biological sciences), Helen Miles (health and human performance), Teresa Woods (teacher education), and Valerie Yu (nursing).

4:02 (8 minutes) For the ***philosophical*** mode of inquiry, Drabkin (philosophy) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: Gary Andersen (advanced education programs), Lexey Bartlett (english), Brian Bennett (political science), Amanda Fields (english), Elmer Finck (biological sciences), Paul Lucas (criminal justice), Carl Miller (philosophy), Gene Rice (philosophy), and Michelle Robinson (advanced education programs).

4:10 (6 minutes) For the ***aesthetic*** mode of inquiry, Marez (communication studies) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: Laura Andrews (music and theatre), Erica Bittel (art and design), Sungwon Chung (communication studies), Ben Cline (music and theatre), Allen Craven (art and design), Ron Rohlf (informatics), Jennifer Sauer (library), Amy Schmierbach (art and design), Chaiwat Thumsujarit (art and design), Angela Walters (informatics), Brett Weaver (english), and Tomme Williams (music and theatre).

4:16 (6 minutes) For the ***historical*** mode of inquiry, Splichal (advanced education programs) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: Erica Bittel (art and design), Sue Boldra (teacher education), Brian Gribben (library), Anna Obermayer (library), Kim Perez (history), Carl Singleton (english), and Juti Winchester (history).

4:22 (8 minutes) For the ***technological*** mode of inquiry, Schmidt (informatics) will serve as lead, and stakeholders will include: Suzanne Becking (advanced education programs), Gordon Carlson (communication studies), Clyde Cranwell (agriculture), Eric Denault (applied technology), Glenn Growe (economics, finance, and accounting), Rich Lisichenko (geosciences), Kris Munsch (applied technology), Ken Neuhauser (geosciences), Kenny Rigler (applied technology), Kenal Sevak (management), Andy Tinknell (library), Hsin-Yen Yang (communication studies), and Hongbao Zeng (mathematics).

4:30 The meeting ended. Our next meeting will be Monday October 30 at 3:30 PM in Rarick 205 (as usual). We will hear from Jill Arensdorf about the First Year Experience program at FHSU. And we will set up the sub-group for the seventh mode of inquiry (***mathematical***).

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**Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary**



***Appendix A:***

**General Education Committee Process for Identifying Outcomes for Objectives**

1. Align Objectives with Modes of Inquiry.
2. Look at each Mode of Inquiry and determine necessary stakeholders for each mode. We foresee a group of about 10-20 individuals from across campus. Do not focus on individual departments, rather, an interdisciplinary and diverse group of experts in the mode.
3. Identify a lead person from the General Education Committee to oversee a particular mode.
4. The lead person then selects from among the stakeholders a workgroup of 3-4 key individuals to formulate up to 3 draft outcomes. The lead should consider diversity when selecting the small group. These groups will be given Doug’s “Idea for Getting Started Formulating Outcomes” document incorporating Trey’s intro and the text of Objective 2.1. The document will serve as a possible starting place for the workgroup’s discussion, but it is not meant as a formal template for the draft outcomes.
5. Once formulated, the lead will present the outcomes to the General Education Committee. The outcomes might be revised with particular consideration given to measurability. After the committee formally approves the draft outcomes by vote, the draft outcomes move forward.
6. The chair will send the draft outcomes to the larger group of stakeholders for feedback. A simple survey will be used to gather comments with regard to the outcomes. The survey should have a short turnaround period of 2–3 business days.
7. Survey data will be processed and presented to the General Education Committee by the Data Analysis Officer. Discussion of survey data might lead to minor revisions of the outcomes. The committee will, by vote, either formally approve the outcomes or solicit a significantly revised draft set of outcomes for more feedback from stakeholders. (The same process is used to identify outcomes for each objective.)
8. The full set of outcomes for all objectives will be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate. This submission will not include the “model.”

**Subsequent steps for the General Education Committee:**

1. Formal approval of a model.
2. Courses proposed and approved for development.
3. Assessment plan for each outcome.

**Flow Chart for Development of Measurable Outcomes for Objectives**

**General Education Committee**

1 2 3

Drafting and Approvals of Measurable Outcomes



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After Objectives and Outcomes Approved

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***Appendix B:***

**MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE MODES OF INQUIRY**

**Background:**

Consider Objective 2.1, one of the objectives of the new general education program currently in development:

***Objective 2.1: Knowledge of the liberal arts***

Students will possess a broad understanding of the world, having studied the humanities, mathematics, the natural sciences, and the social and behavioral sciences, and the ways of knowing characteristic of these disciplines

The approach we are proposing for achieving this objective is through a section of the new general education program titled “Modes of Inquiry.” Students will be required to take one course in each of seven modes of inquiry. Modes of inquiry are essentially different ways of going about answering questions:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Aesthetic** | **Philosophical** | **Mathematical** | **Natural Scientific** | **Social Scientific** | **Historical** | **Technological** |

Each mode of inquiry will have a set of measurable learning outcomes associated with it. Ideally, these learning outcomes will be broad enough to encompass a wide range of disciplines within a broad category (e.g., the natural sciences), yet focused enough to be meaningful and measurable. In order for courses to qualify for a specific mode of inquiry, they must be able to satisfy the learning outcomes for the specific mode of inquiry. For example, if a department wishes to have a course considered for the social scientific mode of inquiry in the general education program, that course must be able to measure the learning outcomes for the social scientific mode of inquiry.

**An idea for formulating measurable learning outcomes for each of the seven modes of inquiry:**

The idea – and this is just a draft, the sketch of an idea – is to have three outcomes for each mode of inquiry. The first outcome would demonstrate that the student understands something of ***the scope*** of the mode, what sorts of things it is concerned with. The second would demonstrate that the student has achieved some ***basic skill*** at thinking in the mode. And the third would demonstrate that the student appreciates something of ***the significance*** of the mode as an important way to organize experience in meaningful ways. In formulating these outcomes, we should bear in mind that we want our graduates to be able to answer questions such as: Why should I ever trust a scientist? Why should I ever trust an historian? Why should I ever trust a film critic? And so on.

The following is the sort of thing we’re looking for, although, again, at this stage it’s just the sketch of an idea. We are asking for your help to make it a reality:

**AESTHETIC**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish aesthetic questions (questions of interpretation and appreciation of subjective experience) from other kinds of questions
* compose and revise an essay that explores an aesthetic question by use of imaginative reasoning (description of the experience, analysis of notable elements, comparison and contrast with other experiences, interpretation of the experience, and critical assessment)
* explain how the answers given to aesthetic questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**PHILOSOPHICAL**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish philosophical questions (non-empirical questions suitable for being approached dialectically) from other kinds of questions

* compose and revise an essay that explores a philosophical question by use of dialectical reasoning (stating the question, providing reasoning in support of an answer, explaining the strongest objection, replying to the objection, and resolving the discussion)
* explain how the answers given to philosophical questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**MATHEMATICAL**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish mathematical questions (questions of necessary truth suitable for being approached through pure logic) from other kinds of questions
* solve a complex problem by identifying the mathematical question that underlies it and explaining why the answer to this underlying question must be what it is
* explain how the answers given to mathematical questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**NATURAL SCIENTIFIC**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish natural science questions (questions of causal explanation that can be answered through empirical study) from other kinds of questions
* evaluate the merits of an example of natural scientific research at the level of an informed citizen
* explain how the answers given to natural science questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish social science questions (questions about human society and behavior that can be answered through empirical study) from other kinds of questions
* evaluate the merits of social scientific research at the level of an informed citizen
* explain how the answers given to social science questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**HISTORICAL**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish historical questions (narrative approach to human data) from other kinds of questions
* compose and revise and essay that explores an historical question making appropriate use primary and secondary source documents
* explain how the answers given to historical questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

**TECHNOLOGICAL**

*The student will*

* identify the characteristics that distinguish technological questions (practical problems that can be solved through instrumental reasoning) from other kinds of questions
* develop a working plan (sequence of steps/business plan/algorithm) to bring about an adequate solution to a difficult practical problem
* explain how the answers given to technological questions enable people to organize their concerns and make sense of their lives

1. And if it should happen that you, dear colleague, find yourself reading these minutes and want input in setting up measurable learning outcomes for one or another of the seven modes of inquiry, contact the lead for the mode you’re interested in and consider yourself welcomed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)