

Approved 4-23-15

**The Minutes of
THE GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

The General Education Committee met Monday, December 1, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. in Rothwell 308. The following were present:

Dr. Jackie Bowman	Dr. Theresa Herrick
Dr. Cheryl Chaney	Dr. Justin Killingworth
Ms. Nancy Cox	Dr. J.J. Mayo
Dr. Patrick Hagge	Ms. Karen Riddell
	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm

Absent: Ms. Gwen Faulkenberry, Ms. Brooke McMillan and Dr. David Roach

Guests: Dr. Monica Varner and Mr. Kyle Bush

Call to Order Dr. Mayo called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the September 29th minutes. Dr. Chaney asked for two corrections to be made to the minutes. Under "New Business" she asked that "BIOL 1004, Principles of Environmental Science" be changed to "BIOL/PHSC 1004, Principles of Environmental Science" and that "students still in the remedial English courses" be changed to "students still in the general remediation courses". Dr. Bowman made a motion that the minutes be approved with those amendments. Dr. Herrick seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Science Proposals Dr. Mayo explained to the committee that the course proposals to add the prerequisite of a score of 19 or higher on the reading portion of the enhanced ACT or completion of ENGL 1013 to BIOL/PHSC 1004 Principles of Environmental Science and BIOL 1014, Introduction to Biological Science that the committee had voted on at the September meeting had gone through the Faculty Senate and been sent back with revisions for the General Education Committee and the Curriculum Committee to look at again. The revision made to the proposal was a change from a score of 19 or higher on the *reading* portion of the enhanced ACT or completion of *English 1013 Composition I* to a score of 19 or higher on the *math* portion of the enhanced ACT or completion of *MATH 0903, Intermediate Algebra*.

Dr. Chaney explained to the committee that Dr. Kellner had done some further study of the data and found that math ACT scores were a better indicator than the reading scores and had sent the proposals back to the Biology G2C committee for consideration.

Dr. Herrick asked Dr. Varner to share some of her findings with the committee. Dr. Varner told the committee that although she could not support the course proposals, she did support the Biology department and their effort to improve student success. She shared some of the statistics that Dr. David Underwood had found. These statistics showed that scores on the reading, English, and math portions of the ACT were not a good indicator of how successful students would be. Science was the only score that would be a good indicator. Dr. Varner said approximately 287-300 students would be impacted by the current proposals and that approximately 140-150 students would have been successful in the class, but with these proposals, would eliminate them from enrolling in the course. She also said that among the groups unable to enroll would be adults age 24-30, non-traditional students and African American students. This could cause an unintended consequence of negatively impacting students ability to enroll in 15 hours and slow down degree progression.

Dr. Chaney made the comment that the proposal also has the option for students to complete MATH 0903, so if they do not have the ACT score, they can take the math course and enroll in the BIOL/PHSC course the next semester. Dr. Herrick commented that many students must have 15 hours their first semester to keep their financial aid and that if too many courses have prerequisites, then it will be very hard to find enough courses for them to take.

Another issue that Dr. Varner brought to the attention of the committee was that starting this summer, the social science programs will be accepting MATH 1003 as the mathematics general education requirement. Students only have to complete six modules of MATH 0903 to get into MATH 1003, but must complete eight modules to get in to MATH 1113, so “completion of MATH 0903” would need to be defined.

Ms. Cox asked if the statistics were taking in to account the students that were not coming to class. She was told that the statistics took in to consideration all of the F, W, and I students and that those students would fall into the “F” category, but that excessive absences were the most indicative variable. Dr. Chaney commented that maybe there could be a way to note in the system whether the student took the final exam.

Dr. Herrick commented that if Arkansas Tech is going to continue to accept scores of below 19 on the ACT as acceptable for admission, then the administration would need to provide professional development for faculty to help them find ways to make the students successful.

Dr. Varner suggested some other ways that faculty could try to help students be successful other than adding prerequisites to the courses. Some of the suggestions were course redesign, utilizing graduate assistants more

effectively and finding funding for faculty to be paid for redesigning new pedagogy. She also commented that if every gateway course started adding prerequisites, it could cause the university to lose enough students that the university would have to make cuts to compensate the loss in enrollment.

Ms. Cox asked why they were asking to add the Math prerequisite to the courses. Is it because there is math in the course? Dr. Chaney and Dr. Bowman answered that yes, there is a lot of math in the science courses and the students were not doing well in that. Dr. Chaney also mentioned that concurrent students were required to have a 19 or above on the ACT, so there is a double standard for the students. Dr. Killingsworth observed that this may be because the concurrent students may not be the same kind of student as we get as freshmen. Dr. Chaney told the committee that the department felt like they had to try something and that if this didn't work, then they would have to try something else.

Dr. Mayo then asked for a motion for a vote. Dr. Chaney made the motion to approve the proposal to add the prerequisite: score of 19 or higher on the math portion of the enhanced ACT or completion of MATH 0903, Intermediate Algebra to BIOL/PHSC 1004, Principles of Environmental Science and to BIOL 1014 Introduction to Biological Science. Dr. Bowman seconded the motion. The committee voted with two voting to approve the motion and six voting not to approve. Motion failed.

The committee then discussed sending a recommendation to the Faculty Senate requesting support for faculty on course redesign and more effective ways to use graduate assistants to promote student success. Dr. Bowman said that she would write up the recommendation and send to all of the General Education Committee for review.

Other Business

Dr. Herrick made a comment that the committee really needed to find a time that everyone could meet. She mentioned that she had had to cancel her class in order to attend this meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.