

# FHSU General Education Committee

---

## Minutes

### Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

**Date:** Thursday October 25, 2018

**Time:** 3:30-5:00

**Location:** Pioneer Room, Memorial Union

### Members

Douglas Drabkin (AHSS)

Marcella Marez (AHSS)

Jessica Heronemus (BE)

David Schmidt (BE)

Sarah Broman (Ed)

Kevin Splichal (Ed)

Trey Hill (HBS)

Glen McNeil (HBS)

Joe Chretien (STM)

Tom Schafer (STM)

Robyn Hartman (Lib)

Helen Miles (Senate)

Adam Schibi (SGA)

Cheryl Duffy (Goss Engl)

Tanya Smith (Grad Sch)

---

3:30 (2 minutes) All members were present with the exception of Broman, Schibi, and Smith. Splichal served as proxy for Broman, McNeil served as proxy for Smith, and student Connor Mountford served as proxy for Schibi. Keith Dreiling, chair of the department of mathematics, was also in attendance. Determined that a quorum was met. Brief introductions were made for the benefit of Mountford and Dreiling.

3:33 (27 minutes) The first item of business was consideration of the math-related objectives 1.2 and 2.1-C, mathematical literacy and the mathematical mode of inquiry. Dreiling agreed that two courses being taught in our current general education program, MATH 101: Liberal Arts Mathematics and MATH 110: College Algebra, each satisfy the learning outcomes for both 1.2 and 2.1-C. This means that, as the committee works to find ways to cut back on the overall hours required for satisfying the FHSU CORE program, we can assume that a single three-hour course will be able to handle both objectives. Chair had put a question to Dreiling prior to the meeting coming from the sociology department, whether MATH 250: Elements of Statistics may not serve just as well at satisfying a student's math requirements. Dreiling replied that, as it is currently taught, MATH 250 does not satisfy the requirement in objective 1.2 outcome 2 that problems be solved graphically. He also observed that successfully completing one of the other two courses, MATH 101 or MATH 110, is already a prerequisite for MATH 250. This means that any student qualified to take MATH 250 has already satisfied the proposed FHSU CORE math outcomes. Dreiling agreed that none of this precludes the development of a new statistics course that would include the graphical solution of problems. Dreiling was then asked if the mathematics department would be in favor of merging objectives 1.2 and 2.1-C into a single objective. He replied that the mathematics department would accept the merging of the objectives, but would prefer they be kept

separate, perhaps as a way of indicating the role of mathematics as both a fundamental skill set and an important way of thinking distinct from the other modes of inquiry. Chair suggested that it would be a good idea, one way or the other, for the phrase “quantitative literacy” to be kept in the new program, as it is a notion likely to be popular with influential people outside of our university, and that we ought to make a point of doing things that are popular with influential people outside of our university. Chair finally suggested to Dreiling that the math department begin keeping assessment data on the outcomes for 1.2 and 2.1-C in Spring 2019, or Fall 2019 at the latest, much as data on the outcomes for 1.1-B are being collected in COMM 100 this semester.

4:00 (30 minutes) Another question arising from the Chair’s conversation with members of the sociology department concerned the advisability of outcome 3 of objective 3.2. It may help to remember the entirety of 3.2:

**Objective 3.2: Intercultural Competence**

Students will understand their own and others’ cultures and possess skills necessary to engage constructively with all kinds of people.

**Outcomes 3.2**

1. Produce an exploratory or investigative work based upon a personal interaction such as a conversation, an interview, or a service-learning experience that compares and contrasts the culture of an individual or group outside of the student’s own identity community with the student’s own culture;
2. Produce an exploratory or investigative work that elucidates multiple aspects of a culture outside of the student’s own identity community;
3. Accomplish an interpersonal task using phrasebook-level communication outside the student’s own language.

The objection was that outcome 3 isn’t valuable, or isn’t sufficiently valuable to be worth keeping, because translating devices have become readily available as phone apps, and any student lacking proficiency in a language would use one of these programs if they needed to communicate with someone who didn’t speak their language. The reply to this objection was that this misses the point of the outcome, which is to get all of our students to be outside their native-language comfort zones and experiencing first-hand what it’s like to be a linguistic stranger. Schafer argued that this sort of experience would be valuable in preparing students “to engage constructively with all kinds of people.” Drabkin recommended that we think about this for a week and hold off voting until next Thursday. But someone had already moved to strike 3.2 outcome 3 from the program, and the motion was seconded. This motion passed: 10 in favor, 2 against, 1 abstaining.

4:30 (29 minutes) The final third of the meeting was a general consideration of some of the ideas that have come forward for keeping low the total number of hours required for completing the FHSU CORE program. But this didn’t occur until one thing was immediately put to a vote: that we weren’t going to put any of these matters up for a vote this week. This motion passed unanimously. The desirability of keeping the hours low(ish) appeared to be a matter of consensus. Beyond that, ideas were floated this way and that, and side conversations sprang up, but nothing came to the point of gelling. It was noted in passing, however, that one thing set in motion last week will take place; some of the members of the committee will meet on Friday October 26 with Kim Stewart, chair of the department of applied technology, to try to come up with a clearer understanding of the outcomes for 2.1-G: the technological mode of inquiry, and in particular, the range of problems that can be addressed through what we are calling “the technological design process.” This will no doubt be part of our discussion at next week’s meeting.

4:59 Meeting ended. The committee will gather next on Thursday, November 1 at 3:30 in the Smoky Hill Room of Memorial Union.

---

Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary

