

**STRATEGIES CLUSTER MINUTES**

**Thursday, March 24, 2011**

**1:30 – 4:00 p.m.**

**BA 134, Lake Worth Campus**

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**ITEM 1: What are discipline-specific ethics** that are currently being used in your courses?

Discussion: Academic honesty, financial integrity, civility/mutual respect, integrity in communication, and personal responsibility are some of the facets of ethics that are part of the Strategies course.

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 2: Information literacy** is the ability to find, evaluate, organize, and use information and it is one of the general education learning outcomes at the College. How do faculty in this Cluster approach information literacy through assignments, projects or activities? Please provide some examples.

Discussion: The Strategies course is in large part about information literacy. Examples include orientations and related assignments (Library, Computer Lab, Career Center, Academic Advising), SQ3R, critical thinking, computer usage, financial aid information/resources, health and counseling information/resources, learning styles information/techniques, assignments such as educational planning and career exploration, and much more.

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 3: Nomination of Courses for Inclusion in General Education** – discussion and cluster approval (if applicable).

Discussion: The Strategies Cluster unequivocally believes that SLS 1501 should be required of all entering College students who have not previously successfully completed an equivalent course. This course should be the cornerstone of the new FYE initiative. As previously recommended, we would like to see this course included in the General Education requirements provided that it stands on its own and is not made part of an either/or selection.

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 4: The General Education Assessment Committee** has selected two learning outcomes for the College to target for improvement. They are:

**Communications:** Develop effective communication skills for a variety of audiences.

**Critical Thinking:** Engage in purposeful reasoning to reach sound conclusions.

Please review the assessment material in the handouts and indicate: 1) how your cluster can support the proposed improvement strategies; 2) other strategies that you plan to carry out directly in your classrooms/clusters that will improve student learning in communications and critical thinking; and 3) new ideas for improvement strategies that can impact the College as a whole.

Discussion: 

- 1) Our cluster can support Suggested Improvement Strategies #2, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11.
- 2) These strategies are already in our curriculum and reflected in our learning outcomes.
- 3) To improve communications that would impact the College as a whole, we would recommend the following:
  - a. More timely distribution of information (example: district agenda items for clusters)
  - b. Automatic copy to staff/faculty of all-student e-mails
  - c. Comprehensive online College Events calendar

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 5: Developmental Education Cluster only** – Please discuss the impact of the PERT and the new competencies for the College’s prep courses, including the EAP courses, which must follow the same competencies. These revised courses will be implemented for the Spring 2012 term.

Discussion: The cluster discussed the perception that the PERT is not quite reliable. It also discussed how the PERT will change enrollment in prep and EAP courses, and by extension, in SLS 1501.

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 6: Discussion and recommendation** on courses recommended by the General Education Committee for deletion from General Education:

**Mathematics Cluster:**

**MAS2103** (Matrix Theory) – This course teaches highly specialized material appropriate for those who intent is to major in mathematics. The committee recommends that the cluster consider eliminating this course from the general education program.

**Natural Sciences Cluster:**

**AST1004** (Stellar and Galactic Astronomy) – This course has not been offered since spring 2009. The committee recommends that the cluster consider eliminating this course from the general education program.

**OCE1001L** (Introduction to Oceanography Laboratory) – This is an optional lab and hasn't been offered since spring 2009. The committee recommends that the cluster consider eliminating this course from the general education program.

**Communications Cluster:**

Intermediate language courses (SPN2200, SPN2201, FRE2200, FRE2201, GER2200 and GER2201) – Professor Victor Schlesinger informed the committee that while these courses are at an intermediate level, they contain a good deal of basic grammar instruction, which is why they have been included as general education courses. However, the German and French intermediate courses have been inactivated and the Spanish courses have been offered very infrequently. The committee recommends that the cluster consider either removing the Spanish intermediate courses from the general education program or re-activating the German and French courses in order to have consistency with all three foreign language offerings.

Discussion: N/A

Data/data source: (where appropriate) N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 7: Textbook voting procedure**

Discussion: The Cluster heard from two companies about four textbooks under consideration for adoption. Members will have two weeks to review the information distributed today and send Monica their top two choices by April 8. We are aiming for April 15 as the deadline for making our final choice.

Data/Data source: Books and materials from publishing reps

Action: All will review and decide and reply to Monica with top two choices no later than April 8.

**ITEM 8: The Portal**

Discussion: Cindy Johnson provided the following report:

History. An Internet portal hosted by Pearson was opened in August 2010 and updated in January 2011. For faculty the portal includes links to alternate Power Points and test questions for the *Keys to Success*, 6th edition text, as well as about 20 teaching ideas submitted by PBSC faculty and adjuncts. It also has links to Pearson teaching resources available in other online locations. The faculty site is password protected. For students the portal includes links to parts of the *Keys* 'Textbook Companion Site'. A card with the web site address is bundled with the textbook. The student site is not password protected. A \$3 - 5 charge is added to the cost of the bundle for this resource.

Usage. The faculty portal has been accessed 681 times since August 2010.

Future. Cindy Johnson has served as the liaison between PBSC faculty and Pearson by collecting and organizing items for the faculty portal. Although Pearson agreed to update the portal 3 times per year, Cindy does not plan an update for summer session 2011. Should the PBSC faculty select a Pearson product for use in 2011 - 2012, she will solicit faculty submissions for a fall semester update. The course number on the student card is incorrect and should be corrected for future terms. In January an adjunct instructor in LW offered to develop an independent, password protected web site for faculty resources. So far, he has been too busy to start this project.

Members of the Cluster expressed their continued gratitude to Cindy for taking on and managing this project.

Data/Data source: Data from publishing rep

Action: N/A

### **ITEM 9: Election of Cluster Chair for 2011-12**

Discussion: Magdala Ray was unanimously elected to take over as chair beginning with our fall cluster meeting. The Cluster appreciates her willingness to serve and has every confidence that it will be in the hands of a most capable leader.

Data/Data source: N/A

Action: N/A

### **ITEM 10: Educational Planning Pilot**

Discussion: Monica reported on the pilot at Lake Worth. It seems to be a success, and she will follow up at the end of the term. Meanwhile, the Lake Worth advisors ask that instructors at all locations continue to stress that if students want to see an advisor at the Lake Worth location for purposes of educational planning, students must make appointments one-hour in advance due to the volume of students seen at that location. (This information appears in writing on the pilot version of the assignment.)

Data/Data source: N/A

Action: We will keep reminding our adjuncts and students of this important policy at the Lake Worth location.

**ITEM 11: Adjunct instructor e-learning request**

Discussion: We have received another request to consider allowing an adjunct instructor to teach a hybrid course. The Cluster unanimously agreed to continue its policy of no pure internet classes for SLS 1501, and no hybrid SLS 1501 unless taught by a full-time faculty member.

Data/Data source: N/A

Action: Monica will inform the instructor of the Cluster's decision.

**ITEM 12: FYE**

Discussion: Monica informed the Cluster that Dakota Stewart-Dick has been hired as the FYE Manager. Monica has also agreed to participate on the FYE Advisory Committee. The Cluster strongly supports FYE and would like to remain fully informed and actively involved in this initiative. As noted above in Item 3, the Strategies Cluster unequivocally believes that SLS 1501 should be required of all entering College students who have not previously successfully completed an equivalent course. This course should be the cornerstone of the new FYE initiative. As previously recommended, we would like to see this course included in the General Education requirements provided that it stands on its own and is not made part of an either/or selection

Data/Data source: N/A

Action: N/A

**ITEM 13: Dual-enrollment in the high schools**

Discussion: The Strategies Cluster recommends that SLS 1501, an essential course for college preparation, be taught to dual-enrollment students in a college setting, providing them the same opportunity afforded to other students to experience the college environment. Dual-enrollment students in classes populated by high school students only and taught at their high schools as part of their high-school day do not get the exposure to the college setting and resources that are an integral part of SLS 1501.

Data/Data source: N/A

Action: N/A

**OTHER:**

- Monica informed the group that Debra-Anne Singleton has been hired as the SLC Manager at Lake Worth.

- Pam Mason-Egan and Magdala Ray recently attended conferences. They agreed to share pertinent information from the conferences at a future date.
- Monica wishes to thank the members of the Cluster for their unfailing support, patience, and commitment to excellence (even in the face of yet another very lengthy agenda) and to say, as always, it has been a pleasure to serve as chair of such a wonderful, caring, and professional group of colleagues.

**Attendance:**

Bennett, Freddie ✓  
Calcagni, Della ✓  
Courtney, Colleen ✓  
Hamlin, Monica ✓  
Johnson, Cindy ✓  
Kevetos, Joyce ✓  
Marshall, Richard ✓  
Mason-Egan, Pam ✓  
Munro, Sophia  
Ray, Magdala ✓  
Simmons, Vanger ✓  
Sullivan, Jeannette ✓

Submitted by:

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Monica Hamlin, Scribe

c. Minutes Distribution List