FHSU General Education Committee Minutes

Meeting Called by
Glen McNeil, Chair

Date: Thursday April 6, 2023

Time: 3:30-4:30

Location: Rarick 107

Members
Douglas Drabkin (AHSS)
Marcella Marez (AHSS)
Christina Glenn (BE)
David Schmidt (BE)
Sarah Broman Miller (Ed)
Sohyun Yang (Ed)
Denise Orth (HBS)
Tanya Smith (HBS)
C.D. Clark (STM)
Todd Moore (STM)
Robyn Hartman (Lib)
Justin Greenleaf (Senate)
Emma Day (SGA)
Cheryl Duffy (Goss Engl)

3:30 (1 minute) All members were present with the exception of Day, Glenn, and Miller. Determined that a quorum was met.

3:31 (1 minute) The minutes from the March 30 meeting were approved.

3:32 (1 minute) The committee finalized the ***Natural and Physical Sciences Discipline Area Course Outcomes Guidelines*** without further discussion. This document aims to help interpret our revision of the CORE 2.1D natural science mode of inquiry outcomes (see minutes from March 9 and March 23) and provide advice on devising appropriate assessment tools. See ***Appendix I***.

3:33 (7 minutes) The committee finalized the ***Engaged Global Citizens Course Outcomes Guidelines***. This document aims to help faculty members interpret the outcomes resulting from the recent merger of CORE 3.2 intercultural competence and 3.3 engaged global citizens as a consequence of last semester's work bringing the CORE program in line with the new KBOR statewide general education program. Discussion today focused on how to interpret "from a global perspective" and "an experience with significant cross-cultural engagement." See ***Appendix II***.

4:00 (3 minutes) The committee finalized the ***Critical Thinking Course Outcomes Guidelines***. This document aims to help faculty members interpret our revision of the CORE 1.5.1-2 lower-division critical thinking outcomes, which have been combined with a revised element from the 1.1A written communication outcomes as a consequence of last semester's work bringing the CORE program in line with the new KBOR statewide general education program. See ***Appendix III***.

4:03 (17 minutes) The committee finalized the ***Personal and Professional Development Course Outcomes Guidelines***. This document aims to help faculty members interpret the outcomes resulting from the creation of the new

personal and professional development course area that came about as a consequence of last semester's work bringing the CORE program in line with the new KBOR statewide general education program. Discussion focused on getting the wording right for describing the sorts of skills ("broadly applicable" vs. "narrow") which should serve as the focus of these courses. See ***Appendix IV***.

4:20 (2 minutes) In order to get this week's work to Academic Affairs before their meeting next week, it was decided that ***this week's minutes*** should be approved by email in the manner of our committee's work a few years back. Please reply to the recording secretary ***before noon on Monday April 10*** whether you approve the minutes. Any proposed changes should be brought to the attention of the recording secretary. Any non-trivial changes will be brought before the committee for discussion, again by email.

4:22 The meeting ended. Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 13, same time and place.

Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary

Appendix I:

NATURAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES DISCIPLINE AREA COURSE OUTCOMES GUIDELINES

Outcomes:

1. Make appropriate use of models based on well-established scientific reasoning to predict or explain natural phenomena.
2. Evaluate the validity or strength of a truth-claim or scenario using scientific reasoning or methods.
3. Collect, analyze, and interpret observational data using scientific methods and reasoning.

KBOR General Education Framework:

The Kansas Board of Regents identifies a Natural and Physical Sciences Discipline Area that must be included in the General Education program of each Regents institution. Students are required to take one science theory course and one science laboratory course.

Assessment Examples:

It is expected that most science courses will be able to identify assignments or exam questions that they are already using in the course to assess these outcomes. Outcomes 1 and 2 are to assess theory courses.

Outcome 1 identifies a common thread among all science courses. Students are taught a scientific theory or framework and are asked to make a prediction or explain an observation. Examples of questions that could be given as a standalone quiz, or as part of a larger exam:

1. Given a map of tectonic plate boundaries, identify regions where we would expect to find mountain ranges, volcanoes, and other geological features or events.
2. A cannonball is launched from the ledge of a 10 m cliff with a muzzle velocity of 10 m/s parallel to the ground. Determine when the cannon ball would strike the ground below, where it would strike the ground, and how fast it would be traveling when it strikes the ground.
3. If you see the full moon rising in the east, what time of day is it? Explain.

Outcome 2 asks students to use what they have learned about a scientific theory or framework and apply it to some claim or (possibly fictional) scenario. Examples of questions:

1. An electric car company has announced that they have made a breakthrough in battery technology. They have found a way to make smaller batteries more efficient and the result is a light car that can travel a greater distance on one charge. The company claims that they were able to drive their 1000 kg electric car to the top of Pikes Peak from its base, an ascent of 4300 m, and only use half the charge of the battery's 50 kWhr battery. Should we buy stock in this company? Explain.
2. It has recently been discovered that the rotation of Earth's inner core has slowed. This is the likely cause of climate change since the Industrial Revolution. Evaluate the strength of this claim.

Outcome 3 is to assess lab courses. Students are expected to learn how to collect observational data and perform some analysis with the data they collected. Collecting data could include collecting physical specimens from the wild, viewing a set of supplied specimens under a microscope and noting various properties, constructing an experiment and taking measurements, or even gathering data from public databases to perform some analysis.

Appendix II:

ENGAGED GLOBAL CITIZEN COURSE OUTCOMES GUIDELINES

Objective:

Students will appreciate social and cultural complexity from a global perspective and develop skills necessary to engage effectively and collaboratively with others to address complex social problems.

Outcomes:

1. Analyze from a global perspective a complex social problem involving people from more than one culture.
2. Produce a work that reflects on the student's learning from an experience with significant cross-cultural engagement.

CORE Assessment:

While Engaged Global Citizens is not included in the KBOR General Education Framework, students are encouraged to include these courses in their program. These courses are tagged with "Engaged Global Citizens" in Workday.

Definitions:

1. "Global Perspective": a viewpoint that takes into consideration the place or places of individuals, groups, cultures, and phenomena in the world and how they relate to one another.
2. "Experience with Significant Cross-Cultural Engagement": an interaction with someone from another culture.

Guiding Principles:

The General Education Committee will be evaluating course proposals that work to satisfy the specified outcomes through developing and/or enhancing the following in students:

Attitudes: This refers to attributes such as openness, respect, and appreciation for diversity; valuing of multiple perspectives with an awareness of the cultural and experiential influences that shape one's own and others' perspectives; and social responsibility. The course develops and/or enhances a desire to better the human condition on a local and global scale.

Knowledge: This refers to an understanding of topics such as global issues and current events; global interdependence, including the impact of global events on local conditions and vice versa; the processes of globalization and its effects on economic and social inequities on a local and global scale.

Skills: This refers to skills such as the ability to communicate across cultural boundaries; collaborate with people who have diverse cultural, racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; think critically and analytically; problem-solve; and take action on issues related to global importance.

Appendix III:

CRITICAL THINKING COURSE OUTCOME GUIDELINES

Objective:

Students will recognize, analyze, criticize, evaluate, and formulate arguments in ways characterized by intellectual courage and reflective self-criticism.

Outcomes:

1. Systematically evaluate arguments of various kinds.
2. Write a formal paper that uses a standard form of reasoning to argue in support of a controversial thesis and then defend this reasoning from a significant objection.

KBOR General Education Framework:

Critical Thinking is one of the two Institutionally Designated Areas for the program. This area allows each Kansas public institution to define requirements for societal issues, local needs, and institutional priorities.

Definitions:

"Formal Paper": a researched paper citing credible sources in a discipline-appropriate documentation style.

Course Prerequisite:

Students must complete ENG 102: English Composition II prior to taking this course.

Guiding Principles:

1. Subject Matter: Critical Thinking is a well-established discipline, with a well-defined subject matter: the identification, construction, and evaluation of arguments of various kinds. Although instructors will employ different pedagogical approaches and may choose to emphasize different aspects of the subject, the topics covered should not deviate widely from those covered in standard Critical Thinking textbooks -- e.g., Lewis Vaughn, *The Power of Critical Thinking* (Oxford), David R. Morrow and Anthony Weston, *A Workbook for Arguments* (Hackett), or Brooke Moore and Richard Parker, *Critical Thinking* (McGraw-Hill).
2. Essential Skills: Learning to think critically involves acquiring skills through practice. Essential skills include: (1) determining whether a passage contains an argument, (2) identifying the parts of particular arguments, including assumed premises, (3) distinguishing different kinds of deductive and inductive arguments, (4) evaluating the validity of deductive arguments, (5) evaluating the strength of inductive arguments, (6) recognizing and avoiding common fallacies, (7) composing a written argument of one's own, (8) identifying and formulating the strongest objection to one's own argument, and (9) replying to that objection.
3. General Applicability: Any course designed to satisfy these outcomes should provide students with fundamental reasoning skills applicable to any major. Instructors may devote more time to argument types relevant to their own disciplines, but the primary focus of the course must be the general reasoning skills applicable to the construction and evaluation of arguments in any discipline.

Sample Course Outline:

Week 1-2	kinds of claims, recognizing arguments, identifying conclusions and premises
Week 3-4	analyzing and evaluating kinds of deductive arguments
Week 5-8	analyzing and evaluating kinds of inductive arguments
Week 9	recognizing common fallacies
Week 10-12	discipline-specific arguments
Week 13-15	the formal paper: constructing, critiquing, and defending an argument

Appendix IV:

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE OUTCOMES GUIDELINES

Objective:

Students will reflect on their strengths and capitalize on opportunities for growth in their personal decision-making and/or transferable professional skills.

Outcomes:

1. Explain the importance of personal and/or professional development in lifelong learning.
2. Identify goals for their own growth in a personal and/or professional area.
3. Create an appropriate individualized plan or decision-making process to achieve identified goals.

KBOR General Education Framework:

Personal and Professional Development is one of the two Institutionally Designated Areas for the program. This area allows each Kansas public institution to define requirements for societal issues, local needs, and institutional priorities.

Definitions:

1. "Personal Decision-Making Skills": broadly applicable skills that focus on developing an individual's ability to assess options on personal matters and make choices consistent with their values, interests, and strengths. (See personal development examples below.)
2. "Transferable Professional Skills": broadly applicable skills that focus on developing an individual's strengths and employability across occupations and industries. (See professional development examples below.)
3. "Lifelong Learning": "The provision or use of both formal and informal learning opportunities throughout people's lives in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfillment," *Collins English Dictionary*, 12th ed. 2014.

Guiding Principles:

Many topics would fit into the Personal and Professional Development outcome set. Course designers are encouraged to consider a range of subjects that would provide opportunities for student growth. The intent of the outcome set is not to provide training activities designed to teach a narrow range of skills. The following are only examples to guide course development, and proposed courses are not limited to these topics:

Personal Development: career choice, finances, physical health, mental health, interpersonal relationships.

Professional Development: collaborative relationships, teamwork, computing, technology literacy, equity and inclusion, leadership, professional ethics.