**FHSU General Education Committee**

**Minutes**

Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

Date: Monday December 4, 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)

Paul Lucas (nonvoting member)

3:33 (1 minute) All members were present with the exception of Miles, Smith, and Splichal. McNeil served as proxy for Miles.

3:34 (6 minutes) The committee considered a proposal from the art department to split the course ART 380: Survey of Art History into two separate courses, ART 201 and ART 202, and to offer both for general education credit as “Liberal Arts – Distribution – Humanities” courses in our present program. This seemed reasonable to the committee. It was put to a vote and approved by consensus.

3:40 (4 minutes) Chair entertained an offer from the Academic Affairs committee that a temporary moratorium be put on new proposals for changes to the current general education program. (The idea, presumably, is to avoid to anything that would delay our completing the design and launching of the new program.) Drabkin suggested that we would do well to discourage any tinkering with the old program that called for “too much thinking” (that would delay our completing the design and launching of the new program). The committee decided, for now, to take whatever comes our way. But we may ask for the moratorium if it starts to be a problem.

3:44 (13 minutes) Drabkin proposed reinstating the practice of working out our thoughts, at least in part, prior to coming together for our weekly meetings. Last year, while devising and revising the program goals and objectives, we found it helpful to use a wiki; this year we are working on the program’s measurable learning outcomes, similarly language-intensive, detailed work. Should we do something similar? It was decided that we should. Woods proposed using the learning tool “Yellowdig,” which is available through BlackBoard. She offered to set it up for the committee, and the committee accepted her offer. We will start using Yellowdig for discussing measurable learning outcomes when we return from break in January.

3:57 (23 minutes) The committee considered the proposed measurable learning outcomes for the natural scientific mode of inquiry, modified them slightly, and put the following wording up for a vote:

*Students will:*

1. *identify essential characteristics of natural science questions (questions of empirical study and applications of scientific methodologies);*
2. *evaluate the merits of examples of natural scientific research at the level of an informed citizen;*
3. *apply scientific methodology to a natural science question to increase understanding, make an informed decision, and/or solve a problem.*

This wording was approved by consensus. The next step for these outcomes will be to send them out to the natural scientific stakeholder group (see [minutes](http://www.fhsu.edu/liberaleducation/Meeting-Minutes/) for October 23). This will happen as soon as can be managed after our survey instrument has been approved by the university’s institutional review board (IRB).

4:20 (4 minutes) Conversation turned next to the IRB. We are still waiting to hear back from them about our learning outcomes stakeholder survey (see [minutes](http://www.fhsu.edu/liberaleducation/Meeting-Minutes) for November 13). Woods will follow up with Leslie Paige regarding the status of the request for IRB exemption. But the survey won’t be going out until we get back to work in January.

4:24 Meeting ended. Our final meeting of the semester is scheduled for Monday December 11 at 3:30 PM. Due to exam week scheduling, it probably will not be held in Rarick 205. Chair will find another room and email the committee with the details. Our work will include discussing the proposed outcomes for Objective 1.5: Critical Thinking, and Objective 3.3: Ethical Judgment. (See Appendix below).

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



**Appendix** – measurable learning outcomes for discussion at the 12/11 meeting:

***Objective 1.5: Critical thinking***

*Students will explore issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Students will recognize, analyze, criticize, evaluate, and formulate arguments in ways characterized by intellectual courage.*

*The student will*

1. sort claims according to the kinds of evidence that could be used to establish their truth, and the kinds of expertise that would be relevant to evaluating this evidence;
2. evaluate arguments of various kinds (identify, in a wide variety of contexts, when an argument is being made, what its conclusion is, what the logical relation between premises and conclusion is supposed to be, whether the premises are plausible, and whether the conclusion is established);
3. compose an essay on a difficult question that centers on subjecting the student’s own reasoning to sustained, intelligent criticism.

***Objective 3.3:  Ethical judgment***

*Students will recognize situations where reasonable, well-informed people disagree about what the right thing to do is; explain the underlying values that are in apparent tension, bringing to bear relevant ethical principles and approaches; and make intelligent decisions as a result.*

*The student will*

1. describe a situation in an area such as private life, business, health care, politics, applied science, and the arts where reasonable, well-informed people disagree about what the right thing to do is;
2. explain, in detail and in writing, the underlying values that are in apparent tension in this situation, bringing to bear relevant ethical theories and principles;
3. respond intelligently to this situation, in detail and in writing, providing well-reasoned arguments that either reconcile the underlying tensions, find one of the competing considerations decisive, or explain why it remains unclear what ought to be done.