

MINUTES
General Education Assessment Committee
Friday, February 18, 2011
10:00 p.m. – 12:00 noon
ETA 101, Lake Worth

Attendance:	Louise Aurelien <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Campbell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tcherina Duncombe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robin Hoggins-Blake <input type="checkbox"/>	Joseph Millas <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marcella Montesinos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Karen Pain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ginger Pedersen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Anthony Piccolino <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Andrew Plotkin <input type="checkbox"/>	Carole Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Syeda Qadri <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Helen Shub <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Victor Slesinger <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Melissa Stonecipher <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Patrick Tierney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Connie Tuisku <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bobette Wolesensky <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

ITEM 1. Review Survey of General Education Philosophy and Learning Outcomes

Discussion: The Office of Institutional Research distributed an online survey to all full-time faculty asking for their input on the newly revised general education philosophy statement and general education learning outcomes. The faculty comments were overwhelmingly positive about the recommended revisions; however, based on several similar suggestions received, the committee unanimously agreed to modify the wording of the philosophy statement to read as follows:

The General Education program at Palm Beach State College prepares students for lifelong intellectual pursuit and responsible participation in a complex global society through a core curriculum that incorporates values, shapes attitudes and offers students a depth and breadth of learning that transcends the content of any one specific discipline.

Several additional comments from the faculty survey brought up issues that had already been considered by the committee when it formulated the revised versions of the learning outcomes. Those issues and the committee’s rationale are as follows:

1. The word “Technology” does not appear anywhere in the learning outcomes. The committee felt that technology is a tool that must be utilized in order to accomplish many of the other learning outcomes and therefore does not need to be explicitly listed as an outcome.
2. Personal Development was removed as a learning outcome. The committee’s rationale for this action was that in order to achieve competence in the other learning outcomes, a student will necessarily have to achieve competence in his or her ability to manage one’s self, set goals and learn effectively. The committee also noted that

these personal development skills are extremely difficult to assess when examined apart from the achievement of other outcomes. The removal of the personal development learning outcomes was a unanimous committee decision.

3. Some faculty preferred the more expansive learning outcomes rather than the revised concise versions being proposed. In the creation of the new learning outcomes, the committee unanimously felt that the broader the definition of the outcomes, the more flexibility there will be in the assessment process. When the learning outcomes are too specific, the assessment is then locked in to whatever is stated. The process that will be developed over time will be to identify the criteria for each learning outcome that should be assessed on a continuing and evolving basis.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: Dr. Ginger Pedersen will bring the recommendations for the general education philosophy statement and learning outcomes to the Academic Deans' Council for their approval.

ITEM 2. Review of Form for Inclusion of Courses in General Education Program

Discussion Dr. Pedersen presented to the committee the revised form for faculty to use to recommend courses for inclusion in the general education program. The committee unanimously approved the form. Since this new form includes the revised version of the general education philosophy statement and learning outcomes, it cannot become final until those items are formally approved. Dr. Pedersen stated that the approval process will be expedited and hopefully completed within a few weeks. She assured the committee that the form would be finalized and sent to the clusters prior to their cluster meetings.

In continuation of the general education review process, the committee decided to review the general education program to see if any courses should be recommended for deletion. The principle factors considered for course deletion include such things as: 1) consistent low enrollment; 2) the course is offered only on one campus; 3) the course no longer supports the general education philosophy; or 4) the course is too specific in its scope. If any courses are identified by this review, the recommendation to delete the course from the general education program will be sent to the appropriate cluster for their consideration. Dr. Pedersen observed, however, that our current general education program is already relatively lean in its offerings and in very good shape. The review for potential course deletion will take place during the next committee meeting.

General questions about the requirements of the general education program were raised for the committee to discuss. They were:

1. Currently, Palm Beach State College requires students to earn a grade of "C" or higher in all general education courses. The question brought up to the committee was whether that standard should be adjusted to allow grades of lower than "C" to count towards general education credit. The committee unanimously voted to uphold the existing policy of requiring students to earn a grade of "C" or higher.
2. A question was raised regarding whether the composition of the general education program should be driven, in part, by the transfer requirements of FAU. The

committee unanimously voted that the courses contained in the general education program should be reflective of what the College faculty believe provide the competencies addressed in the program's learning outcomes. They further stated that the elective credit hours contained in the AA degree give students ample opportunity to select courses appropriate for their transfer program.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: Dr. Pedersen will update the form once the general education philosophy statement and learning outcomes have been approved. The form will then be sent to all clusters.

ITEM 3. Discussion of Embedded Assessment

Discussion: Helen Shub distributed to the committee a handout that contained a variety of questions about the logistics of implementing a process that incorporates embedded assessments. She pointed out that although the intention is to conduct several pilots during fall 2011, the purpose of a pilot is to institutionalize the effort if the pilot is successful. Therefore, it makes sense to only pilot those things that have the potential to be spread throughout the College. Ms. Shub also distributed a list of suggested types of activities/assessments that could be considered.

The committee discussed a variety of ideas for how to incorporate the use of embedded assessment and came up with preliminary ideas for three separate pilots:

1. The Nursing program already requires a written paper in one of its courses. It was suggested that a random sample of these papers be submitted to the assessment committee. The committee will develop a rubric for writing and then use that rubric to grade the papers. The results of this assessment will be shared with both the Nursing faculty and the English cluster.
2. Select a sample of Gordon Rule classes and collect randomly selected essays from the students enrolled in those courses. The committee will develop a rubric for writing and then use that rubric to grade the papers. The results of this assessment will be shared with the participating faculty and the English cluster.
3. The committee will develop a rubric to measure competencies in speech. This rubric will then be distributed to selected courses that require student presentations. The faculty of those courses will be asked to use this rubric to assess their students' skills in this area and then submit the results to the committee. The information will be shared with the participating faculty and the Speech cluster.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: N/A

Meeting Adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

Helen Shub, Scribe