

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Friday, February 26, 2010 10:00 a.m.

UEAC Members: Russell Lowery-Hart, Larry Garrett, Roberto Agüero, J. Michael Coleman, Shannon Carroll, Dani Day, Rex Peebles, Jeanie Hardin, Bill Waggoner, Agnes DeFranco, Richard Eglsaer, Donna Ekal, Ronald Swain, Marianne Hopper, Lynn Hoggard, Larry King, Cynthia O'Neal, Joyce Ritchie, Jeffrey Schonberg, Mark Smith, Celia Williamson

Coordinating Board Staff: MacGregor Stephenson, Kevin Lemoine, Anya Sebastien, Catherine Parsonneault, Lucy Bloor, Janet Beinke, Gabriela Borcoman

Guests: Danita McAnally (Amarillo College), Loraine Phillips (TAMU), Judith Bean (TWU), Neal Armstrong (UT, Vice Provost), Jenny Kennedy (UNT System), Rissa Potter (CPUPC), David Silva (UT-Arlington), Libby Barlow (UH), Brenda Nichols (LU), Edward Harpham (UT-Dallas), Kristin Harper (TAMU), Pamela Matthews (TAMU), Enrique Garcia, Jonathan Barraza

Absent: Juan Carlos Reina, Janna Arney, Jessica Woodward

MEETING NOTES

Introduction: Russell Lowery-Hart called the meeting to order at 10:02 am. He noted that the meeting was being webcast and was following the requirements of the Open Meeting Act. He outlined that the primary goal for the meeting was to reach a consensus on the core curriculum objectives.

I. Approval of Meeting Summary for November 13, 2009.

Meeting Notes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

II. Announcement/Introduction of New Committee Members

Russell Lowery-Hart welcomed the ten new UEAC members. The members introduced themselves, their institution, and position at the institution.

III. Election of a New Co-Chair (Community College Member)

Russell Lowery-Hart recognized Larry Garrett's term as co-chair of UEAC, with the Committee applauding Dr. Garrett's leadership as his term concluded. Dr. Lowery-Hart opened nominations to fill the Community College co-chair position. Rex Peebles was nominated by Agnes DeFranco. Nominations were closed with Dr. Peebles as the single nominee. A vote for approval by acclamation was called. The committee gave a unanimous affirmative vote with no abstentions. Rex Peebles will assume responsibilities at the next meeting.

IV. General Education Assessment Practices Survey 2009: Report from the Coordinating Board's Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) Staff Wendy Erisman

Dr. Erisman presented the results of the Assessment Practices Survey which outlines the comparison of assessment practices and methods, responsible parties of assessment, cycle of assessment, resources available, software utilized, VAS and standardized exams, and response and challenges to assessment outcomes at 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education.

Staff will distribute Dr Erisman's Power Point slides to committee members and others who request it.

Discussion: no questions or comments

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V. **Presentation of Recommendations from the Small Group Meeting (Jan. 20-21, 2010) Regarding Revisions to the Core Curriculum and Discussion of the Recommendations**

Larry Garret, Russell Lowery-Hart, Rex Peebles, and Agnes DeFranco, with assistance of Danita McAnally and Loraine Phillips, presented the results of their meeting regarding the development of Core Curriculum objectives and a potential framework for the core curriculum.

Larry Garrett began by reminding the committee why the core curriculum is being reconsidered. He referred to UEAC's Report: *Designing Texas Undergraduate Education for the 21st Century*, acknowledging changes in both SACS reaffirmation of accreditation priorities and changes in the culture of higher education during the past twenty years. He continued by presenting the existing parameters of the Texas Legislative and SACS requirements and the current framework of the core curriculum. Russell Lowery-Hart continued by reminding the committee of its resolution to replace the existing general education core curriculum outcomes, including the current Basic Intellectual Competencies, Perspectives, and component-area Exemplary Educational Objectives, with a set of learning outcomes developed to reflect current best practice and future needs. He continued with points for reconsideration of the core: the resolution approved by UEAC on 11-13-09, a summary of UEAC's "Likes and Dislikes" from 4-26-09, research resources such as AAC&U's LEAP initiative, Hart Research Associates' report, feedback from the Accountability System Peer Group Meetings, the UEAC *Designing Texas Undergraduate Education in the 21st Century* report, a comparison to other states' core requirements, and The Conference Board's "Are They Really Ready to Work?" report.

Based on this research, the work group determined four guiding parameters: alignment (with course learning outcomes, SACS, and institutional objectives); pedagogy changes; assessment; and current statutes and Coordinating Board rules.

Prof. Lowery-Hart presented the work group's recommendation for six new Core Objectives – Critical thinking skills, Communication skills, Quantitative literacy, Teamwork, Civic knowledge and engagement, and Ethical reasoning and action. Ronald Swain asked for clarification of language: learning outcomes vs. core objectives. Larry Garrett clarified that the work group discussed this terminology thoroughly and determined that "Core Objectives" was the appropriate language. The proposed framework for the core within the current statute might include 36 SCH for the core requirements comprising the eight foundational courses allowing for 6-12 SCH of institutionally chosen courses. Finally, the co-chairs outlined the potential questions and discussions that will continue, including implementation considerations, mapping core objectives to component areas, an appropriate number or variety of courses, the inclusion of upper division courses, the possibility of disciplinary tracks, and the possibility of pursuing statutory changes.

The floor was then opened for comments and questions.

Libby Barlow – assumption of course assessment – incorrect – clarified by LG

Richard Eglsaer questioned whether the skills embedded in many areas or independent to each component. Rex Peebles noted that it could be both. Some objectives lend self to be in some components. Russell Lowery-Hart reminded the committee that mapping of the objectives to components probably will be necessary. Rex Peebles commented that early sentiment was to toss out the entire core curriculum and start all over again.

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However, we must stay within statutory regulations. Current structure is not necessarily bad, but it can we improve upon.

MacGregor Stephenson stated his concerns that UEAC should take into consideration: a) how to identify when Core Objective is achieved, b) consistency across institutions to make sure Core Objective is covered regardless of institution taken, and c) how many objectives does each core course need to cover to be eligible to be call "core curriculum."

Discussion and comments continued from the co-chairs and MacGregor Stephenson concerning the next steps in the implementation process specifically that UEAC may need to make a decision about how many courses could be available in each objective or component while allowing for institutional choice, which components belong in which objective, etc. However, the main focus should not be on content but how to apply content to fulfill objectives. MacGregor Stephenson emphasized the importance of UEAC members talking to their institution's faculty and administration about the discussions by UEAC. Russell Lowery-Hart suggested that there should be way to seek input from the community also.

Before the lunch break, Larry Garrett assigned UEAC members to small breakout groups to discuss potential revisions the proposed Core Objectives. The visitors also were asked to contribute. The groups charge was to determine the positives and negatives of each Core objective and propose potential changes.

VI. Consideration of Recommendations from the Small Group Meeting (Jan. 20-21, 2010) Regarding Revisions to the Core Curriculum

At 1pm, the groups reconvened to discuss their findings. Each work group presented its findings concerning the proposed core objectives. Each objective was thoroughly edited and revised for vocabulary choice, clarification of objective, and inclusion. The February Work Group's proposed objectives, as a whole, were accepted but UEAC suggested the addition of "Scientific Inquiry."

The committee reached general consensus on all Core Objectives except "Personal Responsibility" and "Scientific Inquiry." A motion was not taken to approve any of the proposed objectives.

VII. Interim Assignments and Next Meeting Date (April 2010)

The proposed Core Objectives will be considered for approval at the next UEAC meeting. The co-chairs asked UEAC members to review the edits to the proposed Core Objectives and share with their institutions. Also, the co-chairs requested UEAC members consider the process for mapping of potential core objectives to component areas, the possibility of disciplinary tracks, and the general framework of the core curriculum.

Russell Lowery-Hart and Catherine Parsonault cautioned members to be aware of lobbying and respond that each comment will be considered by the entire committee. Lucy Bloor added that before any official changes are proposed the Coordinating Board will request comments and suggestions from institutions and members of the community.

VIII. Adjournment

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Before adjourning, Russell Lowery-Hart asked the committee to once again recognize Larry Garrett for his outstanding service to UEAC.
Adjourn at 3:25pm.