

**GENERAL EDUCATION COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**  
**May 21, 2013**  
**2 pm**  
**Nevins 1060C**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Byron Brown, Sheri Gravett, Kent Moore, Mark Smith

1. Status of Core Curriculum Assessments: Members of the GEC met with representatives of each of the core areas through spring semester:

Area A: January 29

Area B: February 26

Area C: March 8

Area D: March 26

Area E: April 30

At these meetings, representatives shared assessment plans and results as well as discussed issues relevant to each core area. As a result, each core course is now part of a rotation, and departments are in the midst of both designing, implementing, and reporting on their assessment activities.

2. Discussion of draft Core Curriculum Assessment Guidelines and Core Curriculum Assessment Plans: Members of the GEC reviewed the Core Curriculum Assessment Guidelines (CCAG) and Core Curriculum Assessment Plans (CCAP) as prepared by our consultants, Katie Adams and Jeremy Tost. Members were impressed by these drafts and wish to implement them in the fall with only a couple of minor editorial revisions (see attachments). Council members also discussed in what format to develop these forms—as a Word document that allowed individuals room to enter all the required information or as a form in Digital Measures.

Sheri agreed to pursue this discussion with Michael Black and Brian Haugabrook to determine the most appropriate format, ensuring both ease of use and consistency of format between multiple assessment forms, including IERs and IEPs.

Members believe these forms will provide a good basis by which our consultants can begin an evaluation of those assessments already submitted.

3. Core Curriculum Meeting: Tuesday, August 6, 1:30-3:00, UC Ballroom A  
Academic Orientation in Core Classes: GEC members discussed a possible focus for this year's Core Curriculum faculty meeting. One possible approach would be an interactive session on orientation strategies for instructors teaching core classes. For the first time this year, VSU will offer an Academic Orientation session to all new first-year students on Friday, August 9. While this two-hour session will probably highlight college expectations and strategies for academic success, in what ways can those teaching in the core reinforce those messages in their classrooms? What issues are they facing? What are some possible strategies that will assist students in general? What are some strategies that may assist students in a specific subject area—for example, what are some "survival" strategies for college algebra or a supersection natural science course or ENGL 1101? Some of these ideas might lead to projects in our new IDEA Center.

Sheri agreed to contact Donna Sewell to see if some of the faculty in her Writing Across the Curriculum program might be interested in developing some of the content for this meeting. She will invite Dr. Sewell to our next planned meeting on June 25.

4. Core Matters Conference November 7-8, 2013

While the Core Matters Steering Committee has tentatively reserved space in the University Center for a fall conference, the committee has not been successful in finding someone to chair next year's conference. Without someone willing to serve in that important leadership role, we may not be able to host the conference this year.

Mark Smith agreed to talk with Connie Richards as soon as possible to see if they could identify someone who would be able to serve in this role.

#### 5. GEC Membership

Over the past few months, the membership in the GEC will experience some changes. Mark Smith has already replaced James LaPlant, and the College of the Arts will need to replace John Gaston after his retirement. Gayle Taylor, from the College of Nursing, also will not be able to continue as a GEC member. Therefore, members discussed whether we needed a change in membership and/or direction.

The GEC was given the following mission statement:

The General Education Council addresses issues central to Valdosta State University's General Education Curriculum. This Council has a number of critical responsibilities, including:

- Overseeing and maintaining the integrity of VSU's core curriculum;
- Promoting the importance and quality of core curriculum courses in VSU's colleges and departments;
- Providing guidelines, assistance, and review to departments proposing new courses in the core curriculum;
- Establishing and reviewing policies related to the transfer of core curriculum courses;
- Collecting, examining, and reporting on current assessment data on the core curriculum, in particular looking at how well student learning outcomes for the core curriculum are currently being met; and
- Developing and implementing an assessment plan specific to the core curriculum.

Over the past several years, the GEC has worked diligently on the final two bullet points. Our initial charge was to ensure that courses in the core were consistently assessed and evaluated. At this point, we are well on our way to routinely developing and conducting assessments. In particular, with the addition of a Director of Institutional Effectiveness, we continue to make strong progress in this area. With oversight from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Academic Affairs, we can work to assure that assessment remains routine, timely, and sufficient. Therefore, GEC members considered developing a different focus (and perhaps a different membership) for the next phase of the General Education Council, addressing bullet point two more directly, particularly in the area of faculty development for reconfiguring core classes whether through classroom pedagogy or delivery method (hybrid or online). With that aim in mind, should the GEC continue its current membership, reconstitute itself, or perhaps appoint special taskforces?

We will discuss these issues and others at the **upcoming GEC meetings**:

June 25 at 2 p.m. in Nevins 1060C

July 23 at 2 p.m. in Nevins 1060C