

General Education Task Force Meeting
Torreyson Library 215, 1:00 pm
Tuesday, July 24, 2012
Minutes

Attendees: Lisa Daniels, Art Lichtenstein, Krista Peppers, Ed Powers, Tammy Rogers, Conrad Shumaker, Carey Smitherman, Barbara Williams

Guest Tony Sitz commended the TF on work done. He mentioned that having been at UCA for 30 years, he understood the meaning of the current system. He is interested to see how courses fall into the various categories. He suggested separating the upper level GenEd courses from the term GenEd so that it doesn't get confused with state minimum core. Discussion of GenEd indicated that often this has the connotation as a lower level and complications could arise with the upper level GenEd requirements. A suggestion was that the GenEd be called the core, which extends throughout all four years. Core at the lower level and state minimum core could be considered GenEd. Sitz suggested the requirement to complete upper level thread designations and a capstone experience should be listed by programs as a program requirement.

Sitz believes tracking of the thread designations will work, especially with the new software package purchased. One other consideration is to articulate what would happen to Upper GenEd course credit if a student changes majors (i.e. the GenEd requirement would be met, but they would need any required courses for the major). He suggested that if upper level courses were to be included in the RL category, perhaps the wording the bulletin regarding credits earned associated with class level be revised.

The degree evaluation report needs to work well, and advising will be key for the proposed model. It will need to be made clear that those lower level courses in the state minimum core should incorporate (and assess) the goals and outcomes of each of the four designations. For example, humanities courses are listed in the new GenEd sheet as meeting Diversity. It is not necessarily assumed that all courses currently listed in the draft GenEd sheet actually meet the D designation. Those departments would need to put forth the paperwork for those courses to have the appropriate designations applied.

Revisited the discussion about assessing C and I with common rubrics in FYS. This would likely exclude humanities courses for FYS. The suggestion was that rather than require FYS use the rubrics for C and I, the requirement would be that they use only the rubric(s) used for the designation of the course. The insurance that the FYS are doing in the courses what they say they will do should come as part of departmental course evaluation. If we say that FYS should meet the communication goals, they need to use the appropriate C rubric(s). The extent to which the intended outcomes of FYS are met can be measured in the student exit survey so that the formal performance rubrics for every area are not required.

Common elements of the FYS would be:
GenEd introduction (assessed in exit survey)
Collaboration (assessed with team work value rubric)
Writing (assessed with writing rubric)

Meet one of the GenEd thread designations (strike requirement that it meet state minimum core)

Models of FYS at other institutions include an annual evaluation of FYS courses and ongoing review of new FYS courses. It is suggested UCA adopt this policy.

Any discipline could propose a FYS, but since the goal is to increase the focus on writing and collaboration, the 3 courses under Communication would not be eligible.