

## Liberal Studies Committee Notes of Discussion

March 30, 2021, 1:00-2:45 p.m., virtually via zoom

Meeting called by: Jason BeDuhn, Chair  
Type of meeting: Liberal Studies Committee  
Facilitator: Jason BeDuhn, Chair  
Note taker/recorder: Barbara Branton

**Voting members:** Jason BeDuhn, Bruce Fox, Susan Smiley, Amy Hughes, C. Christina, Toby Hocking, Jermaine Martinez, Louise Lockard, James Latham, John Doherty, Kristen Konkell, Jeannie Copley, Neal Smith, Alison Conant, Will Cordeiro

**Ex-Officio members:** Jeff Berglund, Melinda Trembl, Monica Bai, Sue Pieper, Amy Rushall, Alana Kuhlman, Cody Canning,

**Excused voting:** Shelley Vaughn, Vince Caranchini,

**Excused ex-officio:** Kim Hensley-Owens, Betsy Buford,

**Guests:** Bridget Bero, James Palmer, Lori Poloni-Staudinger, Eck Doerry, Dayle Hardy-Short

### Agenda and notes of discussion

Topic	Discussion
<b>Welcome/Notes of Discussion</b>	<p>Call to Order:</p> <p>J. Latham moved, S. Smiley seconded, and the Notes of Discussion for March 3, 2021 meeting passed unanimously.</p>
<b>Information item: Workload and Elections</b>	<p>Chair BeDuhn calculates that members will be putting forth about a 15% effort to complete the transition of courses to the new, proposed, general studies program. While it is an uncommon practice, he intends to send a note to the appropriate parties for consideration as Statements of Expectations are crafted for the AY 21-22 academic year. Several members offered assistance with the crafting of the note. The number of representatives might be increased for the transition year. If approved, that could be part of the summer Faculty Senate elections for next year. Also under consideration is asking ex-officio members to take part in the reviews and/or considering another year moratorium on accepting new courses. Members will be assigned a specific subcommittee by knowledge area categories.</p> <p>Elections for the chair and vice chair for AY 21-22 will be held on April 27. Members may self-nominate.</p>
<b>Curriculum Process/course transition</b>	<p>A proposed curriculum timeline for AY 21-22 was presented. Members also discussed changes to the existing curriculum process, with a request that one form serve all the curriculum bodies that review a course proposal/syllabus and thereby remove materials from the syllabus that do not pertain to student audiences. The development of an instructor guide that reflects the full details of the course's connections to General Studies, etc. was mentioned as part of what should be included with the syllabus of record. This would be handed to new faculty as background information for teaching the course. Also, requested is clarification on who is responsible for ensuring the syllabus template is correct. If one committee approves specific sections of the syllabus template, then others would not have to ask for further revisions as the syllabus is circulated through the various committees: e.g., degree program outcomes</p>

	<p>vs. General Studies outcomes. Members continue to push for consistency in the syllabus of record, seeking detailed assignments connected to the learning outcomes. These suggestions will be brought to the Curriculum and Assessment Coordinating Committee for discussion.</p> <p>Members walked through a prototype instructor guide that will be developed for each knowledge area. This guide highlights that outcomes are required to be connected to the assignments. Several inconsistencies were noted in the draft document.</p> <p>650 courses have been identified under courses transitioning to the new program. Departments have been asked to classify these into specific areas including the anticipated knowledge area the course will move to. This is also an opportunity for identifying courses to bring forward and courses to remove from general studies. Streamlining the process is always part of the ongoing discussion. Reports will be run to identify how changes may impact other degree programs. The committee may reconsider the practice of not allowing prerequisites for its general studies courses as well as how it might handle topics courses. Existing courses will need some redesign to include information literacy and courses currently using critical thinking as their essential skill will need to transition to a one of the new skills, just as courses in the Cultural Understanding distribution block will need to transition to one of the new knowledge areas. Members were reminded that two programs will run simultaneously until the currently enrolled students have graduated. The committee was reminded that some of the elements require working within PeopleSoft and they have lost two thirds of their staff so responses are frequently delayed when changes are requested.</p> <p>Members should consider the documents and come back with concrete suggestions on how to manage the process efficiently for the committees as well as the faculty submitting courses.</p>
<p><b>Challenges of the new proposed general studies and Engineering</b></p>	<p>Representatives of the College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Science (CEIAS) shared their concerns and recommended changes for the impacts the new general studies proposal has on their graduates. Of specific concern is the new separate requirement for social sciences alongside of the one for physical/life/space or earth science within the Science knowledge area. ABET, the engineering accreditor, has specific definitions for what constitutes a science, and social science courses will not be able to be counted towards the degree, thus increasing the credit hour pressure for Engineering students to complete their degree within 120 hours. This was already challenging under the existing Liberal Studies program. The addition of a 3 credit American Institutions requirement and 3 credit of Social Sciences requirement makes things even more difficult. Suggestions to fix this include dropping the 3 credit social science requirement (making it optional within Sciences), or folding it in as requirement or option within the SPW requirement, or providing assistance to the department to qualify some of their existing courses under American Institutions or looking for ways to fully use the 9 overlapping credit option. It was acknowledged by CEIAS representatives that CENE 150 has potential to be developed as a General Studies course that would help alleviate the problem. But generally CEIAS representatives preferred a change to the new GS program, rather than the labor involved in a program-by-program solution to the problem.</p> <p>The meeting ended before all guests had a chance to share their thoughts. Members are encouraged to write to committee leadership with suggestions so that a proposal can be developed for the next committee discussion.</p>
<p><b>Announcements</b></p>	

<b>Good of the Order</b> (your opportunity for future agenda items)		
<b>Adjourn</b>		The meeting was adjourned at 2:47pm. The next meeting will be April 13.