

GERTF Meeting

February 3, 2006

Members Present: John Ambrose, Sarah Ash, Samara Burnette, Mike Carter, Jo-Ann Cohen, Allen Dupont, Ken Esbenshade, Chris Gould, Karen Helm, Chris Kessler, March Krotee, Jerome Lavelle, Marian McCord, Jacquie Hawkins-Morton, Laura Severin, Joni Spurlin, Jordan Wallace, Kathy Wallace, Carrie Zelna.

Guests: Judy Austin, Instructional Development Program Coordinator; Maxine Atkinson, Director, First Year Inquiry Program; Alton Banks, Director, Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning; Ben Motal, student writer, "The Technician."

Associate Dean John Ambrose opened the meeting to order at 8:05. Ambrose moved to approve the Jan.20, 2006 minutes. Motion was approved.

Dr. Ambrose introduced the guests to the committee: Judy Austin, Maxine Atkinson, Alton Banks, and student Ben Motal. He informed the committee that Motal is a student writer for "The Technician" and will be sitting in on meetings and writing a series of articles on the group's work in the future.

- 1- Presentation from First Year Inquiry Guests
- 2- Discussion of Proposal B.2.
- 3- Next time ?

1) The committee's guests opened up the meeting with a summary of the First Year Inquiry (FYI) Program at NC State.

Maxine Atkinson explained how the program works, what kinds of courses are taught, and who takes these courses. FYI courses are GER courses with a limited class size and incorporate active teaching and learning through the use of Inquiry-guided learning principles. She passed out handouts with statistics and information about students who have taken FYI courses. Some of the information included students' sense of community as well as the number of sections offered by semester.

Discussion Highlights or Questions:

- Most GER courses are offered through CHASS and a lot are also offered from PAMS.
- Why only first year students?
- Why are there not FYI courses for larger classroom sizes?
- How many faculty teach FYI courses?
- How does the funding work? Where do the resources come from?
- From an estimated 4,400 entering freshmen, approximately 25% take an FYI course in the first year. (quoted from comments presented).

Alton Banks presented information about a pilot course from the past Fall semester, a Chem 100 course with about 130 students using an inquiry based method for the course. Banks had several teacher's assistants. One student was responsible for preparing demonstrations, making sure safety guidelines are met, and gathering the materials. The other student teacher assistants were

divided up over sections of the students to assist with lessons, experiments, and feedback. This course combined faculty, TA's, and students to engage them in inquiry based learning. Committee members asked questions about the student make-up of the course, the TA's work in the course, and the overall students' performance.

2) Committee thanked the guests and began discussion of the revised Proposal B (B.2). Marian McCord gave a brief summary of this proposal.

Key Elements:

- learning in classroom – course based with a set of core abilities and skills to learn
- learning in outside classroom experiences – forums, events, volunteer activities, presenters, etc.
- Limit to 30 credit hours for Gen. Ed program.

Discussion:

- Building respect and valuing diversity.
- Promoting interdisciplinary cooperation.
- Developing communication skills
- 2 seminar freshman courses – during the first year.
 - o Focus on a theme
 - o Make interdisciplinary and global connections
 - o Bring in guest speakers from disciplines.
 - o Focus on NC State community, opportunities and experiences.
- How are these experiences assessed? How is that worked into the program?
- Get students interested in making their own plan, reflecting at the end of the process, and sharing this with younger student coming in.
- How and when do you provide students with feedback? How do students make changes or transition their experience part of their plan?
- How do you monitor how the students are learning?
- Keeping in mind the logistical problem of requiring even just 1 course for all students.
- Suggestion: Flesh out the details of the 30 credit hours.

3) Next time: In the next meeting, the committee will pick up with Proposal B.2 at the beginning. Also, up for discussion will be revised Proposal A.2.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa McConnell.