

## University General Education Committee

Minutes of Meeting of October 1, 2021, via Zoom

### **In Attendance:**

Lando Carter (presiding) Amy Sayward, Deana Raffo, Janet Colson, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Keely O'Brien, Keith Gamble, Laura White, Mark Frame, Nicolas Morgan, Rachel Kirk, Rebecca Fischer, Ryan Otter, Scott McDaniel, Stephen Leon Alligood, Sungyoon Lee, Sydney Fischer, Terry Goodin, Warner Cribb

### **Non-Voting Members**

Beth Wright, Brian Frank, Christabel Devadoss, David Carleton, Jeff Gibson, Kari Neely, Kate Holt, Katie Brackett, Kristen West, Louis Woods, Nita Brooks, Susan Myers-Shirk

The meeting opened with Committee Chair Lando Carter welcoming members of the committee and thanking them for their work. He requested any edits or amendments to the minutes; there being none, the minutes were approved.

Carter then stated that the goal of the day's meeting was to revisit the models following the work of the Design Team in making the clarifications that were requested from the departmental and other feedback received earlier by the committee in the previous academic year.

General Education Director Susan Myers-Shirk then presented an introduction to the committee's work for the day. In response to the charge from this committee from its previous meeting, the Design Team had addressed the concerns regarding clarity in the version of the models that the committee was going to review today.

Myers-Shirk talked about "how to read the models," highlighting that although each has a different configuration that there were now new continuities—with all of the models have First-Year Seminar (FYS) and Pathways—as a result of the clarification process that the Design Team undertook. Later in the redesign process, Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) and the Committee can further define the specific categories and areas in each of the models

Myers-Shirk then briefly introduced each of the clarified models:

- Model 1's FYS is based on a system where one of the "disciplinary knowledge" courses would be designated as a FYS in line with FYS outcomes. Pathways could also be certificates in this model. This model "keeps" the 3 credit hours of literature.
- Model 2 has a one-credit-hour FYS with a two-credit-hour Grand Challenge (which could be paired into a single faculty member for workload issues). This model does not include a 3-hour literature requirement. This model offers the broadest choice in the

“explorations” category—any 9-10 hours across the outcomes—and it has pathways in the “disciplinary knowledge” category courses.

- Model 3 includes a three-credit-hour FYS (no literature requirement). The “explorations” area is outcomes-driven but has more constraints than Model 2.
- Our current program of General Education has 41 credit ours in 6 categories with a limited number of courses in each of the categories—62 total courses in the General Education curriculum. She suggested to the committee that they could consider keeping these 6 categories but opening them to more classes as well as including a FYS designation and pathways across the 6 categories.

She finished this introduction by explaining that there is now also a glossary of terms created as part of the clarification process and that certificates/badges would be an issue taken up later by the committee.

Carter thanked the Design Team for all of its work before having the committee divide into breakout rooms (each containing at least one Design Team or executive team member) where they would identify advantages and disadvantages for each of the models, which would be reported on a “jam board.”

Kathryn Brackett then provided a short introduction to jam boards, and Myers-Shirk included a link to the glossary in the chat.

Before moving to breakout rooms, Mark Frame identified the issue of university priorities and staffing, which would be crucial to any successful General Education redesign process. Warner Cribb also mentioned that the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) General Education Committee has made it clear that MTSU’s redesign cannot make it hard for transfer students and community college advisors to understand, that assessment will be crucial, and that a campus general education center that would manage assessment could help departments with the challenging work of assessing their work in the newly redesigned General Education program.

Myers-Shirk ended the discussion by telling the committee that the work that it is doing in small groups today would be processed at its October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, and Carter thanked the Design Team once again for its work.

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m. following small group meetings.