

## General Education Committee Meeting Minutes for April 5, 2019

**Committee members attending:** Virginia Hemby, Mike Boyle, Alion Ly, Justin Gardner, Zaf Khan, Kate Pantelides, Teresa Davis, Dovie Kimmins, Geeta Maharaj, Mark Abolins, Karen Reed

**Ex-officio members attending:** Susan Myers-Shirk and Peter Cunningham

**Guests attending:** None

- **Call to order** by Virginia Hemby-Grubb at 2:05 p.m.
- **Approval of minutes from February 08, 2019.** Motion by Mike Boyle, seconded by Terry Davis. Minutes were approved unanimously.
- **Report on Status of FLC Focus Groups.** Susan Myers-Shirk reported that focus group data will be available at the meeting on April 26. She stated that AAC&U had accepted our proposal to come to the Institute to present the data that has been collected via the Focus Groups as well as the Strategic Plan for review. Susan reported that the data obtained came from students as of April 5, indicated approximately 977 student responses.
- **What should a university student know, be able to do, or have experienced upon completion of a General Education Program?:** The committee participated in a focus group following the procedures and guidelines used in the university-wide process. (Facilitators Guide attached) The skills and knowledge the committee identified as crucial included:
  - *Workplace writing skills*
  - *Information literacy (ability to vet information; research skills)*
  - *Ethics*
  - *Civility*
  - *Decision-making*
  - *Critical thinking*
  - *Global understanding (culture, diversity, gender, generations, ethnicity)*
  - *Study abroad*
  - *Foreign language*
  - *Internship/practica*
  - *Experiential learning*
  - *Visual literacy*
  - *Financial/mathematical literacy*
  - *Basic legal information (contracts, leases, credit cards)*
  - *Civics (responsibilities of a citizen)*
  - *Environmental literacy (how one thing impacts others)*
  - *Reading (comprehension and appreciation for)*

**From the list, the committee chose its top 5**

- Communication
- Quantitative Literacy
- Cultural and Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking/Problem-solving
- Scientific and Technological Literacy

**The committee then developed the following list of delivery methods:**

- *Interdisciplinary courses*
- *1 or 2 credit courses*
- *Study abroad*
- *Experiential learning*
- *Team-taught interdisciplinary courses*
- *More YouTube video lessons and fewer textbook only*
- *Attendance at on-campus events (art, music)*
- *Internships/practica*

**For modifications to our current program, the committee suggested:**

- Start from scratch
- Spread general education across four years
- Build outcomes into courses and program
- Build in reflection

- ***Any new business.***

No new business

Virginia Hemby adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Virginia Hemby

## General Education Redesign Focus Groups Facilitator's Guide

### **Before the Focus Group Begins:**

- Please arrive early. All focus groups are scheduled for JUB 100, Faculty Senate Chambers
- All supplies will be in the Faculty Senate closet.
- Ensure that you have set up the notepads and have markers available. You should also feel free to incorporate the white board. (Remember not to write on the white board with the permanent markers.)
- Write the following categories on the notepads—one category per notepad page:

Knowledge	Skills / Abilities	Experiences	Technologies

- Consider writing the central question on the whiteboard or on its own notepad page.
- Place index cards in the middle of table for focus group participants.
- Check on snacks and coffee—you may need to make coffee.
- If you plan to take notes, decide with your team member who will take notes and who will lead the session or whether you will share these tasks.
- As participants arrive, please distribute name cards and have them fill them out. Ensure that the arriving participants are at the correct session.

### **During the Focus Group:**

#### **Introduction (2-5 minutes)**

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Today we are here to brainstorm general education redesign. Please write your name on the name tent in front of you. Feel free to eat the snacks we have provided during our session today. We'll be capturing your comments on these large post notes. Your feedback will be used to guide our strategic planning and our design team.

Before we begin, we want to go over a few ground rules that we will follow for this session:

- We want to encourage a university-wide conversation about general education and its redesign.
- All opinions are important and should be shared.
- There are no right answers or wrong answers.
- Please talk one at a time. Do not speak while someone else is speaking.

- Speak clearly and loudly enough for all to hear.
- Avoid criticizing or critiquing anyone else's opinion.
- Be candid, yet cordial.

Now, let's go around the table and let each of you introduce yourself.

- Name, department, college, why you are interested in general education

**Our central question will be:** What should a student know, be able to do, and have experienced upon completion of the general education core?

### **1. Knowledge, Skills (Abilities), Experiences, Technologies** (20 minutes)

- Distribute 3x5 cards and pencils.
- Give participants a few minutes to write ideas on the cards (one idea per card)
- Repeat the central question, which should also be displayed somewhere in the room.
  - **Note to facilitators: Do not mention Classes**
- Collect on large note pads.
  - Do not go one list at a time. Let the discussion be free to move from list to list.
  - Probe: Why are these important?
  - Probe: Are these important for all students, regardless of major?
- Keep the discussion on topic – do not get into a discussion of specific classes at this point
- Probe for connections between these:
  - How are these connected?
  - E.g., Which knowledge goes with which skills, and with which technologies?
  - Are any of these necessarily linked together?
- Which of these are the five most important? (of all items on all lists): Start a fresh notepad page with the heading “five most important.”

### **2. Delivery Methods: Delivering these Knowledge, Skills (Abilities), Experiences, Technologies** (20 minutes)

- What is the best method for delivering these? Start a fresh notepad page with the heading “delivery methods.”
  - Do not mention classes, allow for other options. If not mentioned, probe for service learning, attending events on campus, activities, etc.
  - If classes come up, “What classes would be best suited for delivering these”?
    - Current classes
    - Potentially new classes
    - For which of these (knowledge, skills, experiences, technologies) is classroom education the best delivery method?
    - For which of these (knowledge, skills, experiences, technologies) is classroom education NOT the best delivery method? What other methods would be better?

**3. Integration/Coordination** (10 -15 minutes): Start a fresh notepad page with the heading “integration/coordination”

- Of the delivery methods you mentioned (classes / activities), should any of these be connected, integrated, or coordinated with each other in any way?
  - e.g., classes taken concurrently? Activities connected to specific classes?

**4. Modifications to Current General Education** (10 - 20 minutes): Start a fresh notepad page with the heading “modifications.”

- Given what we have talked about today, how should the current General Education requirements, programs, and/or structure be modified to achieve the knowledge, skills, experiences, and technologies you have identified as important?



**After the Focus Group Ends:**

- Photograph the whiteboard (if used) to include with your debriefing form.
- After completing the session, gather the papers from the day. Collect and label index cards and notepad pages with the date of your focus group.
- Fill out the debriefing form to the best of your abilities.
- Turn in all paperwork to Susan or Katie when you can. You can submit the debriefing form electronically, but physical papers need to be turned in to us.