



Academic Affairs Committee

Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2011

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee was called to order at 12:37 pm on September 27, 2011 in the Chapel, Classroom 2 by Gloria Cook.

Present:

Members: Mark Anderson, Sara Bishop, Gloria Cook, Nancy Decker, Fiona Harper, Jana Matthews, Sebastian Novak, Maria Ruiz, Samuel Sanabria, Wenxian Zhang,

Visitors: Jennifer Cavanaugh, Sharon Lusk, James Zimmerman.

A. Distribution of Agenda & General Education Designation Form

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

C. Open Issues

Welcome to new members: Mark, and Samuel. Mark will serve as Secretary for the committee.

Gloria acknowledged that although past committees may have had, perhaps, a reputation for being slow to deliver decisions, we must continue to thoroughly evaluate issues brought before us.

General Education Designation: Maria Ruiz spoke about the need to amend the **A&S Request for General Education Designation form** because we need to collect more information and clarify what we are looking for regarding the assessment portion. Looking at Item #1, the section in which you describe how your course meets that goal, it was suggested that we consider adding *“and how will you assess that students have met this goal?”*

The following suggestions/points were brought up.

- Only gather information that is going to help you decide whether or not to approve the General Education designation.
- Maybe we should ask for the whole syllabus.
- In the end we need to send a report to SACS. We are not doing well at gathering the assessment data and we are not doing well at “finishing the loop,” that is, using the data to make informed decisions about the general education program.

- The language used is confusing. We seem to be using the word *goals*, which is a broad term, for the word *objective*, which is a more specific, measurable outcome.
- Could departments approve the general education designations? Probably not, since general education designations are not housed in departments.
- The purpose of this form is to insure that there is uniformity across campus—that all courses with designation “X” are meeting the same goals.
- We may want to bring in an assessment expert to make sure we know whether or not SACS will be satisfied with our designation form.
- We don’t want to make this into an onerous task for professors, which may result in them not wanting to put General Education designations on their courses.

The committee voted to table this issue until the next meeting.

D. New Business

Rollins Plan: Dean Cavanaugh, came with the attached proposal concerning the pilot implementation of the Rollins Plan to:

1. Not administer the California Critical Thinking Test to the participants in the Rollins Plan or to a control group, since 1) the sample size has gotten too small, 2) students have only been in the plan for three semesters, 3) it would be costly, both in terms of money and time to administer the test, and 4) the difference between the original and current group of students in the plan.
2. Ask James Zimmerman to prepare the external report, since the person originally contracted to do this is no longer available, and James is both competent and willing to prepare the report.
3. Delay the vote by the faculty on the future of the Rollins Plan until the spring, so that there will be time and inclination (on the part of a distracted faculty) to have meaningful discussion.

Gloria responded that she plans to bring these proposals to the Executive Committee

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 1:57 pm. The next general meeting will be at 12:30 pm on October 4 in the Chapel, Classroom 2.

Minutes submitted by:

Mark Anderson