

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

October 13, 2015
at Holloway Hall 119

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

Call to Order (Faculty Senate President): 3:30PM, quorum present

Reading of Minutes (Faculty Senate General Education Review meeting of September 15, 2015)

— Minutes approved as distributed

Opening Remarks from the Faculty Senate President

Faculty Senate Meeting scheduled for October 20 during advising week is cancelled

New Business

Report on the Status of General Education Review presented by Dr. James King, Co-Chair of the General Education Steering Committee (see documents)

General Education Review Survey

- Faculty will receive one more reminder of the faculty survey about General Education; there have been 315 responses so far
- Survey will close on October 19
- Survey working group is in the process of analyzing the data and preparing a summary
- A student survey is underway and is available to students in MyClasses
- An alumni survey was also distributed; that data is also currently being analyzed

Open Sessions

- Open Sessions were held on October 6, 7 and 8 to explore options at how General Education curriculum can be enhanced
 - Very low attendance but good input from those who did attend

- Faculty Senate President suggested that attendance may be low since there is no specific proposal that is being considered; Steering Committee may want to consider meeting with academic departments as an alternative way of collecting feedback rather than relying on open meetings
- Feedback that was obtained via the open sessions included:
 - Concerns about our current General Education program
 - Suggestions for how the General Education program might be changed
 - Developing an app to provide descriptive material of General Education courses; perhaps even a brief video by the faculty member describing their GenEd course
 - Having a “speed-dating”-like advising forum where students can go table-to-table and briefly meet with GenEd faculty and learn of the various GenEd course offerings
 - Discussions on the use of a “thematic approach” to General Education
 - Discussions on General Education models at peer and aspirational peer institutions and the model currently in use at College Park (because that institution revised its program quite recently)
 - Some peer institutions with thematic approaches to General education:
 - Appalachian State University
 - Bloomsburg University
 - Dartmouth College
 - Millersville University
 - Portland State University
 - University of Massachusetts
 - University of North Carolina – Wilmington

Discussion on General Education Review and Open Sessions feedback

- We should change student perceptions regarding General Education: Students, and perhaps some faculty during the advising process, seem to think of General Education as something to “get out of the way”
- Is there value in a “sequential approach” to General Education to allow for upper level courses to be categorized as GenEd courses and which would require prerequisites

- Use of Advanced Placement (AP) Courses/Tests: Many expressed concern at granting college credit if a student gets a score of ‘3’ on an AP exam; Perhaps ‘4’ should be the minimum expectation
 - One Senator commented that that it was common for students to earn a ‘5’ on the AP calculus exam, so perhaps the AP exams themselves are not wholly reliable
- Limit the number of GenEd courses that can be satisfied with an AP exam
- Change the name of the program; “General Education” is not particularly informative or enticing
- Use language makes sense to students and parents; ‘Group IIIA’ (for example) doesn’t make sense to anyone
- We should encourage breadth in modes of inquiry as we consider the elements of a good general education program
- ENGL 103
 - Because of articulation agreements, many students get credit for ENGL 103 but have not taken it at SU
 - There is a perception that transfer students who do not take the course here are less prepared for writing in their other classes
 - One suggestion is to require students to satisfy two requirements: composition and information literacy; In this case, the transferred ENGL class would satisfy the composition requirement but perhaps not the literacy requirement
- We need to communicate to parents that we are not here only for the purpose of career preparation
- As part of the advising process we need to help change student mindset that “getting a convenient schedule” is a priority
- Pre-loading students into courses
 - Perhaps students are prohibited from choosing GenEd courses that are more appealing to them and are scheduled at the same time as the course in which they are preloaded
 - How can we inspire students when they don’t even know what they are taking

- We might consider distributing advising loads more broadly and across disciplines; Faculty in smaller departments could perhaps advise students from other disciplines and thus potentially expose students to courses outside their major
- Should we be comfortable with online courses taken at community college transferring here as general education courses
- Related to discussions of a “thematic approach” we should aim to “carefully tweak” our curriculum instead of chasing fads
- We do seem to plan general education course offerings as effectively as we plan our major course offerings
- Let us not lose site that the “general” in General Education is derived from “genre” not “generic”
- While we may end up proposing a new general education program, the status quo should be on the table as well when it is time to vote
- Improving faculty feedback regarding General Education Review
 - We might consider doing holding open sessions during the week before classes begin in the spring semester; and we should schedule and publicize it now
 - Perhaps the Provost would be willing to sponsor a wine and cheese reception as part of this event; Suggestion to consider an open meeting in the evening or on a weekend

Adjourned 5:00PM