

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

The General Education Committee met virtually on Thursday, 14 May 2020. The following were present:

Dr. Erin Clair	Dr. Christine Austin	Dr. John O'Connor
Dr. Rajib Choudhury	Dr. Arwen Taylor	Ms. Katy Dodd
Dr. Alaric Williams	Dr. David Blanks	Dr. Wan Wei
Ms. Ashtyn Mondy	Dr. Jay Post	Dr. David Ward

The following were absent:

Mr. Steven Junker	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
-------------------	--------------------

Minutes      Dr. Blanks called the meeting to order and asked the committee for a motion to approve the minutes of the 12 March 2020 meeting. The minutes were approved.

“Reports from Sub-Committees”

Dr. Blanks said that the Grant Sub-Committee has the results of Dr. Schwehm’s report, and this will be very useful moving forward to make an argument in the grant proposal. The Grant Sub-Committee is a little behind because of the current conditions, but ready to move forward now.

Concerning the Research Sub-Committee, Ms. Mondy said the focus groups showed that everything focused on relevancy and professors. If students are in a General Education course and they don’t do anything, they feel it is pointless. On the other hand, some groups said that the information is often too specialized in these courses. Dr. Blanks said the most important thing is to educate faculty, and Professional Development needs to happen that focuses on General Education and General Education faculty. Ms. Mondy stated that explaining relevancy, even for information that seems very basic to the instructor, is an important takeaway.

Concerning the Program Review Sub-Committee, Dr. Clair discussed the external program review. She stated that the reviewer mirrored what we have been discussing and working on all year. For example, professors aren’t aware of General Education as a course of study, so we are working toward doing a better job communicating goals, mission, and requirements for General Education. The reviewer saw that there has been progress and we know we have work to do and a plan to execute that work. Dr. Clair also discussed changes the reviewer suggested regarding goal verbiage and project-based learning, as well as Civic Engagement and Diversity and Inclusion. All of these comments were included in the provided document “Program Review Response”, which was reviewed by the committee members. Dr. Blanks said that we are on track, and Drs.

Clair and Austin encouraged the committee members to read over the reports carefully over the summer.

Dr. Clair made several proposals. The first proposal was that the committee adopt new language about diversity, empathy, and leadership. Dr. Austin said some verbiage needs to be altered for assessment ability. Dr. Blanks suggested we look at even more of the language Dr. Austin highlighted as less than ready for assessment. Dr. Blanks said we should circulate a draft and take some time to contemplate these changes. Dr. Clair also proposed a change to “apply the value of the Arts and Humanities”, stating that the only change requiring a vote would be any change of the wording of the actual goal. Dr. Blanks asked if the committee would agree to a vote if we still address the changes that need to be made per Dr. Austin’s suggestions. The motion passed unopposed.

#### “Changes to the Committee”

Dr. Blanks stated that he would be stepping down, and Jennifer Saxton and David Ward have been elected. There will also be new members appointed by their departments; the committee will receive and accept these nominations. The committee was successful in getting approval for a three year term for the committee chair, and Dr. Clair has also agreed to the job of General Education director. Dr. Blanks thanked Dr. Clair and the committee for all the good work they have done and will do.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.