

**Minutes of the Salisbury University Faculty Senate  
Meeting for General Education Review**

September 15, 2015  
at Holloway Hall 119

**Senators Present:** Thomas Calo, Randy Cone, Sean Cooper, Mark de Socio (Secretary), Stephen Ford (VP), Stephen Habay, Kurt Ludwick (Webmaster), Darrell Mullins (President), John Nieves, Brandye Nobiling, James Parrigan, David Rieck, Kathleen Shannon, Bart Talbert, Leslie Yarmo

**Call to Order (Faculty Senate President):** 3:33PM, quorum present

**Opening Remarks from the Faculty Senate President**

Associate Provost Search

- The Provost wants five faculty representatives, one from each academic school and one from the library, to serve on the Associate Provost Search Committee
- If more than five are interested, all names will be forwarded to the Provost and she will choose five from the list of volunteers; please encourage your colleagues to volunteer – they can email the Faculty Senate President if interested
- A question arose concerning how long the search might take and if committee members would need to be available in January when faculty are often not on campus; Faculty Senate President will seek clarification from the Provost

Availability of Senators after 5:00PM on Scheduled Meeting Dates

- Faculty Senate President had previously emailed Senators asking about their availability after 5:00PM on scheduled meeting dates
- Reasoning is that in case we should be in the midst of an important discussion, it might be more effective to be able to finish it rather than wait until the next meeting;
- A number of Senators have already responded to that query, but if you haven't yet, please do so

New Senator

- Dr. Randy Cone of Math and Computer Science was introduced as the new Senator representing Henson; he is the Fall semester replacement for Dr. Brent Zaprowski, who is on Sabbatical

## Business

Dr. James King, Co-Chair of the General Education Steering Committee, presented the mission of the GenEd Steering Committee and its five Working Groups, and summarized their work thus far (see documents)

- Details and documents available on the GenEd Steering Committee website:  
<http://www.salisbury.edu/campusgov/facsenate/archive/genedreview/default.html>
- Discussion
  - Thematic Focus
    - Rather than thinking about general education as a list of required courses as we currently define GenEd, we might identify specific themes that characterize the kind of education we want students to have and within those themes there might be a number of options
    - For example, we might have “Civic Engagement” as a theme and then provide options as to how the expectations consistent with that theme might be met
      - Discussion on what these themes would be; Professor King explained that this is work in process and that we are not yet ready to name specific themes
      - The GenEd Steering Committee is studying other institutions that use this approach
      - Caveats for a thematic approach discussed such as a tendency to be too narrow by creating “silos;” An example would be a course such as “Composition for Business Students”
      - Professor King emphasized the a thematic approach aims to be broad in nature
  - On use of the term “Core Curriculum” to describe the General Education Curriculum
    - Use of the phrase “Core Curriculum” by the GenEd Steering Committee is confusing and should be avoided; some interpret the phrase as a list of particular courses that all students are required to take; some argue that such an approach is not the best approach to general education because our students come to us with varying skill sets
  - Assessing General Education
    - We should not let assessment drive the curriculum
    - Assessment of General Education is difficult and we want to avoid the temptation to adopt a curriculum that is easy to assess; instead, our focus should be to develop a curriculum that we believe is best for our students and then work to assess it, no matter how challenging that might be

## General Education Program Principles

- Dr. James King presented a current catalog copy of the principles of our General Education program with recommended changes and a request for input by the Faculty Senate
- Motion to approve an amended Principles of our General Education program following a brief discussion and modification of the document with input from the Faculty Senate; seconded
- Motion passed (voice vote)

## Open Floor for further General Education Discussion

- Advance Placement
  - Regarding the appliance of Advanced Placement tests from high schools to general education credit at the university level, there seemed to be support for encouraging departments to require a score higher than “3”
  - Further, we might consider giving credit for a particular course but not the general education credit itself; for example, if a student scores well enough to get credit for Calculus, he/she could get credit for that but would still need to take an SU Math class to receive general education credit
- English 103
  - We currently are required to give students general education credit for ENGL 103 if they took ENGL 101 at a Maryland Community College even if they received a grade of “D;” this led to a discussion of how recently such requirements had been reviewed at the State level and that perhaps we should ask the University System about it
- Upper Level Writing Requirement
  - There was a suggestion that general education have a greater focus on writing by including an “upper level” writing requirement; this might be satisfied within majors if major programs designated certain courses as “writing intensive”
    - Ideally, those courses would have lower enrollments
- Prerequisites
  - We currently operate under a philosophy that general education courses should have no prerequisites; is it feasible to have upper division courses (see bullet above) that do not have prerequisites?
- COMAR requirements
  - Some things must remain the same according to COMAR; for example, SU must accept general education credit for students transferring in from other Maryland public institutions and community colleges
  - If an SU student transfers in with an Associate’s degree, anything that was awarded as general education must be accepted as general education at SU; nevertheless, that still leaves plenty of general education requirements remaining
  - Some discussion on the limitations imposed by COMAR; what recourse does SU have to provide feedback to COMAR if we are unnecessarily hindered in our development of general education curriculum?

**Adjourned** 4:57PM