

# FHSU General Education Committee

---

## Minutes

### Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

**Date:** Monday September 18, 2017

**Time:** 3:30-4:30

**Location:** Rarick 205

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)

### Members

---

3:32 (1 minute) All were present except for Duffy, Hartman, Shafer, Smith, and the newly appointed representative from the Student Government Association, Adam Schibi. Paul Lucas from the Criminal Justice Department participated in the meeting as an observer. Before things got started, Drabkin noted some problems with the ongoing “Liberal and General Education” entry in the Tiger Daily emails. Chair asked that he look into fixing them, and he agreed to do this.

3:33 (4 minutes) With Marez and Lucas attending for the first time, there were introductions all around.

3:37 (61 minutes) There was really just one item of business taken up this week: getting clear on what it is to be a measurable learning outcome. Chair explained that, in the context of our project, a measurable learning outcome is a sentence expressing what students need to be able to **do** after fulfilling an element of the general education program we are proposing. In other words, it should describe a **product** of some sort. And it must be **measurable**, which is to say that it should be observable and able to be judged adequate or inadequate given an established standard. Chair emphasized that having a good set of measurable learning outcomes will be necessary for the new general education program to earn the trust of people; for how else will people know if the courses we approve for inclusion in the program achieve the objectives that are the reason for their inclusion in the program? Chair also emphasized that it is important for us to get this list of outcomes more or less right, right from the start; for if we have to modify them at a later date, then the courses that were designed to produce the earlier set of outcomes will all have to be redesigned to meet the new ones. Chair introduced the committee to a number of “action verbs” that are likely to be helpful in describing the measurable learning outcomes of our program, and noted that verbs such as “know,” “understand,” and

“demonstrate an understanding of” are conspicuously absent; knowledge and understanding are real things, to be sure, but they are observed through activities such as “describing,” “identifying,” “comparing,” “distinguishing,” “paraphrasing,” and so on. Chair also warned the committee against packing learning outcomes with multiple action verbs; each outcome should indicate a single product (perhaps a complex product that draws together a good many subordinate elements, but a single product nonetheless). Chair’s explanation and exhortation led to an open discussion of a number of questions: How many outcomes we are looking for? Are we talking about outcomes for the overall general education program, outcomes for sections of the program (e.g., “modes of inquiry”), or outcomes for individual components of the program (e.g., “the historical mode of inquiry”)? What is the significance of the different levels of Bloom’s taxonomy? And so on. The upshot of the discussion was that we are collectively somewhat closer to understanding what it is we are tasked with doing.

4:38 Meeting ended. The next meeting will be on Monday September 25 at 3:30 PM in Rarick 338.

---

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

