

University General Education Council
March 23, 2022, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: K. Witemeyer, J. Smith, J. Jones, R. Brown, J. Prather, K. Jang, D. Flanagan, S. Sanders, M. Atkinson, C. Flanders, R. Ashlock, L. Sharp-Penya

Absent: R. Rama, S. Talley, M. Straughn

Ex-officio: E. Gumm, C. Riley (L. May, B. Smith, S. Macaluso were absent)

Guests: D. Counts, S. Self

The meeting began at 3:32 p.m.

- Call to order by J. Smith
- Prayer by J. Smith
- Minutes from 2/9/22 and 3/9/22

Both sets of minutes accepted as approved.

Action Items

1. A.A.S. General Education Requirements

J. Smith - On the main campus, we have long had a BSN. We are looking at options to engage with students in nursing fields by offering other degrees. The Associate of Applied Science degree is one of those options. We updated the Associate of Arts degree requirements for our Pre-Architecture program already. This will not affect that work. A discussion is coming out of CGPS regarding offering an AAS degree in Nursing. J. Prather - So this would be to get an RN correct? J. Smith - Yes. But today we are strictly looking at the AAS general education requirements, not the fuller degree. This is the first step in the process. It allows us to further explore the idea.

S. Self - The general education portion is 15 hours. There will be an additional 45 hours in nursing added to the program. What we are seeing comparatively in the market is students taking English as their Communication and then humanities. We are including Bible as a humanities option with an option for a vocational formation course. Many of the students who would pursue this degree would be working already. Nursing would decide on the science to qualify as well as the behavioral and social sciences. J. Smith - Our team will fill the menu, but it is likely that the nursing faculty will select specific courses from those menus.

J. Smith - The most different piece is the humanities area. The Bible piece is different. This might have online components, but we are exploring a partnership with a hospital system in an area experiencing nursing shortages. They are interested in providing

options for LPNs to further their education. Students might not be seeking Christian education but would be attracted to an opportunity provided by their employer. We want students to be able to continue on to a BSN should they desire. Ben Reese who works with our Christian Service and Formation program has been working on these vocational formation courses with a meaningful progression starting with the Kingdom of God, then creation and the care of God's creation, and finishing with the vocation of care. S. Self - We have vocational formation content in all of our content already. We like the idea of engaging with the student in an intensive manner and being able to measure it as well.

R. Brown - From a SACS and assessment perspective, we can't keep the same rigor as applied to the full general education for this program. It looks like we are hitting all of the outcomes except for B1. J. Jones - Bible doesn't address the humanities outcomes. Our criteria team does not want to include Bible on our Humanities menu. These formation courses might fit better with what Cornerstone is addressing. J. Smith - These VOFO courses would be considered upper-level Bible. J. Jones - I would recommend calling them Bible courses instead of Humanities courses. J. Smith - I believe this fits SACS requirements. This helps us aim for the goal of cohesion. SACS requires Humanities, Life and Physical Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. To the question of labeling Bible courses as Humanities, at other schools, religion courses are considered humanities. If we separate it out, we would have to add extra hours to the general education to accommodate humanities since that is a SACS requirement.

J. Prather - Why is the general education curriculum so much smaller in proportion compared to the percentage required for a bachelor's degree? J. Smith - Our gen ed is atypical. Most schools have general education in the 30-45 hour range. S. Self - In these kinds of degrees, they are preparing professionals to go to work instead of academic study. Students continuing on to a BSN would need to complete all of the required general education for the bachelor's degree. J. Prather - That seems a little backward. J. Jones - This is different than an associate's degree from a community college. I love this program. C. Flanders - I don't understand the argument that what other people do affects what we do. If we want to create a certain type of person, we should prioritize that. Our current AA degree has 29 hours of general education. Dropping down to 15 seems dramatic. J. Smith - The goal of this program is different. This is not necessarily a bachelor's preparatory degree. C. Flanders - It needs to be about more than just selling the program. I want to see a rationale for why our liberal arts school is moving in the direction of professional degrees. J. Smith - We have never approached a potential degree in this way with having a professional partner in the field. Instead of offering degrees to any students who are interested, with this program, we would be offering the program to a specific population at a certain hospital. It is very different in design in that way.

J. Prather - In our BSN here, they have only 12 hours of Bible. Since this program is half the size of the BSN, I would think we need to have 6 hours of Bible. We are ACU, this is part of our identity. I think textual courses are important so that students focus on the Word, not just their vocation. J. Jones - The content needs to be there. S. Self - Every course has vocational formation included. Students are still getting faith-filled

education. But we are looking at meeting the working student where they are. And we have made it purposefully stackable to encourage them to further their education with a BSN.

S. Sanders - Can we know the hospital system? S. Self - We aren't allowed to say. J. Smith - It will be a market where we do not yet have a presence. J. Jody - Who pays the tuition? The hospital or the student? If we add three hours but charge the same, they shouldn't care about the additional 3 hours. J. Smith - We have been very upfront about the Christian part of our identity. J. Prather - I think we are making some assumptions. This could be the only interaction the students have with ACU. Many will likely not continue on for a BSN. There is another assumption that the VOFO courses are better situated for working adults than BIBL 101. We have a rule that no one is allowed to withdraw from BIBL 101. We believe students really need to experience it. I don't buy some of these arguments.

D. Flanagan - Is moving this to 18 hours a deal breaker? That seems to be the solution. Make a Bible category then have a humanities menu that could support the VOFO courses as well as perhaps a biomedical ethics course. J. Smith - I think that is worthy of discussion. It would be more hours than programs at other schools.

R. Ashlock - One of the things we've been discussing on the residential side is piloting a course as an introduction to the Christian tradition. What is the best way to meet 18 year-olds in 2022? Is it BIBL 101, or is a different entry point better? My concern is meeting these students so that they hear the message. Jerusalem vs. Athens. We want to prepare them to engage the gospel. C. Flanders - I haven't seen the VOFO classes, so it is hard to simply trust that they will accomplish what we want them to. I would want a deeper, richer engagement with the gospel. S. Self - We are trying to build an architecture for the general education at this stage, then we can fine tune and justify the curriculum we are bringing forward. The VOFO courses would have to pass your council. J. Smith - This is similar to approving the general education without the menus populated, but I think that is a helpful comment. R. Brown - So they want VOFO but BIBL 101 is the fall back. J. Prather - I want to make a case for 6 hours. BIBL 101 then the VOFO. This is who we are. I don't want to compromise on our identity. R. Brown - So we are looking to add 6 hours, 3 in Bible and 3 as a separate humanities menu. Or compromising with adding 3 hours and getting one of those two options. J. Smith - Would expanding 6 hours make this unfeasible? S. Self - I don't think we would be competitive with other 60-hour degree programs. There are no 66-hour AAS programs. The 45 hours of nursing courses are set. There is no changing those. S. Sanders - If we add 3 hours could those VOFO go to the humanities menu? So Bible is 3 hours and VOFO is humanities. Since Jody doesn't like Bible on the humanities menu.

J. Smith - One suggestion I could make is to table this for today with a recommendation for things we would like to see. We have the things we want to add, but we need that to fit into the needs of the program. Are there particular things you would like to see addressed?

S. Sanders - Could we get a syllabus for a VOFO course? J. Smith - I don't want to get too deep into those weeds, but we could ask for a more detailed description. C. Flanders - That would be helpful to me. That will make a difference when it comes to approving this framework. Precedence is important. We need to be deliberate and intentional. J. Smith - We will request a brief summary of the courses as well as the framework that would guide the formation of future VOFO courses.

R. Brown - I like the 18-hour option with humanities similar to what we will have for our main gen ed with a separate Bible category.

L. Sharp-Penya - I looked at several programs. They usually require English, but is there an option for oral communication? Nurses deal with oral communication a lot.

Motion to table by J. Jody; seconded by C. Flanders; all in favor; motion passes. Item tabled.

2. COMM 392 – Add Capstone Designation

L. Sharp-Penya - We currently have all of the capstone requirements met by our internship class. That course has grown unwieldy. We have a paper that is written in the COMM 392 course that very well meets the capstone requirement for research writing. With all the things going on in the internship class, we would like to reduce the workload there. J. Jones - Where are you going to assess the outcomes? L. Sharp-Penya - We assess them in Taskstream. We will change things to address the specific capstone requirements.

3. COMM 499 – Revise Capstone SLOs

See above.

Motion to approve items 2-3 by J. Prather; seconded by J. Jones; all in favor; motion passes.

Question about humanities menu:

J. Jones - We are working on a rubric for humanities. Since we joined history and literature under the humanities heading, we have expanded the learning outcomes we need to map. There were differences between what the faculty voted on for general education and what we discussed in council regarding mapping. J. Smith - The version that faculty voted on had the mapping slightly incorrect. We voted to remove B1 in council, but that was not removed in the version that moved forward for faculty vote. J. Jones - We would like to add B1 back in since that is what faculty voted on and because it addresses our history focus well. J. Smith - I agree that is a good plan moving forward.

The meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.