**FHSU Liberal Education Committee**

**Minutes**

Meeting Called by

Shala Mills, Chair

Date: 9/22/2016

Time: 3:00-4:00

Location: Rarick 312

Members

Douglas Drabkin (AHSS)

Bradley Will (AHSS)

Dmitry Gimon (BE)

Jessica Heronemus (BE)

Kevin Splichal (Ed)

Teresa Woods (Ed)

Glen McNeil (HBS)

Tanya Smith (HBS)

William Weber (STM)

Tom Schafer (STM)

Robyn Hartman (Lib)

Helen Miles (Senate)

Megan Garcia (SGA)

Cody Scheck (SGA)

Cheryl Duffy (Goss Engl)

Chapman Rackaway (Grad Sch)

3:00 Meeting began. All members present except Rackaway, Scheck, and Splichal. Will announced that he was to serve as proxy for Rackaway. Established that a quorum was met.

3:03 Chair shared a question submitted to the committee from an anonymous faculty member: Why is there no mention in the goals and objectives of “the liberal arts”?

3:05 First question (32 minute discussion): How should objective 2.1, the breadth-of-knowledge objective, be understood, what should its title be, and what should its description be? The conversation picked up from the committee’s BlackBoard wiki discussion which generated no fewer than five variants. The committee eventually voted to change the title and description to read as follows: “*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 motion passed 14 in favor, none opposed. Heronemus expressed concern that this formulation leaves vague what the program would expect students to know. Many on the committee agreed that, when the committee sets learning objectives for this objective, something needs to be said specifying this. Woods, however, warned against conceiving the objective too restrictively, reducing knowledge in the liberal arts to mere “factoids.”

3:38 Second discussion (22 minute discussion): How should objectives 2.2 and 2.3, the integrative-and-cross-disciplinary-thinking and synthesis-with-major objectives, be understood, titled and described, and should they be merged into one objective? Although there was considerable interest in merging the two, Will insisted that integrative thinking is something significantly different from synthesis with the major. Heronemus concurred and argued that there is no value in combining objectives if they are just going to have to be separated again at the learning objective stage. There was no consensus on either of these points, but it was put to a vote to keep the objectives separate with titles and descriptions as follows: “*Objective 2.2. Integrative and cross-disciplinary thinking: Students will make connections among ideas and experiences, synthesizing and transferring learning from multiple disciplines.” “Objective 2.3. Synthesis with the major: Students will make connections between the specialized knowledge and skills of their major and other fields of study.”* The motion passed: 12 in favor, 1 against, 1 abstaining.

4:00 Chair encouraged the committee, looking ahead especially to proposed changes to the Goal 3 objectives, to consider the value in combining objectives and in this way simplifying and clarifying the resulting liberal education program. In the interest of making best use of the committee’s time, members should work out their points and counterpoints as much as possible online, on the committee’s BlackBoard wiki site, before coming to the meetings. The next meeting is in just 5 days. The next meeting will begin with two items from Goal 1: the title and wording of the quantitative literacy objective, and the proposal to re-conceive and re-describe the critical thinking objective. Then the committee will turn to the proposal to condense the Goal 3 objectives (last year’s six Goal 3 and 4 objectives) to just three. The aim is to wrap up refocusing and clarifying the full slate of goals and objectives so that the committee can turn to specifying learning outcomes by the second week in October.

4:08 Meeting ended.

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