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Fort Hays State University Faculty Senate Minutes, November 28, 2022

FHSU Faculty Senate

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FHSU Faculty Senate Minutes

Special Meeting: *General Education Framework Proposal*

Monday, November 28, 2022 | 3:00 PM | FHSU Memorial Union Ballroom

Attendance

1. **President Byer's initial comments** regarded the framing of today's special Faculty Senate (FS) meeting with regard to the objective(s). The FS special meeting was called as an informative session for the faculty senate, including FHSU faculty at large. The supporting document for today's meeting was shared by the *Group of 6* and provided to all faculty on Thursday, Nov. 17th, 2022 via email. (See attached [General Education Framework Proposal \(.pdf\)](#)).

President Byer goes on to outline that it is the faculty's responsibility is to ask clarifying questions and to then return to their departments and take any clarifying information from today's meeting, beyond the provided proposal, to their departments prior to the full FS Meeting on Monday, Dec. 5th and voting on the proposed Gen Ed Framework. Byer proposes that the FS opens the floor for all in attendance to have the ability to speak freely regardless of FS membership. Senators Ken Windholz motioned and Anita Walters seconded that FS votes unanimously to allow for free discussion by all in attendance at today's special meeting. It should be noted that Byer asked that those asking questions are encouraged to limit their questions and if there is time further questions can be addressed so that everyone has a turn. As well, it should be noted that there will be additional opportunities, at the full Faculty Senate meeting on Dec. 5th, to bring forward senator/department comments, concerns, debate, criticism, etc.

2. **The Group of 6 presentation**, given by the committee, consists of:
 - C.D. Clark (Werth College of Science, Technology, and Mathematics, General Education Committee)
 - Linda Feldstein (College of Education, Faculty Senate)
 - Robyn Hartman (Forsyth Library, General Education Committee)
 - Ginger Loggins (Robbins College of Business and Entrepreneurship, Faculty Senate)
 - Matthew Smalley (College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Faculty Senate)
 - Tanya Smith (College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, General Education Committee)

Group of 6 Presentation

The faculty taskforce that created the recommendations begins by stating that today's meeting is about an overview of the committee's recommendations. Members discussed how each of the Core courses are currently approved per the existing Gen Ed. program, as well as how they are being assessed per HLC. They discussed the "buckets" per the current KBOR Framework that

is currently 34-35 hours, 7 Disciplines or Buckets and compares the current FHSU Gen. Ed. (CORE) with 16 separate outcome sets.

The Tasforce began describing their recommendations by discussing how the committee utilized outcomes per the current FHSU CORE and how the members applied it to the current KBOR Ged. Ed. Program. For instance, in the area of English (6 hours) ENG 101 and 102 were easy crosswalks from the FHSU Core to the new KBOR Gen. Ed. Program. In the Math and Stats Bucket (3 hours), it is proposed that the two outcomes are merged. They stated that It is important that Stats is included in the proposal. Natural and Physical Sciences Bucket (4-5 hours) are all courses that fall under the natural sciences and will all apply to satisfy, but also revise so that more classes fit into this area. These buckets leave 11 more outcomes to be addressed.

Members then discussed how 5 Outcome Sets could potentially be utilized. The Social and Behavioral Sciences bucket could encompass outcomes in the Social Scientific mode of inquiry with one class and, eventually, an outcome that combines Intercultural Competence with Engaged Global Citizens in another class. The Arts and Humanities bucket would have students choose two courses from the Aesthetic, Historical, and Philosophical mode of inquiries.

The additional 6 outcome sets could be included through the Institutionally Designated Area (IDA) and a new graduation requirement. The IDA would require Critical Thinking, which should be expanded to new classes from a variety of disciplines, and a Personal and Professional Development bucket. The new Critical Thinking outcome would also add to students' persuasive writing skills by requiring a persuasive essay towards the end of the class.

This leaves the Information Literacy outcomes to be covered as graduation requirements within each major, or through the library created course for those outcomes. And, a paper, that may or may not be a tradition persuasive essay, within each student's discipline as a graduation requirement to parallel the information literacy outcomes. This addresses the *Writing, Reasoning and Research Sequence* that is scaffolded to the final persuasive essay beginning on page 30 of the Gen. Ed proposal. The committee feels that the proposed sequence is embedded in multiple classes and meets multiple outcomes along the way. Critical thinking, information literacy, and written communication are key skills to all of our graduates.

3. Q&A Segment

Presentation is concluded and the floor is open for questions for the senators/guests, including those participating in the meeting per a Zoom presentation.

- Q How might transfer courses count for the proposed Gen. Ed.
 - A: If a student comes in and has a course that is identified in that "bucket," it will be approved and work as a transfer. A system wide transfer (SWT) course would also counted in this case.

- Q: If a student took an existing core course that was not approved, but is a system wide transfer course, it will count. A (from the Provost) Yes, it will count.
- Q: Do we have to assess system wide transfers or will we have to assess them?
- A: Our outcomes in approved courses will be used for assessment. Because KBOR has SWTs counting that we haven't currently approved for Gen Ed, it will be important for GE to start seeing how assessment could "fit in" to current assignments and projects, or if we will need to create new or alternative assessments.
- Q: What about the sheer number of people writing (e.g. Graduation Requirement/Upper-level Writing, Reasoning and Research Sequence), how will it be assessed and how will it ensure academic honesty?
- A: Plagiarism is a normative issue and can be both intentional and unintentional; however, each class we currently have at FHSU, that includes writing, has this (plagiarism) potential at the moment. Current FHSU ENG are aware of plagiarism issues, and it is on their radar and plagiarism is a real issue and is supported by administration as being taken seriously, steps for actions, etc.
- Q: The university appears to be moving from students to course assessment, so will we use the current rubrics in Blackboard?
- A: GE has already approved courses and rubrics within those courses for Gen Ed assessment. This does not change those rubrics. And, students are assessed through class grades, not course or Gen Ed assessments.
- One senator noted that his department is concerned that we fit all the FHSU CORE work into the smaller KBOR bucket system.
- Q: On Pg. 6 (citing Appendix A) of the Doc. regarding the Grad. Requirement, it sounds like they (grad. requirements) are outside of the purview of the committee's work. Could this be separate and could more faculty weigh in graduation new requirements.
- A: The requirements were included because they were part of the sequencing from the Current CORE and frames areas of importance such as critical thinking, writing, and information literacy. Provost Jill Arensdorf discussed that the Summer 2022 work included a Grad. recommendation that came forward/be included, and the Group of 6 found that perhaps certain areas should be included, for instance writing.
- Q: Should the Grad. Requirements go back to faculty?
- Provost Arensdorf states that her office and the Academic Council makes Grad. Requirements, not the faculty at large. They will keep our recommendations in mind, of course.
- Q: Why are there separate Core classes apart for the KBOR requirements and there are two different fulfillments for graduation. Can you still graduate from FHSU if you only take the Core?
- A: Some courses will count for system wide transfer, but with quality assessments we

are making sure that students are meeting the outcomes. The committee worked on and proposed ideas of what classes are appropriate for the Buckets, and what outcomes can be achieved. \

- Q: Do transferred classes need to be in the CORE?
- A: Yes, eventually, and this transferability is what makes FHSU outcomes align with the KBOR Gen Ed.

- Q What about courses that are approved for or not yet combined for other areas, like global citizens. If something falls under Intercultural Competence, are those courses on hold at the moment?
- A: Those courses would be on hold, in the Gen Ed approval process, until those outcomes are developed.
- Q What if the assessment piece changes when two areas merge - like cultural and global. Do we have to change the assessment?
- A: If areas do get merged, then yes, you would need a new assessment to assess. The committee really wanted to keep cultural competency and didn't want to see the area dropped.

- Q: The current document suggests that the combined outcomes would be submitted to the committee for review, but could those outcomes be broad enough that they wouldn't have to go back to committee?
- A Members of the task force said they wanted them to be revised and easier to assess. Gen. Ed. would approve wording, but yes, they are hoping broader outcomes would streamline this process.

- Q: Why is engaged global part of the Gen Ed. but not intercultural competency when the Strategic Plan makes intercultural and global outcomes both important?
- A: The committee generally felt that Engaged Global Citizens (EGB) needed to be addressed because it's in the university mission. Most of the currently approved courses for EGB fit in KBORs Social and Behavioral Sciences areas. The committee has recommended combining EGB and intercultural competence (IC). IC also has a number of classes in the Social and Behavioral Sciences and the IC outcomes are very similar to EGB outcomes, Both areas can help, overall, with a person's ability to navigate a diverse and global workforce.

- Q: Are the classes in the Engaged Global Citizen outcome transferable with KBOR?
- A: Yes, everything is transferable across system wide transfer - this is the purpose of what KBOR is doing. If the student does their 34-35 hours at any KS institution, then they are fully transferable to all universities. Students will still have to meet grad/program requirements. Majors can potentially add or require more courses if that's what they prioritize.

- Q: If a student meets General Education, does that student still need to meet the graduation requirements? Yes.

- Q: Why put Critical Thinking in the IDA area instead of require it with the philosophical courses?
- A: Critical Thinking is distinctly different than the Philosophical Mode of Inquiry.
 - Adding Critical Thinking to the other outcomes currently with the Philosophical Mode of Inquiry would make that a very crowded bucket.
 - Putting Critical Thinking in the IDA allows for other departments to offer critical thinking.
 - Some of the committee particularly liked adding CT to the IDA once it became part of the Writing, Reasoning and Research Sequence. Students take Comp 1, Comp 2, CT with a persuasive essay, and then can take their writing and research within their disciplines.
 - There is extensive research showing the importance of critical thinking and showing current undergraduate deficiencies in that area.

- Q: Where does Modern Languages fit into the proposed buckets/Gen Ed.?
- A: KBOR didn't include modern languages. Anyone getting a BA should still have foreign language requirements for that degree. The committee also expects that Modern Language will be integrated into the professional development bucket for other students. For instance, business students that may want to take Spanish.

- Q: Are the outcomes set very rigid and can they be revised?
- A: They can be revised and can be looked at every 2 years to grow with the University's needs, to adjust and make policies to revise and adapt, especially as KBOR rolls out more guidance.

- Q: This seems to require two impossible tasks. KBOR seems to be more concerned about transferability than assessment. How confident are we that this program will be acceptable for HLC Accreditation?
- Provost Arensdorf said she was pretty confident. The Regents have asked more about our assessments and we are in a good place to assess outcomes and ensure student learning. We will pivot as needed.

- Q: Can one course can be in two different buckets?
- A: That would be very rare based on KBOR designations as outlined. There are only 34-35 hours. If one class was used for two buckets, it would reduce the Gen. Ed. and would not fit into KBOR's plan. However, both a Major and Gen Ed requirement could work for one course.

- Q: Based on the CoAHSS reorg it seems that students could fulfill one bucket just in one department. Is that accurate?
- A: To a degree, that is accurate. KBOR defines Disciplines with prefixes. If one department is using two different prefixes in one bucket, students could just take one course with each prefix to fulfill Social & Behavioral or Arts & Humanities.

- If anyone is concerned about one department getting a larger share of enrollment/funding, this isn't something the KBOR plan seems to address or have concerns about.
- Q: Could the new writing component in the Critical Thinking (CT) outcome discourage departments from submitting courses? And, if CT is a concern, why add this writing component to the course? Will it be distract from the focus on CT?
- A: By placing CT in the IDA, it is set up to be broader and applied to more disciplines. The persuasive writing should fit fairly easily into the course. And, persuasive writing is often suggested as a component of critical thinking. This sequence may strengthen the Critical Thinking skill sof students more than our current curriruclum.
- Q: if a student takes KSU's course *Logic and Critical Thinking* course and then transfered to FHSU, which bucket does the coruse go into? The course goes into one bucket but not two buckets - maybe the major decides where it goes or perhaps it automatically fulfilled the Philosophy option in Arts and Humanities. There is currently no specific rule on this.If a student feels other universities or Community Colleges have "easier" Critical Thinking courses, they can transfer the course in. KBOR wants Maximum Transferability for students.
- Q: If the courses that are going to be part of the Professional Development outcome (Bucket #7: Institutionally Designated Area), are the existing courses going to have to go through an approval and what is the timeline for going through Gen. Ed. Approval processes etc.?
- Yes, any course that changes its outcomes has to go through the approval process eventually. However, if a course is currently aligned and has already been approved through CORE, it is fine. Once new outcomes are written for the area of Professional Development, in the next few years, then the course could be put forward and also fall into other potential buckets. Would have a couple of years before having to adjust to any revised outcome.
- How was the Group of 6 formed and how was information on the group disseminated?
- The Provost asked committee members to serve. Once membership became known, some people across campus sent the committee their own opinions and insights. The committee also went out and asked for feedback and arguments from departments that seemed most impacted by outcome changes.
- How does GIS302 fit within Social and Behavioral Sciences? Geography is under Social Sciences per KBORs plan and, as a geography class, it's ion the social and behavioral sciences bucket.
- Q: Is it a violation of any rules that a prefix is in two different areas/buckets?
- A: Our current interpretation of the rules is that won't be a problem. The current KBOR plan focuses on subjects and not departments or course prefixes.

- Q: Why revise Social and Behavioral outcomes? If outcomes are updated every two years, how does that create good assessment?
- A: Ideally, those outcomes can be adapted sooner, rather than later, to be more ideally suited to the KBOR intentions and include more courses. Assessments will be limited and there is no perfect means of assessments.