

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

The General Education Committee met Thursday, 12 September 2019 in Brown 355. The following were present:

Dr. Erin Clair	Ms. Katy Dodd	Ms. Ashtyn Monday
Dr. Paola Gemme	Dr. Rajib Choudhury	Dr. Christine Austin
Dr. Alaric Williams	Dr. John O'Connor	Mr. Steven Junker
Dr. David Blanks	Dr. Wan Wei	Dr. David Ward
Dr. Jeremy Schwehm	Dr. Jay Post	

Minutes Dr. Blanks called the meeting to order and asked the committee for a motion to approve the minutes of the 11 April 2019 meeting. Dr. Clair made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Schwehm seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Proposal: "Election of Vice Chair and Secretary to the Committee"

Dr. Blanks addressed Item 3 of the agenda: "Elect Vice Chair and Secretary". Dr. Clair was nominated by Dr. Schwehm to serve as vice chair of the committee. Dr. Clair accepted this nomination, a motion was made, the motion passed. Dr. Clair nominated Ms. Dodd to serve as secretary. Ms. Dodd accepted this nomination, a motion was made, the motion passed.

Proposal: "General Education Goals and Course Proposal Form"

Dr. Blanks addressed Items 4a and 4b of the agenda concerning follow-up decisions from April about updated General Education goals and establishing a new Course Proposal form. Dr. Austin confirmed that progress had been made with updating this information, and Dr. Clair confirmed that some information simply needed to be added to the website.

Proposal: "Committee Structure"

Dr. Blanks addressed Item 4c, Committee Structure, in terms of turnover, achieving long-term goals, and continuity and additional support from Academic Affairs. The proposed solution was for a three year term for the committee chair with the rest of the committee continuing to be composed of departmental appointees and college representatives. Dr. Austin noted that this may need to be approved by Faculty Senate. Dr. Schwehm clarified that it may need to go to Curriculum Committee first, then Faculty Senate.

Action item: Dr. Schwehm agreed to find out if this is defined policy or practice.
Action item: Dr. Blanks agreed to get this on the Senate agenda as soon as possible, pending Dr. Schwehm's report.

Proposal: “CUR Grant and Mellon Grant Proposal”

Dr. Blanks addressed Items 5 and 6 of the agenda, asserting that the overall goal is not to change General Education content, but to reinvigorate and revitalize it without radical changes. He stated that discovering the “why” of General Education and communicating it to students is a part of why we need the Mellon Grant. Dr. Blanks stated that, in preparation for the Mellon Grant, he and Dr. Choudhury would be working together on the application and outline for the Undergraduate Research Grant currently titled “College, Career, Community: Making General Education Relevant”. Copies of this outline were distributed to all members of the committee. This outline also included a draft of the Mellon Foundation Grant budget and its projected distribution.

Dr. Blanks presented the idea of gaining student perspective on General Education by recruiting other students to mine for meaning within select General Education courses. Dr. Austin mentioned that this toes the line of IRB and would need approval beforehand, since audiotaping such sessions for depth of research would be advisable. Ms. Monday suggested running sessions in Tech 1001. Dr. Blanks agreed that this is a possibility, but that it should also be conducted in other General Education courses. Dr. Clair agreed, stating that even after finishing their General Education requirements, many students still did not know what “General Education” was or to which courses it referred.

Action item: Dr. Ward stated that he could write and vet questions to be proposed to undergraduate students.

Action item: Dr. Schwehm offered to facilitate first steps for creating parameters for these sessions.

Dr. Blanks asked for volunteers to spearhead this initiative. Mr. Junker was willing, but was unsure how much physical time he could commit. Additionally, Mr. Junker advised that he would need assistance with the data analysis portion of the project. Dr. Schwem offered to conduct partial analysis and Dr. Ward said he could ask for assistance from Rehab faculty who used reaction groups for similarly structured projects. Dr. Blanks said that the committee would need Ms. Monday’s help to organize and facilitate sessions and she agreed. Dr. Blanks also noted that the preferred timeline for this project is by the end of this semester, even though the grant says we have until the end of next semester.

Dr. Austin said the next step should be to identify how many courses would be involved and how many questions would be helpful before we begin. Dr. Choudhury recommended seeking IRB approval first. Dr. Clair suggested contacting the Concurrent Office with regard to this step. Dr. Ward stated that he could run qualitative data as well. Dr. Blanks stated that the last agenda item focused specifically on the Mellon grant, and Ms. Dodd suggested contacting Grant Coordinator Sara Bailey for assistance constructing the proposal.

Open Forum: "October Meeting"

Ms. Monday noted that the October meeting is currently scheduled during Fall Break. Dr. Blanks recalled Dr. O'Connor pointing this out after the original schedule was distributed to the committee members in August.

Action item: Dr. Blanks said he would work on rescheduling the October meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.