

MTSU University General Education Meeting
Minutes for March 26, 2021

Committee members attending: Samuel Blumer, Janis Brickey, Lando Carter, Warner Cribb, Mark Frame, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Virginia Hemby-Grubb, Rachel Kirk, Ryan Korstange (Chair), Aliou Ly, Tammy Melton, Greg Nagel, Ryan Otter, James Piekarski, Deana Raffo, John Sanborn, Laura White

Ex-officio members attending: Chris Brewer, Nita Brooks, Susan Myers-Shirk (Director), Steve Severn

Design team members attending: Michelle Boyer-Pennington, Katherine Brackett, Brian Frank, Kristen West

Guests attending: Meredith Funderbunk (GA), Kate Pantelides, Erica Stone

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm by Ryan Korstange, Chair.

Approval of minutes from March 19, 2021

The minutes were approved as distributed.

Report on CLEP Tests

Kate Pantelides, Director of General Education, Department of English, and Erica Stone, Department of English

CLEP is planning to discontinue the written portion of the exam on April 15 and a decision must be made on what to do going forward. There are 3 options: 1) discontinue use of CLEP exam, 2) purchase multiple copies of the current exam, and 3) develop an in-house written exam. The English Department faculty examined peer institutions and other research. They found that the CLEP is less predictive of success in college than previously thought. In the past 6 years, only 45 students have taken the exam with only 10 passing. Nearly half of regional peers do not accept CLEP credit. They propose discontinuing use of CLEP for credit for ENGL 2020 and 2030.

Ryan asked what is needed from the committee. Kate asked if the committee is comfortable with discontinuing use of CLEP for these two classes. Discussion ensued about transfer credit for 2020 or 2030 and problems with developing an in-house test.

Greg Nagel made a motion, and Samuel Blumer seconded, to accept the proposal to drop the English CLEP exam. Ryan clarified that since this is not a program change, a simple majority vote is needed to pass. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Current Draft of Outcomes

A draft of the outcomes was distributed earlier. Ryan proposed breakout rooms for 30 minutes to discuss the document to decide if it is ready for public comment or if it needs to be developed further.

Upon returning from the breakouts, Ryan asked if there are big points for clarification or points that it would be beneficial for everyone to hear, but not necessarily solve.

Discussion points focused on clarifying criteria, rubrics, intellectual knowledge vs. applied knowledge vs demonstration, and subjective language. The tables should be clear since they are likely to be faculty's primary takeaway.

Discussion ensued about concerns with the wording and objectives in the civic engagement and intercultural competence categories where several members indicated that these categories are most troublesome and most likely to elicit critical response.

Susan said that intercultural competence is in our MTSU values. This objective repeatedly came up in focus groups, outcomes workshops, and it's in the strategic plan. There was discussion about how it should be worded.

Tammy Melton suggested that we first need to figure out if we are in favor of making changes to the document. Brian Frank asked for clarification on what is problematic – the civic engagement category, or the intercultural competence category, or both, or the entire document.

The committee was polled on whether to make changes to the document. 77% voted that some changes are needed. The committee was polled again on whether to edit the civic engagement category, or the intercultural competence category, both, or the document more broadly. 14% voted to change the only civic engagement category, 0% voted to change the only the intercultural competence category, 48% voted to change both, and 38% voted to make edits on the entire document.

Susan said that the executive team will start with the civic engagement and intercultural categories, and then apply what they learn from this process to the other categories as well if needed. Susan asked the committee to make their suggestions on the shared document in OneDrive. Ryan asked that members makes their suggestions in the margins over the next couple of days.

With no new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Deana Raffo, Recording Secretary