

General Education Core Curriculum Committee
Minutes: October 22, 2003

Present:

Robert Davis, Sanjiv Sarin, Scott Simkins, Nita Dewberry, Jean Williams, Trent Larson, Vincent Childress, Perry Howard, Shea Burns, Michelle Levy, Abebe Kebede, Shirley Bell, John Kelly, Michael Roberto, Dorothy Harris.

- I. Approval of the Sep 17 meeting minutes was postponed to the next meeting.
- II. Drs. Davis, Simkins and Sarin presented their impressions of the Town Hall Meetings already completed in the Schools/Colleges of Engineering, Arts/Sciences, Nursing, Education and Technology. Overall, it was agreed that the Town Hall Meetings are moving on schedule and serving an important role in receiving faculty input on the draft statement of general education objectives. It was suggested that a university-wide town hall meeting be held in the General Science Building Auditorium on November 5th to serve those who could not attend their own school/college meetings. Dr. Dewberry will check on availability of room.
- III. A general discussion ensued touching on several issues related to general education. Dr. Michelle Levy stressed that critical thinking skills should be prominently included in the learning objectives and also mentioned that critical thinking skills are developed through writing courses also. Dr. Roberto suggested that critical thinking and writing be used as instruments in learning world history. He shared revised statements of objectives 4 and 6 and suggested a new objective: "recognize and comprehend the historical events that have shaped the contemporary world".
- IV. The question of classrooms (especially large classrooms) was brought up. A related discussion was concerned with how to effectively teach large classes.
- V. It was felt that we would have to be more creative and resourceful if we are to bring about true quality improvements in general education. Suggestions were made to apply for external funding from NSF and other sources. Dr. Kebede mentioned Labwrite, a special software developed by an NC State Professor to help students write laboratory reports. Dr. Bell mentioned her experience as a Peace Corps volunteer and reminded us that they were able to do wonders despite limited resources.
- VI. Dr. Levy suggested that human graders would be essential in assessing student writing. She mentioned limitations of the ETS Criterion software in this regard. She also suggested limiting writing classes to 20 (this is supported by research reports).
- VII. Dr. Davis informed members that they would be asked to help in processing all the faculty feedback received so far.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Recorded by Sanjiv Sarin