

General Education Council
Minutes
October 25, 2018

1.) Approval of Minutes

2.) Old Business

Suggestion: develop a survey and ask faculty, department heads, advisors, and student focus groups to determine what the issues concerning the Core are and include:

a.) Rodney Carr on enrollment. Dr. Carr suggests that the content of the Core classes be more career-related and directed. Enrollment is important, but retention of students has become the greater issue. If the students can see how the Core classes relate to their specific choice of careers, we can raise our VSU retention rates. Suggests the creation of Freshman Seminars and placed in AREA B of our Core Curriculum.

b.) Rob Friedhoff for FLCs. Rob Friedhoff suggests that many of today's generation of freshman students do not what to expect, nor know what is expected of them, as college students. VSU's enrollment numbers are growing and our freshman class has been growing over the last few years, but our retention rates are not as high as we would like them to be. In order to raise our retention rates, we have to help them adjust to the new environment. This includes traditional decisions like major or career, but also how to get along with others, time management, familiarity with learning resources, and financial issues. Financial issues are an important issue for our students. He concurs with Dr. Carr that a suggestion to improve our Core is to offer Freshman Seminar Classes that covers these orientation type of skills. This would help raise our retention rates.

c.) Mark McNally for the focus group: Mark has kindly agreed to allow his FLC class to act as a student focus group.

3.) New Business: Freshman or 1st year seminars: These are discipline-specific seminars currently offered at VSU.

a.) Bob Gannon: Biology Freshman seminar.

Dr. Gannon has a mandatory Freshman Seminar that is also open to transfer students and other interested Biology majors. It is mandatory for all incoming new Biology majors, requires written assignments, discovers Career opportunities and the Research introduction that will be required of the Biology majors. The seminar is part of the Biology AREA F curriculum and assigns 2 credit-hours. Ways to be successful, time management, and other

orientation-type skills are covered in this course. Bonding and early immersion to the program is introduced.

- b.) Linda de la Garza: Chemistry Freshman, sophomore, senior and soon to be Junior Seminars.

Dr. de la Garza teaches the Freshman Seminar. She and Dr. Gosnell provide a comprehensive progression for the students who are interested in becoming Chemistry majors. All aspects of research, time management, major expectations, career opportunities and bonding are covered. A student organization is also part of this seminar. There is also a Sophomore seminar and a Senior seminar with the development of a Junior seminar to help the progressive development of the Chemistry Students and retention. All of the seminar students are required to attend the Senior Presentations that culminate the Chemistry students' academic career. Also offered in Area F of the Core curriculum. *(check on credit hours)*

- c.) Doug Farwell: Music freshman seminar.

This Freshman seminar is mandatory for all Music majors, and stress is on expectations of students interested in pursuing a degree in Music. Both academic and soft skills are covered including how to dress for a recital, audition, or other professional career. Class meets once a week, roll is taken, but students receive zero credit hours for this course. Retention rates in Music is about 85%, one of highest rates on campus.

- d.) Check with Peer institutions: M