

FHSU General Education Committee

Minutes

Meeting Called by

Bradley Will, Chair

Date: Thursday, April 26, 2018

Time: 2:30-3:30

Location: Smoky Hill Room, Union

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)

2:31 (1 minute) All members were present with the exception of Lucas, Marez, and Russell. Heronemus was serving as proxy for Russell. Determined that a quorum was met.

2:32 (3 minutes) Woods presented the stakeholder survey feedback on the draft measurable learning outcomes for the **mathematical mode of inquiry** component of objective 2.1. The committee voted unanimously to keep the outcomes as proposed.

2:35 (3 minutes) Woods presented the stakeholder survey feedback on the draft measurable learning outcomes for the **technological mode of inquiry** component of objective 2.1. The committee voted unanimously to keep the outcomes as proposed.

2:38 (52 minutes) Returning to the proposed measurable learning outcomes for objective **3.2: Intercultural competence**, the committee turned its attention to the controversial third outcome. The question at the heart of the discussion was whether or not, in order for students to “possess the skills necessary to engage constructively with people” of various cultures, they need to have some exposure to a foreign language. Much of the discussion concerned what it would be reasonable for our students to accomplish in their time as undergraduates. Fluency was thought to be out of the question. Even basic conversational proficiency – the sort of thing aimed at in the courses required for students earning the Bachelor of Arts degree – seemed too much to require of all students. But a “smattering” of a

language, a “phrasebook” experience with a language, the experience of having “brushed up against” a language – this appeared, to a majority of the committee, to be a desirable outcome for all students. The following language for the third outcome was put to a vote:

The student will accomplish a task by engaging in an interpersonal experience involving a language other than the student’s native language(s). (American Sign Language counts as a language.)

This passed 13 in favor, 2 abstaining. It was also agreed, in passing, to add a hyphen in the first outcome, changing “service learning experience” to “service-learning experience.”

3:30 (12 minutes) Wrapping up discussion of objective 3.2, the committee considered a proposal to simplify the language of the objective. The proposal was to move from this:

Students will understand their own and others’ cultures and possess skills necessary to engage constructively with people across a range of races, ethnicities, genders, identities, abilities, histories, religions, traditions, and languages.

to this:

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

Those in favor of the change preferred it for three reasons: (1) the list is incomplete (it leaves off categories of diversity such as “ages”); (2) the list is potentially time bound (new categories of diversity can be expected in the future to rise to the surface as problematic for constructive engagement); and (3) the shorter version is clearer. Those opposed to the change preferred something closer to the original for two reasons: (1) it is more explicit (it provides examples of the kinds of differences that get in the way of constructive engagement); and (2) the incompleteness of the list can be handled with the phrase “such as.” In the end the vote went in favor of the change: 10 in favor, 4 opposed. Putting together our work from last week and this week, the objective and outcomes for 3.2 are as follows:

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:

The student will:

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 a task by engaging in an interpersonal experience involving a language other than the student's native language(s). (American Sign Language counts as a language.)*

These proposed measurable learning outcomes will need to be sent out for feedback to the 3.2 stakeholder group: Keith Bremer (geosciences), Tim Davis (social work), Carol Ellis (communication sciences and disorders), Babu George (college of business and entrepreneurship), Amanda Fields (english), Jason Harper (english), Chris Jochum (teacher education), Jennifer Kitson (psychology), Kate McGonigal (sociology), Candace Mehaffey-Kultgen (management), Chris Mohn (modern languages), Gene Rice (philosophy), Scott Robson (communications), and Brett Whitaker (leadership).

3:42 Meeting ended. The committee will next meet on Thursday May 3 at 2:30 PM in the Pioneer Room of the Memorial Union.

Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary

