

General Education Committee Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2023

1. Call the meeting to order
Chair Mindi Clark called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes from 1-30-23
Kirk Rogers moved to approve the meetings from the January meeting, Dr. Garret Lahr seconded, and the motion passed.
3. Dean of Faculty Update
Dr. Steve Maier updated the committee in regard to a variety of topics. He mentioned the timeline for the Regents to meet in September to discuss the "State System Core". As such, we continue to await any direction. He also discussed the importance of the committee members to be active in their role on the general education committee by communicating with their divisions/departments and developing ways to capture students progress/success, such as critical thinking.
4. Liaison – expanding committee members' role in communication and oversight of data collection and analysis to bridge the committee and divisions/departments better to improve student learning.
Dr. Mindi Clark echoed Dr. Maier's comments about working within departments/divisions each member represents. She encouraged the group to consider themselves as a liaison, as the committee is comprised of members from each department/division, so disseminating information from the committee should be done easily. Also, Dr. Clark encouraged liaisons to work with their individual departments/divisions by looking at not only their general education data, but also department data and help develop strategies to improve student success holistically. She closed with the challenge of finding better ways of capturing data as everyone works to improve student learning, but we often find it difficult in capturing and documenting those efforts.
5. Comprehensive Review of General Education at NWOSU – we have postponed due to Regents' "State System Core" idea. The Regents are to meet on September 13, so any updates will be then.
Dr. Clark reiterated this as Dr. Maier had mentioned.
6. Approval of course to the general education program – Dr. Jen Oswald
Dr. Oswald updated the committee about the Spanish pedagogy class that would satisfy a foreign language general education requirement. Dr. Wickham moved to accept EDUC 3274 Spanish for ESL Pedagogy as a new course that would satisfy a foreign language requirement for general education, Kirk Rogers seconded, and the motion passed.
7. Approval of assessment modification for the course embedded assessment in Biology – Dr. Jason Wickham
Dr. Wickham updated the committee about the general education assessment for SLO Literacy 5. Based on data review from the committee and faculty from the Science Department, changes were made to the course embedded assessment. Kirk Rogers moved to approve the updated assessment, Dr. Lahr seconded, and the motion passed.
8. Update on assessment modification for Personal Finance – Dr. Garret Lahr

Dr. Lahr updated the committee in regard to the modification of the course embedded assessment for SLOs Literacy 1 and 3 and Critical Thinking 1 and 3. He stated the newest versions of the textbook have removed most of the computation and mathematics and replaced with software programs, so the Division of Business no longer felt they could assess Literacy 1. As such, discussion was held with Dr. Maharry who represents the Math and Computer Science Department about assessing Literacy 1. He was welcome to the idea, and Dr. Lahr moved to have the Math and Computer Science department to take over the assessment of Literacy 1. Dr. Oswald seconded, and the motion passed. Further discussion was held about updating their assessment based on the previous data reviews from the committee, and Dr. Lahr expected a modification to be presented at the next general education meeting.

9. Data from NSSE, ETS and Gen Ed embedded assessments

○ Review gen ed data as committee every year

Chair Clark reviewed the data with the committee from the ETS, NSSE, and course embedded assessments. A data observation sheet (See observation sheet) was shared with the group, highlighting the findings from each assessment. Each representative from a department with a course embedded assessment gave an update of the findings with the group as well. Course embedded assessments were good overall. Performance was lower in Literacy 1 and 3, which was addressed with the Division of Business and their desire to modify the assessment. (See Lahr update above). The Science Department piloted their assessment, and significant gains were made from previous years, so it was the desire of the committee to move forward with the modified assessment (see above motion for Literacy 5 update). ETS and NSSE results were positive. Critical Thinking is still a concern among all universities, but NWOSU could celebrate scores in Reading, Writing, and Math 1 as they were high among comparison groups. NSSE revealed areas where students felt engaged, and faculty-student interactions were high, which indicated good support to help students succeed.

○ Findings from most recent round of collection

▪ Continue the conversation about low critical thinking scores.

Kaylyn Hansen discussed ideas about improving scores and suggested curriculum in Ranger Connection. The committee agreed that was a good idea.

▪ Nice job increasing *N*, continued ideas to increase participation for ETS
Hansen was praised for her efforts in increasing participation over the years as this has always been a concern of the committee. Dr. Collins mentioned she does not mind having a reminder as an advisor and Dr. Clark echoed that comment.

▪ What processes need to change as a result of data?

The committee discussed how assessment modifications in Biology have seen improvements, and the modifications in Personal Finance with the Math taking on Literacy 1 should potentially show gains in data. The committee feels these changes should yield positive results moving forward. Also, the committee recommended talking with Calleb Mosburg about Critical Thinking curriculum in Ranger Connection.

▪ Any need for assessment modifications?

Yes, since the committee had already discussed this in the meeting (above), no further action was needed.

10. Discussion from previous meeting - Consider moving toward a goal for percentage of students meeting acceptable or higher.
Clark mentioned this as a possibility in the future but discussion was limited on the matter.
11. Discuss SLOs and how they're being reinforced in the classes that are not collecting data.
Clark encouraged liaisons to discuss this in their departments and to ensure General Education SLOs were on syllabi that addressed SLOS and were being reinforced.
12. Do we like where we are and where we are going? What actions need to be taken?
The committee agreed that general education was moving forward with progress, based on ETS, NSSE, and course embedded assessments, coupled with the strategies and modifications made throughout the years for continuous improvement. The committee is stalled for any large makeovers due to the Regents stalled progress on the State System Core.
13. Future fall meeting to discuss new developments from Regents.
Clark informed the committee she would keep the group posted about new developments, and would schedule a meeting later in the semester for Personal Finance and Math assessments and any information regarding the Regents' decision.
14. Adjourn
With no further business, Shane Hansen moved to adjourn, and Kirk Rogers seconded. The meeting adjourned.

General Education Data Observations – 8/28/23

General Education Course Data Snapshot

L1 – 59.21% acceptable ↓4.5%

L2 – 86% acceptable ↑1.4%

L3 – 70.04 % acceptable or above ↓19% (high target)

L4 – pre-test/post-test showed good gains with 76% at acceptable or target ↓1%

L5 – Questions 1 was 69.1% acceptable or above ↑21.1%, question 2 was 83.6% acceptable or above ↑51.6; and question 3 carried a 89.1% acceptable or above ↑8.1

L6 – 88% acceptable or above ↓6%

L7 – 88% acceptable or above ↓6%

C1 – 76.17% acceptable or above ↓3.13% (high target)

C2 – 86% acceptable or above ↓3%

C3 – 64.62% acceptable ↓6.1% (high target)

E1 88% acceptable or above ↓4%

E2 85% acceptable or above ↓8%

E3 86% acceptable or above ↓1%

NSSE – (2023)

Speaks to engagement. Are students participating in learning activities that relate to SLOs?

First year students: *Significantly lower in Higher-Order Learning, Reflective & Integrative Learning, and Effective Teaching Practices* than the Carnegie Class, similar to the previous NSSE. There were no significant differences in Learning Strategies, Quantitative Reasoning, Collaborative Learning, Discussions with Diverse Others, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality Interactions, and Supportive Environment.

Seniors: Significantly higher compared to the Carnegie Class in Student-Faculty Interaction and Quality of Interaction. Collaborative Learning was no longer significantly lower.

First year students: The highest performing item, compared to the Carnegie Class was related to service-learning, and the others were indirectly related to academics. The lowest performing item, compared to the Carnegie class was combining ideas from different courses when completing assignments followed by class preparation, societal issues, analyzing ideas or experiences, and applying facts. The latter seem to be important concepts for critical thinking.

Seniors: The highest performing item, compared to Carnegie was also related to service-learning, followed by quality of interactions with student services staff, other administrative staff, and academic advisors, and the institution's emphasis on helping manage non-academic responsibilities. The lowest performing item was completing a culminating senior experience, followed by assigned more than 50 pages of writing, discussions with diverse others, and the institution's emphasis on using learning support services.

Satisfaction was high among senior respondents, and they believed the perceived high gains in critical thinking, writing, working effectively with others, speaking clearly, developing values and ethics, acquiring job-related knowledge and skills, understanding others' backgrounds, being an informed and active citizen, solving complex real-world problems, and analyzing numerical and statistical information. Each of these are core to the General Education SLOs.

ETS

N=90 (50% of the cohort)

Participation increased from 32 to 65 to 85 to 90 and overall mean from 431.5 to 444.6 to 439.74 to 439.2.

Data reported the most room for improvement in Critical Thinking, Mathematics Level 3, and Writing Level 3. The need for improvement lies in Reading Level 2, Writing Level 2, and Mathematics Level 2. Students showed improvement from the previous year in Reading Level 1, Reading Level 2, and Writing Level 1. Mathematics Levels 1, 2, and 3 were nearly the same from the previous year. Critical Thinking and Writing Level 2 showed small decreases from the previous year. Although low in some areas, data were similar to the Carnegie Class for comparison. Compared to the Carnegie Class, NWOSU scored lower in only two areas and remained the same with Critical Thinking, compared to lower in four and eight the previous two years. Perhaps university discussion has improved critical thinking scores?