

**GERTF Meeting**  
March 3, 2006

**Members Present:** John Ambrose, Sarah Ash, Andrew Barnes, Mike Carter, Jo-Ann Cohen, Allen Dupont, Ken Esbenshade, Louis Hunt, Chris Kessler, March Krotee, Marian McCord, Jacqui Hawkins-Morton, Jose Picart, Dan Robison, Laura Severin, Joni Spurlin, Kathy Wallace, Carrie Zelna,

**Guests:** Maxine Atkinson, Director, First Year Inquiry Program; Rex Smith (for March Krotee)

- 1) Dr. John Ambrose's Presentation
- 2) Minutes Approval
- 3) Summary and discussion of Proposal B.2
- 4) Discussion of "Requiring one course for all students"
- 5) Objectives in a required course: What are we looking for students to gain? (Flip Chart)
- 6) Attached Appendices: A, B, C (from Dr. Ambrose's presentation)
- 7) Next Time -

1. Dr. John Ambrose opened the meeting at 8:05 a.m. Before starting the morning's discussion, Dr. Ambrose presented slides sharing some recent data from Fall '05 Courses.

- Linked courses with same advisor, numbered in the chart in Appendix A. (Control Group)
- These students are FYI students, randomized and assigned into the FYI courses. Control groups taught by same advisor.
- The data showed 10 situations (by advisor) where students in Q Linked courses performed better and had better overall GPA's. (Please see Appendix A for how these sections compared).
- Linked courses, "Villages," and community groups set expectations for the student to foster future relations with faculty and campus community during their academic career. This can have a positive impact on their GPA and their academic experience.

2. Dr. Ambrose moved to approve the minutes from Feb. 3, 2006. Motion was approved.

3. Marian McCord briefly summarized Proposal B.2 for the committee, picking up from the last meeting's discussions. Some of the key elements of this proposal include defining learning outcomes and the setting in which they are achieved (i.e. tying learning outcomes to specific courses and experiences) and providing students with engaging experiences (internships, study abroad, volunteering, leadership activities, etc.). It is important to get students involved in their own education.

Students would take a freshman seminar focusing on the "freshman experience" and learning how to make connections. The second semester (or year), depending on how it was laid out, of this course would require students to develop a plan to have experience-based learning throughout their academic career. The senior level or capstone course would be a reflection type course that could

also be tied to the freshman experience so senior level students could share their experiences with freshman.

4) Open discussion around the problems or logistics of requiring even one course for all students as part of their GER program, such as a freshman seminar or capstone seminar.

Discussion:

- What if the program required a capstone course and the student failed the course? What would happen then?
- Could FYI courses be scaled up to a freshman group across the whole University?
- Capstone course would make assessment easier.
- What are the GER outcomes expected from a freshman seminar or capstone course? What do we expect the students to know?
- Discussion of English 101 and how there are certain “expectations” of learning outcomes from this course. Dr. Carter elaborated that ENG 101 introduces different ways of writing in different disciplines that gives students insight into different ways of thinking.
- If there was to be a required course for all students, what would be key outcomes?
  - o Provide critical thinking, discussion skills, and integration of thoughts and ideas across disciplines.
  - o Introduction to diversity and ethics.
  - o Engage the student in his/her learning experience.
  - o Sense of belonging & community.
- Could it include peer mentoring, resources and research interests?
- Such a course, were it to be required, would need some clarification on how it would apply to transfer students and meet the Articulation Agreement between community colleges and universities.
- Committee members suggested a linking of courses to provide a “Freshman Experience” and be a model to show students how disciplines are related and how to cultivate a learning experience with faculty and community.
  - o For example, linking 3 courses such as ENG 101, College Intro course (PMS, ALS, etc), or other IDS course, and a “freshman experience” course together to set the stage for guiding students in becoming engaged in their learning. This establishes a model for them to follow as they continue in their academic career.
- How can the university promote faculty involvement and motivation in a GER program that features linked courses or themes to build interdisciplinary perspectives?

Committee members also talked about the two models they’ve seen so far: FYI Courses: discipline based courses and FYC Courses: introduction to individual Colleges and the University as a whole.

There was also a brief discussion on using Summer orientation to elaborate on University experiences and opportunities. Would it be possible to provide a weeklong type orientation before the semester begins?

Any proposed program would also have to take into account how all the above objectives could be met in 1 course and how this would be accomplished.

5. “Objectives”: (Required course at the freshman level) – Flip Chart:

- Engagement: (Campus involvement and sense of belonging)
- Interdisciplinary
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Setting the stage (Perspectives and Holistic Views)
- Research I Institutions
- Diversity
- Global Knowledge
- The Arts
- Communication (Speaking & Writing Skills)
- Ethics training

6. Attached Appendices:

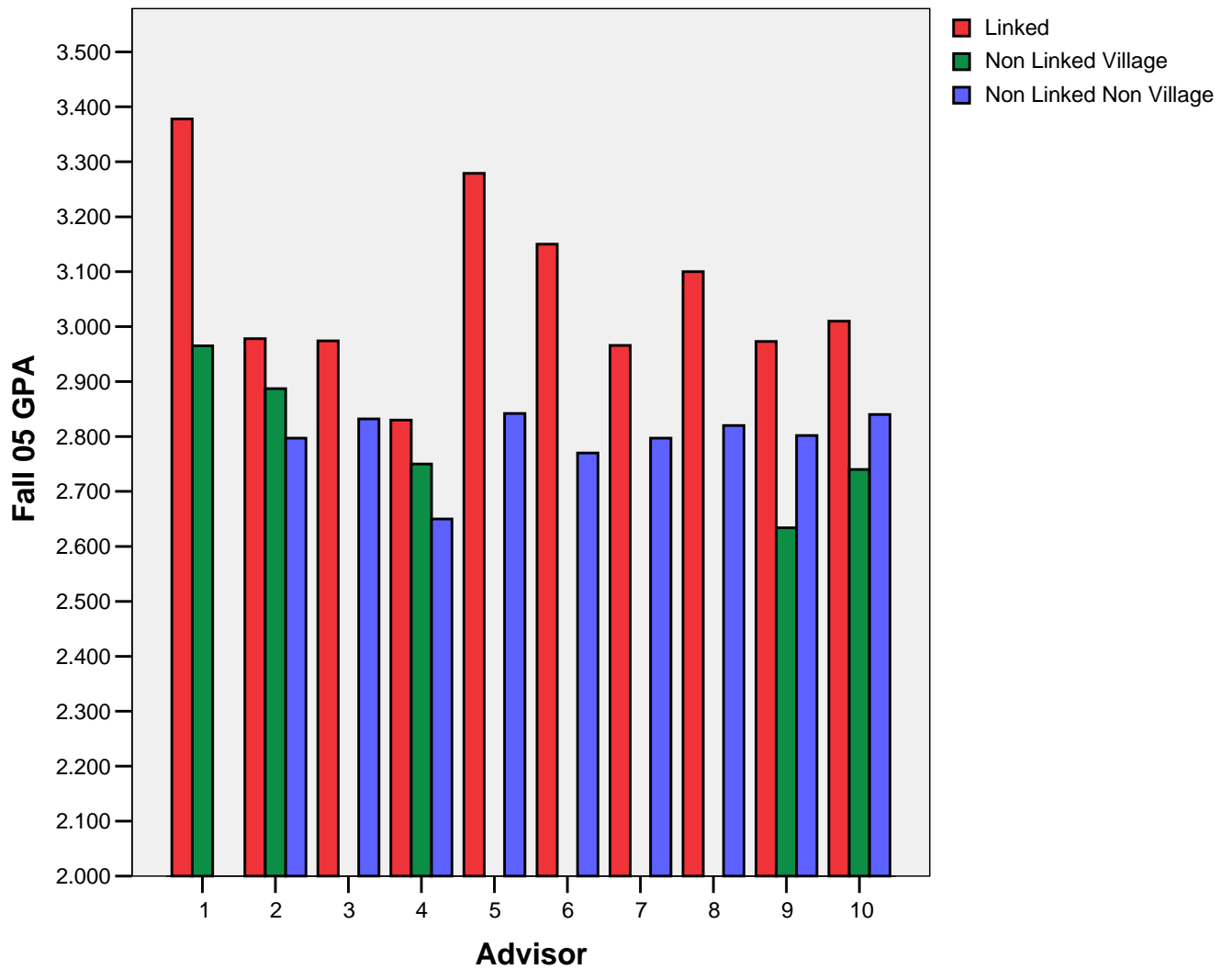
- A: “Comparison of Fall 05 of Students from Linked Versus Non Linked FYC Sections”
- B: “Fall 05 FYC: Descriptive Statistics”
- C: “Fall 05 FYC: Pairwise Comparisons”

7. Proposal Evaluation forms will be sent out to committee members to fill out and email back to be collated and examined at the next meeting.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa McConnell.

**Appendix A:**

**Comparison of Fall 05 GPA of Students from Linked Versus Non Linked FYC Sections**



**Appendix B:**

**Fall 05 FYC: Matched Adviser, N = 486**

**Independent Variables: LinkMAQnoQ**

**Dependent Variables: GPAHRS, SGPA**

**Covariate: AI**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	LinkMAQnoQ	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
<b>GPAHRS</b>	Linked	14.62	1.499	184
	MatAdvQ	14.18	1.655	76
	MatAdvnoQ	14.16	1.812	226
	Total	14.34	1.686	486
<b>SGPA</b>	Linked	3.076	.7352	184
	MatAdvQ	2.900	.7130	76
	MatAdvnoQ	2.759	.7635	226
	Total	2.901	.7577	486

**Appendix C:**

**Fall 05 FYC: Matched Adviser, N = 486**  
**Independent Variables: LinkMAQnoQ**  
**Dependent Variables: GPAHRS, SGPA**  
**Covariate: AI**

**Pairwise Comparisons**

Dependent Variable	(I) LinkMAQnoQ	(J) LinkMAQnoQ	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)	95% Confidence Interval for Difference(a)	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
GPAHRS	Linked	MatAdvQ	.439	.227	.054	-.008	.885
		MatAdvnoQ	.418(*)	.166	.012	.091	.744
	MatAdvQ	Linked	-.439	.227	.054	-.885	.008
		MatAdvnoQ	-.021	.222	.924	-.457	.415
	MatAdvnoQ	Linked	-.418(*)	.166	.012	-.744	-.091
		MatAdvQ	.021	.222	.924	-.415	.457
SGPA	Linked	MatAdvQ	.180	.096	.062	-.009	.369
		MatAdvnoQ	.268(*)	.070	.000	.130	.406
	MatAdvQ	Linked	-.180	.096	.062	-.369	.009
		MatAdvnoQ	.087	.094	.352	-.097	.272
	MatAdvnoQ	Linked	-.268(*)	.070	.000	-.406	-.130
		MatAdvQ	-.087	.094	.352	-.272	.097

Based on estimated marginal means

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).