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The College of Arts and Sciences

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TO: Academic Standards Committee (ASC)

FROM: Charles Singler, Chair *CS*

DATE: January 21, 1998

SUBJECT: I. Minutes of January 16, 1998  
II. Minutes of January 19, 1998

**I. Minutes of January 16, 1998: 1 p.m.**

Present: McCloud, Kornbluth, Riley, Law, Mears, Sirbu, Conser, Gill-Wigal, Singler

1. Minutes of January 5, 1998 were approved  
Minutes of January 12, 1998 were approved
2. A request by the four science chairs to meet with the ASC was declined.
3. Discussion of the general education requirements proposal:
  - a) The ASC agreed to recommend to the Senate the proposal as received from the GETF with editorial changes and notes of clarification attached.
  - b) The ASC agreed to recommend to the Senate changes in the original proposal as amendments to the proposal.
4. Changes to bring forward to the Senate:
  - a) Editorial/Clarification changes -
    - 1) p. 4 Item A.1: Replace "in a computer-assisted environment" with "using a computer."
    - 2) p. 6, under Goal 5: Replace "mathematics entrance exam" with "mathematics placement exam", and replace "taking a higher-level..." with "passing a higher-level..."
    - 3) p. 4, first paragraph a.1: For clarification, change the language as proposed by W. Jenkins.
    - 4) p. 5, second paragraph A.1: For clarification, change the language as proposed by W. Jenkins.
    - 5) p. 4, regarding prerequisite and upper division listings for GER courses: Prerequisites are an assurance that students are prepared for the content and skills required in the courses. The ASC does not see a problem with prerequisites, nor with upper division designations. Other restrictions, such as admission to a program, would preclude a course being designated as a GER course.

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b) Amendments to be proposed--

1) p. 4 under A1: Replace "Student may test out of these two courses through taking a placement test" with " Students may be placed into Writing II based on the Composition and Reading Placement Test (CRPT), or receive credit for Writing I and/or Writing II through AP testing."

The ASC noted that the current CRPT is not suited to test the skills and content of Writing II, and could not be used for that purpose. Further, the current academic policy defines that students may test out of English 550 only (97-98 undergraduate bulletin, p. 54) and that a rationale to change the policy is not provided.

2) p. 5 line 1 regarding enrollment in writing intensive courses: Replace "30 students" with "25 students." Sound writing pedagogy argues for limiting class size to 25.

3) p. 3 table referring to speech at 0.5 course, and p. 5 item 2, first paragraph referring to "minimum of 20 class hours" and to "the implementation of this provision is subject to the availability of faculty and resources":

The ASC will move to require one course in Speech [not 0.5 course], to delete the language "(minimum of 20 class hours)", and to delete reference to the availability of faculty and resources.

Sound oral-communication pedagogy argues for the inclusion of a full-length course.

4) p. 5, item 2, first paragraph: Delete the sentence "Students may test out of this requirement through ways to be determined by the GER coordinator and the communication department."

The ASC questions how students can test out of this requirement. A test is not in place, procedures are not defined nor proposed by which implementation can take place, and the resources to do these are not available.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

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### **Minutes of January 19, 1998; 2 p.m.**

Present: McCloud, Kornbluth, Riley, Conser, Mears, Sirbu, Singler, Akpom and Law.  
[continuation from January 16 regarding amendments to the general education proposal]

5) p. 5, item 3: Replace the paragraph with "It is expected that all GER courses will attempt to integrate goals 1, 2, and 3 wherever possible. To encourage critical thinking, these courses should include discussions of the logical means of defining terms, stating assumptions, distinguishing inductive from deductive reasoning, constructing and evaluating arguments, eliminating common fallacies, and organizing coherent theories. Capstone courses are expected to incorporate writing, oral-communication and reasoning critically as appropriate in each discipline. Critical thinking coordinators will offer training courses."

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The ASC noted that the means to satisfy goals 1 and 2 were addressed in the GETF report, but that a means to address goal 3 was not, except in brief. This oversight should be corrected, and the statement above is proposed. Further, it was noted that certain academic programs would find it difficult to implement a capstone course with components of goals 1, 2, and 3.

6) p. 6, goal 5: This goal is interpreted as including an understanding of statistics, especially in applied contexts. Accordingly, the ASC proposes to replace "a mathematics placement exam" with "a mathematics -- statistics placement exam" and to replace "passing a higher-level mathematics course such as calculus" with "passing a higher-level mathematics course such as calculus, or passing a statistics course."

7) p. 6, Natural Science: Replace "Students must take at least one course with a lab component as part of this requirement." with "Students must take at least one course with a lab component in which the lab component shall be one credit in addition to the regular course."

Also, p. 3, bottom of page: Insert "The science lab course will be a (3 + 1) semester credit course."

The ASC recognizes that many studies indicate that undergraduate education produces too many students poorly prepared in science and technology at a time when scientific literacy is needed more than ever.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 28 at 4 p.m. at Kilcawley Gallery.