

EPC minutes – 12/16/09

Present: Amy Godert, Kelley O'Keefe, CJ Koepp, Leslie Miller-Bernal, Cindy Speaker, Susan Tabrizi

Meeting began at 9:30

We began with a discussion of our February open meeting date. ASA requested an open meeting on the role of an advisor on Feb 16th, so we agreed to move our meeting to Feb 23rd. We all agreed that more time would be beneficial, allowing us to accomplish more of our work. At this open meeting reports from the PE subcommittee, Experiential Learning subcommittee and Information Literacy and Oral Communication subcommittee will be presented. We will also present what we have on the distribution requirements and institutional goals (to know, to do, to be). The subcommittee reports will be condensed and made available to all faculty prior to the open meeting.

The process for review of subcommittee reports was discussed. The subcommittee drafts a report that is submitted to EPC for comments. Revisions are made and the report goes back to EPC (if there is time) for further review. The report then goes to the faculty, who make additional suggestions and comments. The report is further modified based on faculty feedback. EPC hopes to bring a new general education proposal to faculty for approval in the spring (for implementation in the fall).

We discussed the minutes of the previous week and approved them with some minor changes.

Susan presented the status report from the Information Literacy and Oral Communication subcommittee. The subcommittee is making good progress on the information literacy portion of their charge. They feel that information literacy involves a progression of skill development and that it should be reinforced throughout a student's career. It begins with Wlls 101 and should be integrated into the major and included in programs' assessment plans. Information literacy is critical for students since it provides the support for effective writing.

A few examples of how information literacy could be incorporated throughout a student's time at Wells were given.

- Wlls 101 – Information literacy could be incorporated into Wlls 101, giving the student a foundation to build on during their time at Wells. By incorporating this into Wlls 101, all students who enter Wells as freshmen would be exposed to information literacy. Wells101 could utilize the library staff to give students the basic information and skills through workshops. It was noted that oral communication skills might fit nicely into Wlls 101 as well.
- Major/Division based courses – These are upper level courses offered either by majors or divisions. There are a number of forms that this type of course could take. Some ideas were that the course could be about research methods, interpreting papers, epistemology, or how to prepare for writing a thesis (or a combination of any/all of these). It was mentioned that if a divisional or major course was offered, the information that is given should be uniform and include relevant information on database searching.

- Within existing courses – Existing courses in the major could be designated as writing/oral communication/information literacy intensive and could then be used to fulfill the requirement. The designation of a course as being intensive in a certain area would require committee oversight to ensure the designations are correct and that the objectives for the requirements are being met. How the course meets the objectives would have to be clearly defined and would also be incorporated into the program assessment plan.
- Incorporating it into a senior thesis or capstone project – The senior thesis or capstone requires that students be able to collect, interpret and present information about a specific area. However, there are questions within some majors of what form theses will take (and if they will even be required) in the future, especially if the student body grows.

The issue of how transfer students would get basic information literacy skills was discussed. Transfer students do not have to take Wlls 101, but since the process proposed by the subcommittee is iterative, they would be exposed to it at other times (in classes, through the information literacy class offered by the library, etc).

A suggestion was made that day for faculty could be used to help inform faculty on how to be better at teaching students more effective ways to communicate orally. This could include information on different types of presentations and methods of communication.

EPC had no major objections to the information contained in the update from the Information Literacy and Oral Communication subcommittee. We support the idea that it should be an iterative process that is reinforced throughout a student's time at Wells. We recommend that the subcommittee meet with Linda Lohn to discuss incorporating certain aspects of Information Literacy and Oral Communication regarding Wlls 101.

The meeting ended at 10:50. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, Feb 3rd at 9am.

Respectfully submitted.