

# FHSU General Education Committee

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## Minutes

### Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

**Date:** Thursday, February 1, 2018

**Time:** 2:30-3:30

**Location:** Rarick 308

### 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)  
Karmen Porter (Grad Sch)  
Paul Lucas (nonvoting member)

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2:33 (4 minutes) All members were present with the exception of Marez and Splichal. Introductions were made all around as Karmen Porter was welcomed to the committee.

2:37 (17 minutes) Duffy provided the committee with an update of progress made by the university's Writing Across the Curriculum committee in developing a rubric for the first of Objective 1.1's two measurable learning outcomes: *to write a persuasive essay that includes (a) a clear and debatable thesis, (b) fully developed and supported ideas, (c) a clear organizational structure, (d) effective consideration of opposing arguments, (e) use of credible sources, (f) appropriate documentation of sources, (g) consideration of a target audience, and (h) conventional grammar and mechanics.* The rubric that has been developed has descriptions for each of these eight qualities at four levels of achievement: "not proficient," "developing proficiency," "proficient," and "exceeding proficiency." The aim is to get all students to "developing proficiency" in all eight qualities by the end of Composition II and to "proficiency" by graduation. The rubric is being piloted this semester in all five colleges. If it works well, the plan is to explain it to the campus-at-large in Fall 2018, and to bring it into general use in Spring 2019, prior to the overall launching of the new general education program in Fall 2019 (fingers crossed). The second of Objective 1.1's two measurable learning outcomes, *to produce a discipline-specific document judged competent according to a department-developed rubric*, is scheduled for development in Fall 2018, with the idea of bringing it into effect in Fall 2019.

2:54 (23 minutes) The committee considered a proposal by the English department to significantly change the description of ENG 327: Introduction to Fiction for the remaining year or two of the current general education program. Introduction to Fiction is currently conceived as a course organized around the genres of the novel and the short story. Its proposed replacement is to be organized around a specific topic (for example, "The Hero's Journey," "Sports in

Literature,” or “Literature of Protest”). The altered course would keep the ENG 327 number, but would be a variable content course, something like the Topics courses common around campus, and would appear to students in TigerTracks with the title “Literature Matters” followed by a colon and a subtitle (so, for example: “Literature Matters: Literature of Protest”). The committee voted unanimously to accept the proposal. It moves next to faculty senate’s Academic Affairs committee.

3:17 (21 minutes) Drabkin presented three measurable learning outcomes for the philosophical mode of inquiry:

The student will

1. *identify the characteristics that distinguish philosophical questions (non-empirical questions suitable for being approached dialectically) from other kinds of questions, such as social science questions, natural science questions, and legal questions;*
2. *compose and revise an essay that accurately captures someone’s reasoning in support of their answer to a philosophical question;*
3. *compose and revise an essay that accurately captures a significant objection to a clearly formulated philosophical argument and explains why the objection is significant.*

The committee recommended that these outcomes be changed to the following:

The student will

1. *identify the distinguishing characteristics of philosophical questions (non-empirical questions suitable for being approached dialectically);*
2. *compose an essay that accurately captures someone else’s reasoning in support of their answer to a philosophical question;*
3. *compose an essay that accurately captures a significant objection to a clearly formulated philosophical argument and explains why the objection is significant.*

Drabkin will take the proposed changes back to the subgroup for their consideration. Heronemus asked whether a course like General Logic would, given these outcomes, fail to be a philosophical mode of inquiry course. Drabkin said that General Logic, as it is currently conceived and taught, would indeed fail to achieve these outcomes. If General Logic were to have a place in the new general education program, it would presumably be in service of the first two outcomes for objective 1.5 ([see minutes for December 11, 2017](#)).

3:38 Meeting ended. The committee’s next meeting will be Thursday, February 8 at 2:30 PM in the Pioneer Room of the Union.

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Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary

