

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

The General Education Committee met Thursday, 13 February 2020 in Brown 355. The following were present:

Dr. Erin Clair	Dr. Christine Austin	Dr. John O'Connor
Dr. Rajib Choudhury	Dr. Wan Wei	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
Dr. Alaric Williams	Ms. Katy Dodd	Ms. Ashtyn Mondy
Ms. Amanda Gardner		

The following were absent:

Dr. Paola Gemme	Dr. Jay Post	Mr. Steven Junker
Dr. David Ward	Dr. David Blanks	

Minutes Dr. Clair called the meeting to order and asked the committee for a motion to approve the minutes of the 14 November 2019 meeting. The minutes were approved.

“Report on Meeting with Faculty Senate/Reworking Language”

Dr. Clair addressed Items 3 and 4 on the agenda, “Report on Meeting with Faculty Senate” and “Reworking Language for General Education Requirements”. Dr. Clair referred to the committee’s goal to remove “Wellness Concepts” to align with the removal of Physical Education requirements. This is replaced with “Civic Engagement”, which was approved by the Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senate recommended that the committee add a verb to align with the structure of the other General Education goals. Dr. Schwehm, consulting Bloom’s taxonomy, recommended “practice” as an appropriate and measurable verb. There was a motion, and the committee unanimously approved the use of “Practice Civic Engagement”. Dr. Clair will draft a memo to Faculty Senate with the result of the committee’s vote.

“Discussion of ‘College, Career, Community’ Mission Statement”

Dr. Clair addressed Item 5 on the agenda, and the fact that we do not currently have a philosophy, as opposed to a mission statement. She asserted that if the committee were to vote on “College, Career, Community” as the General Education philosophy, it could be helpful to clarify overall General Education goals. Dr. Schwehm agreed that this more clearly articulates the intention, and Dr. Clair added that it aligns well with the new Civic Engagement goal. A motion was made, and the committee voted unanimously to adopt “College, Career, Community” as the General Education philosophy.

“Other Business: Assessment Schedule”

Dr. Clair addressed the document “Two-Year General Education Program Goal Assessment Schedule”, which was provided to the committee for review. Dr. Clair stated, in reference to Criterion 3 for General Education assessment, that multiple levels of assessment need to be addressed. We already do CPGEs, but that is just one level at which we assess goals. Dr. Clair stated that there had to be a plan to look at “communicate effectively”, and we know that General Education English courses state this as their goal.

The department did an assessment using papers pulled from Blackboard, and writing, reading, and oral communication in History, Communications, and English will also be included. This is one level, and an institutional level measure is the surveys Dr. Schwehm is conducting. Dr. Clair is also meeting with Dr. Warwick, and they are looking at what is happening to the goals after students complete their General Education courses.

“Other Business: Open Forum”

Dr. Clair addressed the document “Open Forum”, which was provided to the committee for review. She reinforced the need for the committee members to attend the forum for the General Education Component of the HLC Report to answer questions about General Education. She noted that the date and time of the forum, 13 March 2020 at 3:00 p.m., was included in the document.

“Other Business: General Education Outcomes”

Dr. Austin introduced Amanda Gardner, who joined the committee to discuss data trends for General Education. Ms. Gardner addressed the document “General Education Outcomes 2020”, which was provided to the committee for review. Ms. Gardner stated that part of the challenge is that every program is measured slightly differently, but since it is all coded, she was able to reduce the data down to whether or not a student passed or failed. One thing she noticed is that Economics is not well represented at the General Education level. The resulting summary shows data as far back as 2008, but there is not data for every single semester for every single program. However, Ms. Gardner said we can see overall outcomes in the data.

Dr. Clair stated that what this means for practical purposes is that we have to align across the board. Dr. Austin stated that we want to have a more detailed look at what students are learning, which is why we are moving forward with improvements. Dr. Clair reiterated that this is why it is so important to emphasize General Education goals as a whole.

“Other Business: Survey Information”

Dr. Schwehm discussed sending out the survey. He has received around 180 responses, but he predicts there will end up being around 250 responses total. Dr. Schwehm asked Dr. Austin if there was a full list of General Education courses and, if so, where to find it, because an overabundance of respondents said they did not know exactly how to find

one. Dr. Austin said there is one, and she would send it to him. Dr. Schwehm also noted that a clear philosophy of General Education will help students and faculty get more out of General Education, rather than seeing it as something to just get through. Dr. Austin said we have the HLC documents online for everyone to look at, but the accompanying links won't be live because the number of documents is so extensive. There will be a final report eventually, though.

“Other Business: Physical Science Assessment”

Dr. Choudhury discussed a specific assessment used in the Physical Sciences, and asked how this should be used or changed. Dr. Clair said we should work across all Sciences to incorporate the same assessment. Dr. Austin said we're looking at scientific method, so we have to be mindful of any differences that must be adjusted among the Sciences. Dr. Clair stated that the data would make sense across the board if we have a more standard assessment. Dr. Austin suggested Dr. Choudhury work together with Dr. Bowman and Dr. Chaney to come up with a workable overall assessment.

Dr. Austin also noted that coding is not done by major but by course, and we need to change that. Dr. Clair said as we move forward, CPGEs will also be replaced with these more refined assessments. Dr. Clair noted in conclusion that the ADHE report is due on the 28th to the reviewer. When the reviewer visits, the committee will be asked to come and discuss current status and recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.