

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting
December 1, 2005

In attendance:

V. Kenausis (Ch)	R. Drozdenko	P. Secundo	
J. Bogues	R. Flanagan	L. Vaden-Goad	D. Goble (Guest)
D. Brown	B. Petkanas	A. Zink	

I. The meeting was called to order at 10:04 am. The minutes of the meeting of November 10, 2005 were approved. The Committee welcomed Jessica Bogues, student representative.

II. New Business: MUS 103 World Music as a General Education Humanities course. This is a required course for some music majors and the Music department would like to make it available to non majors as a gen ed elective. Motion to accept (Petkanas/Flanagan) passed unanimously.

III. Old Business: The first year experience, continued. Linda Vaden-Goad presented a number of possibilities for the components of a first year experience. They included

- A. Learning communities, which might include block scheduling of two to three courses, integrated based on themes, and working toward some outcome.
- B. First year seminar (either independent or part of a block) taught as an independent course or discipline-specific, based on developing higher education skills and knowledge of the University with a common assessment protocol.
- C. Student activity "passport:" a passport-like artifact which students would carry to special events, lectures, films, and other campus activities which would be stamped in various pages signifying participation in different cultural and academic experiences.
- D. Living/Learning communities in residence halls, housing students by block scheduling or interests, faculty fellows, student mentors.

Discussion:

Learning communities: Housing is willing to try things along these lines. Some places do this by major, interest group, etc.

First Year Seminar: Should there be such a thing as a course label for first year experience courses? There is some disagreement over whether a FYE seminar should be independent of a department or specific to the departments. If such a course were required, where would the credit attach? Should there be three credits or one? One suggestion is that the set of skills associated with FYE could be incorporated into any course (like the current writing requirement "W"). There was agreement that requiring some kind of FYE is beneficial, but we need to discuss further what form it should take. We should solicit information about the current Project Breakthrough as to cost and effectiveness.

We should read "Placing Learning Communities and First-Year Seminars at the Core of General Education reform," supplied by Linda for the next meeting.

IV. Other new business: Meeting times for next semester. Discussion: There is no time when all members can make it Monday through Thursday. Friday afternoon at 1:00 is under consideration but there is some resistance to using Friday and not all committee members were present at this point. More discussion is needed to see if that time will work.

V. Adjournment: There being no other new business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, at 8:15 am.

Respectfully submitted
Bill Petkanas