

**UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING**  
**January 19, 2006**  
**3:30pm**  
**SUB Governors' Room**

**Members Present:** Scott Alberts, Steve Smith, Alan Davis, Bev Perrachione (for Peter Kelly), Wynne Wilbur, Shannon McGinnis, Chris Lantz, Sharon McGahan, Al Weitz, Royce Kallerud (for Sally Cook), Betty McLane-Iles (for Sana Camara), Lisa Glaubitz, James Hirner, David Garth (for Eric Howard), Vaughan Pultz, Ian Lindevald, Glenn Wehner, Patricia Burton (for Randy Hagerty), Terry Olson, Kathryn Brammall, Angela Crawford, Nick Beydler, Lanny Morley, Adam Davis, Kay Anderson, and secretary Erika Woehlk

**Guests:** James Cianciola (LL), Diane Johnson (LL), Scott Thatcher (MTCS), Sue Pieper (VPAA Office), Jeff Osborn (SC)

**Call to Order**

The Undergraduate Council was called to order on Thursday, January 19, 2006, at 3:30pm in the SUB Governors' Room. Scott Alberts, Chair, presided.

**Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved by general consent.

**Approval of Minutes**

The December 8, 2005 minutes were approved by general consent.

**Information Item**

GEOG 317 Economic Geography as writing-enhanced:  
This course is a blend of writing-enhanced templates two and three.

**Old Business**

BIOL 249 Writing About Biology as writing-enhanced:  
Since this agenda item appeared last month, it has already been motioned and seconded. To pass or fail will require a simple majority. J. Osborn refreshed the UGC on the course, which will be taken in conjunction with any biology elective numbered 300 or above. Students can choose whichever writing-enhanced template they wish, and then obtain the instructor's approval. **A vote was taken and BIOL 249 Writing About Biology was approved as a writing-enhanced course by 18 aye, 0 no, and 1 abstention.**

**New Business**

Report on Writing As Critical Thinking Essential Skill – Royce Kallerud:

The committee has three major points in their report. First, the preamble to the outcome statements is new and is a clarification of what is expected of students in this Skill rather than changes to what appeared before. Second, the outcomes and preamble parallel the format from the Computer Literacy report. Finally, the results of the review will be shared with ENG 190 instructors, the supervisor of GTRAs in English, and the English faculty.

The committee also conducted a review of existing assessment data. After looking at indicators from the CSEQ, GSQ, and Portfolio Project, the committee concluded that the data do not directly address a majority of the outcomes, but they do suggest that Truman's curriculum is meeting expectations for the questions that are asked in these assessments.

*Discussion:* The committee members were commended for their work. The UGC suggests that direct assessment be used in the future: perhaps something with the Portfolio Project.

The newly-proposed outcome statements and preamble will appear on the February agenda for a vote.

Report on Speech Essential Skill – Diane Johnson and James Cianciola:

The committee found that there is not much national data on speech outcomes. The committee discussed including video or digital recordings of students' presentations from early in COMM 170 and from an upper-level course in their major from the senior year in the Portfolio. This way, a post-COMM 170 effect can be measured. This is modeled after Alverno's value-added project. However, more investigation into resources will be required before any steps can be taken.

After looking for data in the CSEQ, GSQ, NSSE, and CIRP, the committee moved to examining the outcomes for the Essential Skill. They chose to propose new outcomes based on the National Communication Association's recommendations. The new outcomes are focused on ethical issues and critical thinking skills rather than presentation skills.

As for future assessment of the Skill, members of the committee would like to apply for an assessment grant so that an integrated, direct assessment can be developed.

*Discussion:* There was some conversation on the word "enact" in the first newly-proposed outcome, and it was eventually decided that the word should remain in the statement. UGC members also discussed how transfer credit will be applied to the Skill if the outcomes are shifting toward ethics and critical thinking. Will other institutions teach the course the way that is being proposed, or will they be the "stereotypical" presentation-centered courses? Truman does offer a test-out option for COMM 170. Perhaps this will be the way to handle transfer credit.

The newly-proposed outcome statements and preamble will appear on the February agenda for a vote.

Report on Elementary Functions Essential Skill – David Garth:

This committee examined finals from the courses under the Essential Skill. The committee members proposed creating a common final to each other, but there was a difference of opinion. Thus, there is no common final proposed in the final report. Additionally, the committee felt that the existing outcome statements and preamble for this Skill are sufficient and appropriate; there are no changes proposed.

*Discussion:* UGC members talked about the pros and cons of a common final. As per the charge, the UGC suggested that the committee add something to their report regarding Truman's existing assessment instruments and the data that can be gleaned from those. The question was raised asking how many students actually take the Essential Skills at Truman. One person wagered that 22.7% of incoming students transfer in Calculus I credit and that fewer than 50% of our students take a course under the Essential Skill.

A revised report will appear on the February agenda.

Report on the Computer Literacy Essential Skill – Scott Thatcher:

S. Thatcher distributed an executive summary. The committee began their work with an analysis of data. It was difficult to assess anything because there is no course associated with this Skill. How will changing the outcomes be effected with no course to tie them to? How will improvement be measured? These are the questions the committee wrestled with. The proposed solution is to not test all the students. This would only add one more burden, or check box, to the students. Rather, the committee is suggesting that the discipline faculty demonstrate how their students achieve the outcomes. If it turns out that a major cannot demonstrate competency, then the students in that major will be asked to complete modules for the areas where there was no competency found. Finally, the committee chose not to change the preamble to the outcome statements because it is seen as an administrative issue the way it is written.

*Discussion:* Does “technology” necessarily equate to “computers”? There are many kinds of technology; perhaps outcome “F” should be clarified appropriately. The students were looking for an outcome concerning spreadsheets, which is there, and an outcome concerning web page design, which is not on the proposal. Can it be added? What about presentation technologies, such as PowerPoint? Instead of heading straight away into asking disciplines for demonstrations of Computer Literacy competency and then springing test modules on students, why not query the disciplines first to find out how many majors actually can document what their students can and cannot do?

Further discussion mentioned the following: renaming the Essential Skill, eliminating the Essential Skill altogether, developing online tutorials for 0.5 credit hours after completion (such as web design), workshops for students prior to the Student Research Conference on presentation media and skills (in conjunction with the Speech Essential Skill), and ethics of computer literacy. Many faculty development opportunities could arise from these ideas if implemented.

The newly-proposed outcome statements will appear on the February agenda for a vote.

Report from the LSP Benchmarking Committee – Terry Olson:

The committee gathered data that will be used by others on campus, such as the SPAC and other UGC committees, in their planning. The committee looked at over 50 schools, including all public Missouri four-year institutions (except Harris-Stowe), all COPLAC institutions, all peer institutions from Truman's HLC Self-Study document, and a handful of other miscellaneous peer institutions. The resulting matrix details many indicators from each of the institutions. The committee chose to split up the 4 Powerful Pedagogies into their constituent parts on the spreadsheet: undergraduate research, study abroad, service learning, and internships. Finally, the committee is still working on gathering information from five more schools and will let the UGC know when everything is complete.

The committee found varied and widespread differences between the general education requirements of the institutions. Grinnell is probably the most radical in that they only require one course of their

students. In Missouri, William Jewell and Drury had interesting names for their general education programs. Northwest and William Jewell offer service learning certificates for their students.

The spreadsheet will be distributed to the UGC, Faculty Senate, and Strategic Planning Advisory Committee.

Report from Chair Scott Alberts:

A small group met over Winter Break to discuss syllabi. They decided that there are three different uses/kinds of syllabi: 1) the papers handed out on the first day of class that include many of the recommended requirements listed in the *Faculty Handbook*, 2) discipline-level information that comes from discussions with discipline colleagues about what outcomes should be in courses while still respecting instructor freedom, and 3) the papers filed in the VPAA Office and Division Offices attached to the New Course Approval Forms that include all course outcomes and outcomes for the course attributes. Ad. Davis and I. Lindevald will write something up concerning syllabi.

At the last meeting, it was announced that four exploration committees will be formed. S. Alberts has gotten memberships for three of the four committees. The graduation outcomes committee is lacking representation; however, the SPAC is addressing these issues now. Therefore, the graduation outcomes committee will probably not be formed. *Discussion:* A UGC member asked for the distribution of the membership of the SPAC. E. Woehlk will send the Council a link to the SPAC's website, <http://spac.truman.edu>.

A group of University staff, faculty, and students will be meeting soon to discuss advising on campus. UGC members are invited to attend if they wish.

Be prepared for an extra meeting in February. The upcoming agenda is full of reports and it might become necessary to split the February 9 meeting.

**Adjournment**

**S. Alberts adjourned the January 19, 2006 Undergraduate Council meeting at 5:31pm.**

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