

Approved 3-17-16

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

The General Education Committee met Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in Rothwell 308. The following were present:

Dr. Christine Austin	Dr. Theresa Herrick
Dr. Jackie Bowman	Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim
Ms. Cheryl Chaney	Dr. Thomas Nupp
Ms. Nancy Cox	Ms. Karen Riddell
Ms. Gwen Faulkenberry	Dr. David Roach
Dr. Patrick Hagge	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm

Call to Order Dr. Bowman called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Dr. Hagge made a motion to approve. Dr. Herrick seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Old Business The committee started by talking about the General Education Mission and Function Statement Dr. Herrick and Ms. Chaney had been working on (this was sent to the committee via email for their review). The wording they used for the mission was basically taken from the "Proposal to the Faculty Senate to Establish a General Education Committee" document from 2008. They had also included the "Objectives", "Purpose", and "Function" in their report. Dr. Bowman asked for a motion to approve the Mission and Function Statement. Dr. Herrick made a motion to approve. Dr. Schwehm seconded the motion. Dr. Bowman then asked for discussion from the committee. Dr. Nupp inquired if the committee actually had the authority to supervise or if they were only an advisory committee. Dr. Bowman said that the committee was only advisory. The committee then discussed the wording in the mission statement and whether the word "supervise" was the correct word to use.

Dr. Austin mentioned the HLC wording quoted in the Purpose section had been updated by HLC since 2003. The committee replied that that was taken directly from the original 2008 Faculty Senate document and was the latest at the time it was written. Dr. Austin said the HLC had changed the criteria for General Education. She looked up and read the current language used by HLC and said it really came down to the fact they wanted you to have a framework to base the general education assessment on. The committee then discussed using the wording in the course catalog under General Education for the "Purpose" section.

After discussion, the committee decided Dr. Bowman would make the recommended edits to the Mission and Function Statement and send out to the committee for their approval. The committee could then vote by email whether to accept the document with the revisions. The committee agreed that vote by email would be acceptable.

The committee discussed the fact that the 2008 report said the General Education Committee was responsible for general education assessment, meaning the committee, and not the Department Heads, should be doing the assessment reports.

The committee then discussed orientation for new members of the committee. Ms. Riddell told them she had started putting together a notebook for this and would give that to Dr. Bowman for her review to see what needed to be added. Dr. Bowman said she also felt there needed to be a notebook for the chair of the committee that contains all of the end of year reports from past chairs.

Goals

The committee then discussed the general education goals. Dr. Bowman told the committee she had reviewed goals from some other universities and had found some that might be helpful in updating ours. Dr. Bowman said that of the goals we currently have, the one she had the most difficulty with was the Demonstrate knowledge of the arts and humanities because it seemed too low-level. She felt our students were capable of more.

Ms. Cox brought up that the recommendation to add Civic Involvement to the general education goals had not been followed up on. It was discussed that the Curriculum Committee had some questions about this and since the chair of the General Education Committee had left Tech at about that same time, this had not been brought back to the committee to get the questions answered. Ms. Riddell said she would get with Tammy Weaver and see if she could provide us with the questions the Curriculum Committee had so we could get that process started again. This would make seven goals for general education once that one is added.

Dr. Hagge brought up the Wellness Concepts goal that had not been followed up on. The committee discussed that the recommendation to move that from the general education goals to the University Strategic Plan had also been taken to the Curriculum Committee at the same time as the Civic Involvement so we need to get feedback from the Curriculum Committee on what exactly they needed answered on those recommendations.

Dr. Ibrahim asked if TECH 1001 was a general education course and the committee told him it was not. He thought this course could be used to

assess Civic Involvement since it dealt a lot with diversity. The committee told him some disciplines had their own orientation courses, so not everyone used TECH 1001. Dr. Austin told the committee one of the things HLC has been asking for is to have more coordination between all the orientation courses. If this happens, these courses could possibly be used for that. Dr. Schwehm asked if all the courses had to be 100% specifically measurable to be used. Dr. Bowman asked Dr. Austin what HLC said about that and Dr. Austin said they don't have to be 100% specifically measurable but we do have to have a strong background with an identifiable framework and that there are pieces that can be measured.

Dr. Nupp thought all of the goals needed to be expanded to explain more what was meant. He thought each goal needed to be an actual sentence to help the students understand what was expected. Dr. Bowman thought that was one more reason that the committee needed to take another look at the current goals. Dr. Bowman said she remembered from when these were first developed they were trying to keep them short to put in the course catalog. The committee thought since the catalog is electronic now, that would not be an issue. The committee discussed that there was more explanation within the criteria of our goals and that should be a starting place to look for expansion of the goals the students actually see. Dr. Herrick suggested everyone have their copies of the 2009 General Education Report handy to use when making revisions since all the criteria is listed in this report.

Dr. Bowman then suggested that the committee be divided up in teams of two to look at each individual goal (excluding the Understanding Wellness Concepts). Dr. Nupp expressed to the committee that if they felt Understanding Wellness Concepts needed to be left in the general education goals, then they should leave it in and find ways to measure it. Just because the Physical Activity courses were removed from general education did not mean they could not be measured. Dr. Bowman thought the committee should wait to see what happened with the recommendation to the Curriculum Committee. She then asked if anyone had any specific goals they wanted to be on the team to look at. Ms. Cox and Dr. Hagge volunteered to look at the "Demonstrate knowledge of the arts and humanities" goal. Dr. Nupp and Ms. Chaney wanted the "Apply scientific and quantitative reasoning" goal. Ms. Faulkenberry and Dr. Roach took the "Think critically" goal. Dr. Schwehm and Dr. Ibrahim took the "Communicate effectively" goal and Dr. Herrick and Dr. Austin took the "Develop ethical perspectives" goal. Ms. Cox asked if they could go ahead and agree for everyone to start out with the beginning sentence in the criteria already, "Students at Arkansas Tech who complete the general education requirement will:" and the committee agreed to start with that.

Dr. Herrick then suggested the committee invite Tammy Weaver to a meeting to talk about trends in General Education. The committee agreed that was a good idea. Dr. Bowman asked the committee if they were okay with not having a meeting in December. The committee agreed to have the next meeting in January.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm