

General Education Core Curriculum Review Committee  
Minutes: Sep 15, 2004

Present:

Robert Davis, Sanjiv Sarin, Scott Simkins, Shirley Bell, Lea Williams, Rita Lamb, Shea Burns, Trent Larson, Jean Williams, Sandra Hicks, Devang Mehta, Michael Roberto, Perry Howard, Dawn Murphy, Lee Young,.

- I. The committee members considered a proposed curriculum structure shared at the previous meeting. There was much discussion on the requirement of proficiency assessments. The committee agreed to “required” assessment of English and Mathematics proficiencies for incoming freshmen and “strongly recommended” testing of Foreign Language and Information technology proficiencies. The committee also endorsed the overall curriculum structure including distribution of credit hours. A copy of the approved curriculum structure (with two sample clusters) is attached.
- II. Lea Williams suggested conducting a study to document the performance of students who enroll in English 100 and Math 100 courses despite being advised to enroll in lower-level 0900 courses, based on their English and Math proficiency examination scores. Rita Lamb and others supported this suggestion.
- III. Lee Young pointed out that assessing incoming freshmen was strongly related to advising and encouraged a stronger advising system. He offered to send high-school transcripts to advisors to allow them to place students in appropriate classes. Simkins suggested central advising. Roberto noted that WCU has central advising in addition to department advising. Committee members supported the idea of a central advising system in each school/college in addition to departmental faculty advising.
- IV. Lee Young also proposed block scheduling of freshmen. There was general support for this concept and the committee strongly supports the idea.
- V. Planned events:
  - a. The pre-proposal workshop (for Spring 2005 pilot courses) will be held on Sep 16 (3:00 PM – 5:00 PM) in Dowdy 304. Approximately 30 people have signed up to attend the workshop.
  - b. UNST Preamble and Learning Objectives will be presented to the Faculty Senate on Sep 28 (3:00 PM). The meeting will be held in Webb Hall Auditorium. All committee members were encouraged to attend the meeting.
  - c. Interdisciplinary Courses and Assessment workshop will be held on Jan 12-13, 2005. Presenters will include Peggy Maki and Terry Rhodes.
- VI. The next meeting of the full committee will be held on Oct 5, 2004.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Recorded by Sanjiv Sarin

## **Proposed Curriculum Structure Sep 15 2004**

### Freshman Competency (0-8 credits)

During Freshman Orientation, all students will be expected to demonstrate competency in the following areas:

- English composition
- Mathematics

Each competency area will be assessed separately. If a student fails a particular assessment, he/she will be required to take one 2-credit course to enhance his/her abilities in the corresponding area. At most 4 credit hours may be required to meet Freshman Competency requirements. These credits will not count towards UNST requirements. Students should be able to make up this time in the summer sessions after their first year.

In addition, academic programs are strongly recommended to consider adding competency assessments in the following areas:

- Information technology
- Foreign language

### Required courses

#### *Freshman Seminar (1 credit)*

This seminar will emphasize the role of the University Studies program and present a broad overview of the curriculum structure and rationale. The seminar will introduce students to a variety of interdisciplinary themes within the UNST program.

#### *Required Core (24 credits)*

Interdisciplinary courses organized in clusters. Collectively, the courses in a cluster ensure coverage of all UNST Learning Objectives. Approximately 10 clusters will be defined. Each cluster will be governed by a committee consisting of faculty members from various disciplines. Each cluster committee will establish the credit structure for the courses. For example, eight 3-credit courses, twelve 2-credit courses, other combinations. Some or all courses may be team-taught. Approximately half of the credits will be at 100 level, the other half at 200 level.

#### *Major specified core (9 credits)*

Selection of these courses is left to individual degree programs provided each of these additional courses add to/reinforces one or more of the learning objectives

#### *Capstone experience (3-6 credits)*

Designed and specified by individual degree programs and consistent with the goals and objectives of the UNST program. Capstone experience may include design projects, internships, co-op experiences, foreign study, community projects, etc. Senior level course.

#### *Volunteer service (50 hours)*

## Clusters

### **Energy and Environment**

#### UNST 1XX Journalism for Science and Technology

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written means.
- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written communication.
- Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines

#### UNST 1XX Mathematical and computer models of weather phenomena

- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written and oral communication.
- Use analytical thinking skills to evaluate information critically.
- Apply multiple modes of inquiry, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, to formulate, describe, evaluate, and solve problems.

#### UNST 1XX Soil and water pollution

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using visual means.
- Effectively use information technology to find, interpret, evaluate, and use information discerningly.
- Apply scientific reasoning skills to model natural, physical, social, and aesthetic phenomena using multiple modes of inquiry.
- Use a wide range of disparate information and knowledge to draw inferences, test hypotheses, and make decisions.

#### UNST 1XX Role of African American Scientists in Environmental Mitigation

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using oral, and visual means.
- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in oral communication.
- Understand African/African-American culture and traditions, including political, economic, and social challenges affecting people of African descent.
- Interact effectively with people from diverse cultures.

#### UNST 2XX Policy debates on Energy and Environmental issues

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written and oral means.
- Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines

#### UNST 2XX Political and economic models of energy production and consumption

- Understand the role of social, political, and economic institutions and processes in the development of societies and the factors that lead to dynamic change in societies over time.
- Understand and appreciate the diversity and interrelationship of cultures locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

#### UNST 2XX Influence of popular film and music on environmental policy

- Understand the role of literature, music, and the fine arts in describing, defining, and celebrating the human condition in diverse world cultures.

#### UNST 2XX Ethical issues in energy use

- Understand and apply ethical reasoning principles to resolve moral, social, and professional issues.
- Understand the role that markets, governments and other social institutions can play in reducing social and economic inequality.

## **Leadership and Entrepreneurship**

### UNST 1XX Persuasive writing

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written means.
- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written communication.
- Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines

### UNST 1XX Analytical models for decision making

- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written and oral communication.
- Use analytical thinking skills to evaluate information critically.
- Apply multiple modes of inquiry, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, to formulate, describe, evaluate, and solve problems.

### UNST 1XX Scientific innovations for market leadership

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using visual means.
- Effectively use information technology to find, interpret, evaluate, and use information discerningly.
- Apply scientific reasoning skills to model natural, physical, social, and aesthetic phenomena using multiple modes of inquiry.
- Use a wide range of disparate information and knowledge to draw inferences, test hypotheses, and make decisions.

### UNST 1XX History of African American Entrepreneurs and Innovators

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using oral, and visual means.
- Effectively employ critical thinking skills in oral communication.
- Understand African/African-American culture and traditions, including political, economic, and social challenges affecting people of African descent.
- Interact effectively with people from diverse cultures.

### UNST 2XX Speeches of the Great World Leaders and Generals

- Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written and oral means.
- Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines

### UNST 2XX Effective leadership in government and civic engagement

- Understand the role of social, political, and economic institutions and processes in the development of societies and the factors that lead to dynamic change in societies over time.
- Understand and appreciate the diversity and interrelationship of cultures locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

### UNST 2XX Role of literature and fine arts in promoting social justice

- Understand the role of literature, music, and the fine arts in describing, defining, and celebrating the human condition in diverse world cultures.

### UNST 2XX Business and Leadership Ethics

- Understand and apply ethical reasoning principles to resolve moral, social, and professional issues.
- Understand the role that markets, governments and other social institutions can play in reducing social and economic inequality.

**Other possible clusters:**

- Science, economics, policy and politics of environmental pollution
- Randomness, genetics, world financial markets
- Mathematics, economics and politics of global population migration
- World war, science and economic development in the United States
- Science, social relations and criminal justice
- Ethics, economics and politics of nuclear weapons
- Geology, water resources and history of human migration
- Hunger, climate and societal change
- Wisdom of ancient texts
- Science, economics and sociology of sports
- Science, society and global catastrophes
- Universities and their role in community building