**FHSU Liberal Education Committee**

**Minutes**

Meeting Called by

Shala Mills, Chair

Date: Monday April 17, 2017

Time: 3:00-4:00

Location: Rarick 329

Members

Douglas Drabkin (AHSS)

Bradley Will (AHSS)

Dmitry Gimon (BE)

Jessica Heronemus (BE)

Kevin Splichal (Ed)

Teresa Woods (Ed)

Glen McNeil (HBS)

Tanya Smith (HBS)

William Weber (STM)

Tom Schafer (STM)

Robyn Hartman (Lib)

Helen Miles (Senate)

Megan Garcia (SGA)

Cody Scheck (SGA)

Cheryl Duffy (Goss Engl)

Kenton Russell (FYE)

Chapman Rackaway (Grad Sch)

3:03 (1 minute) All were present except for Garcia, McNeil, Rackaway, Russell, Scheck, Smith, Splichal, and Will. Miles served as proxy for McNeil. Established that a quorum was met.

3:04 (22 minutes) Chair distributed an article from *The Chronicle of Higher* Education, “Math Gets a Makeover,” by Shannon Najmabadi, for the committee’s consideration (no discussion), as well as the two handouts from the committee’s meeting four days ago. Then, for the benefit of the two committee members who were not at the meeting four days ago, Chair summarized the compromise proposal. See [minutes for April 13](http://www.fhsu.edu/liberaleducation/Meeting-Minutes/).

3:26 (22 minutes) Discussion began with a consideration of the two proposed gateway courses: “Orientation and Wellness” and “Reasoning and Inquiry.” Miles (and McNeil through his BlackBoard wiki post) expressed doubts that it would be beneficial to alter our current Personal Wellness course in the ways suggested by the description of “Orientation and Wellness” in the proposal. Heronemus similarly expressed doubts that the financial literacy elements in that description could be taught well in a course that shared the stage, as it were, with the health education elements. Woods suggested that it is too early to be talking about courses; we should be focusing instead on learning outcomes. Chair replied that there is, or has been, a strong desire among some committee members to talk in terms of courses, even though learning outcomes have not been identified. There was a brief consideration of the proposed “Reasoning and Inquiry” course. Miles wondered if it wouldn’t be a good idea to take this introduction to analyzing, evaluating, and formulating arguments and to the seven modes of inquiry and fold it in with Freshman Seminar. Woods reiterated her view that we should be discussing outcomes now, not courses. Chair took an informal survey of committee members to gauge whether the proposal ought to have a gateway section to the program, an orientation to college of some sort. There was nodding of heads.

3:48 (10 minutes) Heronemus wondered if critical thinking was getting too much emphasis in this proposal. Chair noted that reasoning is indeed focused upon to a far greater degree in the proposed program than in our current program, but that this is a good thing. Weber and Duffy concurred; this is one of the things we are trying to get right this time.

3:58 (10 minutes) Gimon looked at the overall proposal and asked where the foreign language requirement is. How can we take being “world ready” seriously if we don’t require even a smattering of foreign language? Chair suggested that “reality,” as she sees it, is “against this,” which is to say that it wouldn’t be practical (1) to ask the Modern Language department to offer 3-hour language courses as well as the 5-hour language courses they are currently offering, and (2) to expect students to study with us at FHSU if they can study elsewhere and avoid this requirement. Gimon replied that this is something we should speak with the Modern Languages department about.

4:08 (2 minutes) Woods forwarded a “stripped down” version of the proposal to the Chair, something less specific than the current proposal, and something that can perhaps be taken to chairs and other administrators for their consideration over the summer months. The committee did not discuss this stripped down version. There was general consensus, however, as the meeting drew to a close, that the committee would be willing to support something like the compromise proposal (very roughly: gateway/orienting courses, a sequence of reasoning-and-communication courses, an array of modes-of-inquiry courses, and broadening/integrating courses).

4:10 Meeting ended. The committee’s final two meetings for 2016-2017 will take place Thursday April 27 at 3:00 in Rarick 312 and Monday May 1 at 3:00 in Rarick 329.

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**Submitted by D. Drabkin, Recording Secretary**

