Liberal Education Program Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, October 3, 2012  
3:25- 4:45pm – ASC 201  
Meeting Minutes

Present: Polly Beals, Joe Fields, Liz Keenan Kim Laing, Wes O’Brien (recording), Elsie Okobi, Dave Petroski, Mike Shea, James Tait, Deb Weiss,

Call to Order—3:06

Announcements

• Joe Fields asked committee to keep in mind “Pathways to Academic Excellence” taking place Friday 10/12. Vince Breslin will speak on poisonous compounds in the local environment.

• Polly Beals thanked those who attended the symposium last week. Dean Fredeen is interested in having Ashley Finney (sp?) return to host an assessment program.

Liz Keenan mentioned a recent discussion in her class regarding employment and wages, which elicited a general discussion regarding the role of education in general and the role of liberal education in particular in preparing people for the workforce: what relationship does that goal have to the larger goal of preparing the “whole person” (so to speak) to lead a meaningful and satisfying life? During the course of this discussion, Polly realized that she wasn’t being strict enough and moved the committee on to consider old business.

Old Business—Tier 2 courses in first semester

The committee turned its attention to new data provided by Elliott, and further discussion regarding extending the policy of allowing students to take T2 course in the first semester commenced. Some time was spent trying to recall where the discussion had left off during our last meeting. The general question entertained: Should we extend for a period of 5 years the policy of allowing first semester students into a T2 course? Would such a policy satisfy the concerns, for example, of departments of Psychology and Nursing and the School of Business?

Points or questions raised included:

• Suggestion that there is not enough data upon which to make a final decision
• Members’ concern with discarding principal for practicality
• Question as to why students can’t take another “something” instead of a T2 course and the need for more “somethings” to be made available.
• Noted that the data seems to suggest that being in a remedial course has more negative impact on performance than not having completed one’s T1 requirements

The committee also discussed unanticipated practical problems resulting from LEP implementation. These included:

• Space, facility and faculty challenges impeding ability to offer enough courses
• Backlog on world languages and language lab
• Freshmen being required to take very early and very late classes as well as Saturday classes

The following motion was placed before the committee after a long discussion regarding whether or not it should read “either MAT 95 or ENG 110” vs. “MAT 95 and ENG 110.”
The LEPC moves to extend for 5 years the policy that freshmen may take one T2 course in their first semester with the understanding that students placing into either MAT 95 or ENG 110 are excluded. Comparison performance data will be collected annually to assess the impact of this policy. The motion failed miserably.

Discussion continued regarding:
- further discussion of “and” vs. “or”
- other possible distinctions or exclusions embedded in the language and the difficulties involved in tracking and maintaining complicated requirements and exclusions
- Whether or not both remedial courses impact possibility of success or if being good in one and not the other can indicate readiness for a T2 course
- the practicality and need for the 5-year plan
- how to ensure that comparison performance data will be collected and analyzed

The following motion was brought:
The LEPC moves that freshmen may take one T2 course in their first semester with the understanding that students who place into either MAT 95 or ENG 110 are excluded. Comparison performance data will be collected annually to assess the impact of this policy.
The motion passed unanimously
Meeting adjourned at 4:51
LIBERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Report to Faculty Senate for Academic Year 2011-2012

The following motions and business were approved or discussed by the LEPC during the academic year 2011-2012 and when appropriate, subsequently approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum (UCF). This represents the primary focus of business that was resolved during this academic year; please refer to minutes which are posted on the UCF website for further details regarding discussions surrounding these issues.

Summary of motions and important business approved during academic year 2011-2012:

9/7/11

Approved newly proposed Tier 3 form

Approved revision to Tiers 1 & 2 forms

9/28/11

Approved that the Director of the Liberal Education Program shall convene Tier 2 Affinity Groups based upon Areas of Knowledge as soon as possible

10/5/11

Approved Liberal Education Program Course Proposal Signature Sheet for Existing Courses that Require No Revision

10/12/11

Approved creation of Affinity Groups (AG) for the Tier 2 Areas of Knowledge (Area) as follows: The AGs shall be open to all interested faculty members. In accordance with the LEP document (p. 12), the goal of the AGs is to ensure continuous assessment and improvement of the courses in the Tier 2 Areas. The AGs shall convene regularly in order to:

- Share and review information regarding the curricula and pedagogies in the Areas of Knowledge.
- Determine at least one annual action item that would strengthen student success.

Coordinators

Each AG shall be chaired by a Coordinator to be selected by the Group for a one year term with a limit of three consecutive terms. The Coordinator shall have either had a Tier 2 course in the relevant Area approved or submitted as a proposal. It is recommended that
Coordinators receive appropriate reassigned time. The Coordinator shall facilitate faculty activities in each Tier 2 Area of Knowledge as required by the LEP Document and other university policies. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Convening and chairing AG meetings as needed
- Assisting the LEP Director in handling transfer student issues
- Communicating with those that teach in the Area
- Facilitating the sharing of syllabi and other instructional materials
- Serving in an advisory capacity to UWIC
- Working with the LEP Director

**Consultants**

Consultants are self-selected members of the AGs who have expertise in their Area and are familiar with the LEP course approval process. Consultants should be capable of assisting faculty members in creating or adapting courses in their Areas. The Coordinator of the LEP Director shall match interested faculty with Consultants. AG Coordinators may also serve as Consultants.

**10/19/12**

Approved primary (non-textbook) expository source definition for Intellectual Foundation Component for Tier 2 courses for Box E and Box E Explanation as follow:

**Box E**: Each Tier 2 course must assign at least one primary influential (non-textbook) expository source. Please indicate below how this source makes an influential argument about a major idea in the field.

**Box E Explanation**: The Liberal Education Program’s intellectual foundations goal of studying “influential arguments about major ideas” is achieved by incorporating one or more primary (non-textbook) expository sources into all Tier 2 courses. A primary expository source is usually a text, but there may be exceptions. If you anticipate others will teach this course, attach a brief annotated bibliography of alternative sources.

**10/26/11**

Approved revised Tier 2 form incorporating primary expository source definition and explanation approved at 10/19 meeting

**11/2/11**

Approved an additional year extending students the opportunity to take one Tier 2 course during their first semester
Approved Key element checklist for Tier 2 courses – checklist to be adapted for all Tier 2 areas and utilized by UWIC for proposal review as well to serve as an aid for faculty in creating courses

11/9/11

Approved that UCF make a request that proposers carefully consider the necessity of requiring a non-LEP prerequisite for T2 courses since this may have negative implication regarding students being able to access the LEP

11/30/11

Approved modification to the Multilingual Communication Key Element for Language Proficiency as follows:

From: Language Proficiency - Participating in interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive modes of communication at the following levels as defined by the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): western language – intermediate mid; non-western language intermediate low.

To: Language Proficiency - Participating in interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive modes of communication at the following levels as defined by the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): western language – intermediate low; non-western language novice high.

12/7/11

Approved resource resolution to be sent to the administration as follows:

Whereas SCSU exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

and whereas University administration has made a commitment to provide the resources necessary to support implementation of the Liberal Education Program (LEP);

and whereas Tier 1 courses should be completed as early as possible in a student’s program;

and whereas a concern has emerged regarding the unavailability of multilingual communication courses for many students during their first semester;

therefore be it resolved that University administration make it an utmost priority to provide the necessary resources to facilitate implementation of the LEP, e.g., the necessary sections for WLL.
Agreed that the following information be communicated by the LEPC Chair at the next UCF meeting:

The LEPC would like to remind the UCF that departments with concerns about the impact of the LEP on their majors’ ability to graduate in a timely manner should submit those concerns in writing to the LEPC Chairperson.

Agreed on the following guideline for transfer student placement:

**Spring 2012**

- Students entering SCSU with 15 credits and under are advised in the LEP.
- Students entering SCSU with 15-30 credits will have their transcripts evaluated by Academic Advising to determine which program will maximize their number of transferrable credits.
- Students entering with 30 or more will be advised as AUR students.

**Fall 2012**

- Students entering SCSU with 44 credits or less will be advised as LEP students.
- Students entering SCSU with 45-59 credits will have their transcripts evaluated by Academic Advising to determine the best program to maximize use of transfer credits.
- Students entering SCSU with 60 credits or more will be advised under the AUR program.

12/14/11

Approved change of language in undergraduate catalog as follows:

A waiver examination may be available for students who, as a result of prior experience, have proficiency in a subject area competency equivalent to that of a student who successfully completes a course. Students should see the department chairperson of the appropriate subject area, or, in the case of Technological Fluency or Critical Thinking, they should see the coordinator for that area.

2/15/12

Approved that granting a Tier 2 Mind and Body exemption to the Nursing Department is premature at this time until other options have been explored. The LEPC will assist Nursing in exploring these other options.

2/22/12

Approved that transfer equivalency requests submitted by institutions involving courses that do
not reasonably align with any SCSU course, but appear to fulfill an LEP category, be reviewed for suitability by the LEP Director; should the course be deemed suitable, it will be forwarded to UWIC for decision.

2/29/12

Approved that transfer equivalency requests submitted by transfer students involving courses that do not reasonably align with any SCSU course, but appear to fulfill an LEP category, be reviewed for suitability by the LEP Director in consultation with the LEPC Chairperson or his/her designee as needed.

Clarified that any Tier 3 course must be taken as part of the LEP - Credits for Tier 3 courses that are specifically designed for particular majors should go into the LEP in order to fulfill the 3 credit Tier 3 requirement (as opposed to 3 credits in the Department’s major). If the department currently has a capstone course that will either be modified to meet the Tier 3 requirements or designs a new course in lieu of the previous course, the department will need to submit a program modification in order to remove the 3 credits from the major.

3/7/12

Approved LEPC bylaws

4/11/12

Approved resolution to allow changes to LEP document as follows:

Whereas the UCF Constitution states that proposals concerning major changes to the University’s general education program shall be decided by faculty referendum¹,

and whereas the Liberal Education Program at Southern document ii allows for changes that do not entail major restructuring via the normal procedures for program revision iii,

and whereas the Liberal Education Program at Southern document does not define the phrase “major restructuring” in its section on amending the program, leaving the potential for multiple interpretations;

and whereas primary tenets of the Liberal Education Program at Southern include the program’s dedication to being dynamic, flexible, amendable and reformable as evidenced in the following excerpts, all directly quoted from the document (page7) iv, (page 7) v, (page11) vi, (page 14) vii, (page 51) viii;
therefore be it resolved that the following information be added to the Amendment of the Program section following the current paragraph\textsuperscript{ix} in the document:

Major restructuring refers to changes that would violate the fundamental structure of the program including 1) its characteristics (from 2005 faculty referendum), 2) basic curricular goals and 3) fundamental architecture, as outlined below:

1) Characteristics:
   - Concretely articulated goals
   - Curricular coherence throughout
   - Assessment and review to determine its success
   - Dynamic and amendable for improvement over time
   - Oversight through an elected liberal education faculty committee and a director
   - Flexibility in dealing with the needs of students, transfer students, and departments

2) Inclusion of basic curricular goals infused throughout the program\textsuperscript{x}:
   - Competencies—skills of intellectual inquiry and communication that an educated person should possess (providing a foundation for subsequent development)
   - Areas of Knowledge and Experience—multidisciplinary areas of inquiry with which an educated person should be familiar (approachable by more than one academic discipline)
   - Discussion of Values—conversance with a set of socially important values (familiarity with the values and their relevance to important societal issues rather than inculcation of particular values per se)

3) Fundamental architecture:
   - Inclusion of the three sequential Tiers 1) A foundation of basic competencies (Foundations), 2) Exploring Areas of Knowledge and Experience (Explorations), and 3) Integrating Competencies and Knowledge in a capstone experience that focuses on value-laden issues (Connections)
   - Programmatic Sequence and Recursion
   - Inclusion of concrete objectives for the curricular goals that utilize a Purpose statement and Key Elements\textsuperscript{xi} and assessment throughout the three Tiers\textsuperscript{xii}

\textit{5/2/12}

Approved pilot program for Information Literacy embedded competency to be implemented in fall 2012 with select group of Tier 1 courses

\textsuperscript{i} UCF Constitution (2010)


ii  Liberal Education Program at Southern (2009)

iii AMENDMENT OF THE PROGRAM
Amendment of the Liberal Education program that does not entail major restructuring will be pursued via the normal procedures for program revision. The Liberal Education Committee will play the role normally played by departments, and UWIC will be the subcommittee that reviews the proposal. Final approval will be conferred by a vote of the UCF (page 14).

iv In the “The Liberal Education Program” document approved by faculty referendum in 2005, the following points are included in Southern’s approach to general education:

- Dynamic and amendable for improvement over time
- Flexibility in dealing with the needs of students, transfer students, and departments when appropriate

v These goals, along with their stated purpose and key elements, can be modified and improved as times change and as the program undergoes assessment and review.

vi Assessment may take many forms and, as a system, is also susceptible to reform.

vii CONCLUSION
The Liberal Education Program at Southern is goal-driven, coherent, dynamic, and reinforces skills and knowledge at several levels. It is self-improving through the use of assessment, review, and subsequent modification. It provides students with greater choice while raising expectations for student performance. It allows faculty members flexibility and innovation while also holding the whole faculty responsible for student outcomes.

viii To ensure that the program will remain true to its original vision, continual assessment constitutes a critical element, along with regular opportunities for modifying the program to continue improving student learning and to reflect our evolving understanding of the changing world. Finally, the program has the flexibility to accommodate transfer and part-time students, along with full-time students undertaking all their coursework at Southern.

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x See Endnote iii

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xii See Endnote v