

**MTSU University General Education Meeting
Minutes for November 6, 2020**

Committee members attending: Samuel Blumer, Janis Brickey, Lando Carter, Warner Cribb, Mark Frame, Terry Goodin, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Ryan Korstange, Kevin Krahenbuhl, , Aliou Ly, Tammy Melton, Greg Nagel, Ryan Otter, James Piekarski, Deana Raffo, Laura White

Ex-officio members attending: Chris Brewer, Nita Brooks, Leah Lyons, Susan Myers-Shirk (Director), Steve Severn

Design team members attending: Katherine Brackett, Louis Woods

Guests attending: Adonija Bakari, Emily Baran, Aleka Blackwell, Joseph Morgan, Keri Neely

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm by Ryan Korstange, Chair, University General Education Committee.

Approval of minutes from October 23, 2020

A motion was made by Krahenbuhl and seconded by Nagel to accept the minutes. The minutes were approved.

Discussion of Competency Assessment Reports

The reports were distributed in advance for the committee to review prior to meeting.

Department of English

Aleka Blackwell represented the English department to answer questions. Nagel commented that the interpretation of the data was helpful.

Krahenbuhl asked about the type of sampling. Blackwell shared that it was randomly stratified. Krahenbuhl inquired about the 3 types of writing that were represented. Blackwell answered that it was a literacy narrative for ENGL 1020.

Blackwell commented that dual enrollment students performed significantly worse. All faculty who teach the 1010 sections evaluate assignments based on the course objectives. Genres have a lower score and Blackwell is recommending more primary research on the dual enrollment sections. Severn commented that dual enrollment faculty are either high school faculty or they are university faculty. It is more difficult for the dual enrollment courses to mirror university classes because it is more difficult to monitor. Frame asked if dual enrollment students later enroll at MTSU. Severn responded that around 30% come to MTSU. Myers-Shirk shared that the Gen Ed Committee does not have jurisdiction over dual enrollment.

Cribb inquired about faculty status. Blackwell said that the department has historically provided training to graduate assistants and they are now inviting all faculty to that training. Cribb asked if

GTAs or faculty teach the courses. Blackwell responded that the faculty status ranges from GTA to adjunct to FTT to tenured faculty. GTAs are a mix of PhD and master's students and varies from semester to semester.

Blackwell asked for input from the committee on whether dual enrollment students should be included. Myers-Shirk said that dual enrollment data must be included, that SACS expects assessment regardless of how the courses are offered.

Melton asked if other universities are obliged to accept dual enrollment. Myers-Shirk replied that it depends on the transfer requirements from the university where they are going.

The committee voted to accept the report, with 14 voting to accept and 1 abstention.

Department of Mathematical Sciences

Dr. Ping Zhang represented Mathematical Sciences to answer questions about the report. Krahenbuhl asked about single items assessing multiple learning outcomes with some overlap. Zhang shared that that is correct – a single question can assess more than one learning outcome. Melton asked how they know which outcome a student is lacking when a single item measures multiple learning outcomes. Zhang replied that there are some questions that measure only one learning outcome.

Korstange asked about the design of the assessment and whether the common final is a good assessment because items measure multiple learning outcomes. Krahenbuhl said that it could be problematic to make inferences on what students know.

Blumer inquired about the sample final on the website. Zhang shared that the common final has a core set of questions that must be used by all faculty and that faculty can add additional questions.

Cribb encouraged the math faculty to correlate specific questions to specific learning outcomes to avoid overlap. Cribb acknowledged that it could be difficult to write questions that are specific to a particular learning outcome and suggested that perhaps as a part of the redesign process, learning outcomes may be more targeted and more effectively assessed.

Blumer inquired about the practice math final on the website. Krahenbuhl asked if it is the exact final or a sample. Zhang replied that the topics are the same, but the items are not.

Krahenbuhl asked about K-sections vs. non-K sections and said it would be interesting to see differences since the students are starting from a different place. Zhang agreed this is a good idea and added that she would also like to see dual enrollment differences in the future. Myers-Shirk said that for SACS, dual-enrollment sections need to be included in the assessment report.

The committee voted to accept the report, with 13 votes to accept and 2 abstentions.

Discussion of Course Proposals for the Current General Education Program

Korstange introduced the two history courses. They are existing courses approved by university curriculum committee. The question for the committee is whether to add them to general education as options in the history category. Choices would include the 3 current history courses, and then these additional courses, if added. Korstange said that the question for the committee is - Do the courses meet the learning outcomes for the history category of the existing gen ed program.

Blumer asked for clarification on the vote. Korstange said that a simple majority is needed to send the proposals out for public comment. The committee will then consider the proposals again in 2 weeks with consideration of comments. The committee will then vote again on whether to include the courses in Gen Ed which will require a two-thirds majority vote.

Gray-Hildenbrand asked about what members are required to do in curriculum. Myers-Shirk replied that there is no action for members to take in curriculum.

HIST 2040 Survey of African American History I - Request to add course to the History category

Emily Baran represented the history department. Cribb asked if 2040 is a prerequisite for 2050. Baran said no, the courses do not have to be taken in order, and students do not need to take one in order to take another.

Melton asked about cross-listing with another course. Baran replied that it is cross-listed with Africana Studies so that it can be a part of those majors/minors program of study. Q - if a student takes AST prefix, will they get gen ed credit no matter which one they register for? Myers-Shirk is not sure, but thinks that students would have to take it as HIST 2040 to get the gen ed credit.

Frame asked about course titles and whether putting years in the title would make sense. Baran replied that the names match the survey course names and that there has not been a problem with students understanding the chronology. Myers-Shirk said course titles are part of TBR legacy and are intended to prevent confusion for students as they move between institutions.

Blumer commended the proposal to give students more options in the history category. Baran shared that the SLOs for the courses are identical to the gen ed course.

Cribb asked about staffing. Baran replied that it will depend on student interest and that FTTs can be allocated differently if needed. Baran shared that the courses will not require more classes for the department because there will not be more demand in the history category of gen ed overall.

Melton asked about the lack of exams on the syllabus. Adonija Bakari shared that they left the syllabus generic to encourage faculty to mold it as they would like it to be. Baran shared that none of the history courses have required assignments across sections.

Korstange reminded the committee that their role is to determine if the learning outcomes fit with gen ed rather than pedagogy and staffing. Myers-Shirk agreed that the primary question is how it

fits in the gen ed curriculum to allow students to achieve the learning outcomes as they are currently defined.

Lyons shared that not all gen ed courses require exams to assess learning outcomes. Louis Woods shared that he has found that students are often anxious about tests based on the emphasis placed on testing in K-12.

The committee voted to send proposal for community review - 15 approved, 1 abstention.

HIST 2050 Survey of African American History II - Request to add course to the History category

Korstange shared that this proposal is substantially similar to the previous one and asked for questions specific to this course proposal.

The committee voted to send proposal forward for community review - 14 approved, 1 abstention.

HUM 2610 (title and description change) - Request to change title from Foreign Literature in Translation to World Literatures

Korstange introduced the proposal as a name change. Keri Neely represented the department. The course is currently approved for gen ed. No other changes are being made to the course except for the name. Melton asked if name change has to go out for community review. Korstange replied that it did.

The committee voted to send proposal forward for community review - 14 approved, 1 abstention.

MUHL 1610 The World of Music

Korstange introduced the proposal and that the committee is considering two things concurrently – 1) to expand the course to a 3-credit course and 2) to include it in general education. The expanded course (3 credit version) has not gone to the university curriculum committee.

Gray-Hildenbrand clarified that it for the Humanities category and asked how it is different from MUS 1030 since there seems to be some similarities. Joseph Morgan represented the music department and shared that while 1610 is still an introduction to music history, it gives a more in-depth study and assumes that some of the gen ed population has already experienced music to some extent and would prefer more depth beyond introductory topics.

Cribb asked about its appeal to MTSU students and whether this course is using the gen ed program to allow music students to circumvent gen ed since it was originally designed for music majors. Lyons shared that we have a lot of students who had band in high school and know many of the basic elements and might want content that is more in-depth because of their previous exposure to music.

Piekarski asked about a score reading requirement. Morgan replied that the course does not require fluency in notation reading and that the course is meant to be an enrichment for the

general student population rather than targeting music majors. Question about anticipated enrollment. Response - doesn't expect it to be very large, perhaps 30 more students each semester. It is currently required for music students.

Cribb asked if music majors would be able to use the course for gen ed credit. Answer - Yes, they currently can use intro to music for gen ed.

Piekarski asked Myers-Shirk about thoughts on majors taking gen ed courses from their department to count toward major. Myers-Shirk replied that we currently have courses like this and that it can be part of the discussion in redesign and redirected the conversation to "does this course meet the learning outcomes for the humanities category."

Blumer asked about the public comment period. Ryan clarified that the committee takes comments under consideration. Lyon shared that the proposal has already been approved by the Liberal Arts chairs.

Brickey shared that gen ed should expand awareness, that music is a cultural influence, and this context is important at a comprehensive university.

Korstange reminded the committee that there are 2 questions for consideration – 1) is there enough difference between the 2- and 3-credit options, and 2) does it meet the learning outcomes.

The committee voted to send proposal forward for community review - 15 approved.

New business

Myers-Shirk shared that a member of the committee from Behavioral and Health Sciences has had to resign and that the college will have to solicit a new member. This replacement procedure must go through faculty senate. Meanwhile, the two-thirds majority vote requirement will be out of 19 members rather than 20 until the person is replaced.

The meeting adjourned at 3:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Deana Raffo, Recording Secretary