

To: Karen Sprague, Robert Mercer
CC: Earl Potter, Kay Sagmiller, Mada Morgan, Dennis Slattery (U. Studies Comm.), John Sollinger. (U. Assessment Comm.)
Re: JBAC Campus Discussion on General Education & the AAOT; Jan. 12, 2007
From: Paul Steinle
Date: March 1, 2007

Premise

An open campus forum on “General Education and the AAOT” was held at SOU on Jan. 12, 2007 (a list of attendees, Appendix 1, is attached). During a two-hour meeting, the OUS Joint Boards and Articulations Committee’s (JBAC) September 2006 “Draft Outcomes and Criteria Statements” (see Appendix 2) were discussed and reviewed.

Associate Provost Paul Steinle gave a brief overview of the development of general education outcomes at SOU since winter 2003. University Studies Director Mada Morgan reviewed the new University Studies (general education) program at SOU, and CTLA director Kay Sagmiller led discussions of the proposed JBAC “Draft Outcomes and Criteria Statements.” JBAC representatives – Karen Sprague, U. of Oregon; and Robert Mercer, PSU – also attended the discussion.

Discussion

Sagmiller assembled the attendees into discussion groups broken down by the six OTM goal topics: Writing; Speech/Oral Communication; Mathematics; Arts & Letters; Social Science; and Science, Computer Science and Math (see Appendix 3.)

Sagmiller had analyzed the so-called JBAC “criteria” and, based on their characteristics, had broken them into three natural sub-categories: course content, instructional strategies, and “student learning outcomes.” She asked the SOU discussion groups to consider (a.) whether this sub-classification was correct and (b) whether any information should be rewritten to fit in another category.

Each group was also asked to review the JBAC “criteria” and evaluate whether there were any missing or unnecessary criteria. The groups’ complete comments are attached (see Appendix 4).

Findings

After this exercise was completed, there was an open discussion of informal impressions and recommendations. Paraphrasing the results of this discussion, here are the major findings of the SOU faculty review:

1. **Consistency** -- The SOU faculty respondents recognize the need for some course description and consistency to be used by OUS or JBAC in accepting or rejecting courses for general education and are encouraged by the state-wide efforts.
2. **Information literacy and critical thinking** – Neither information literacy nor critical thinking skills were included in the JBAC Draft Outcomes and Criteria Statements. These

skills seem to be fundamental to general education and should be addressed in these outcomes statements.

3. **Mixing content, instructional strategy and outcome criteria** –. In contrast to SOU’s model for general education, which focuses solely on *student learning outcomes* (and their accompanying proficiencies), the JBAC Draft Outcomes and Criteria Statements mix course content, instructional strategies, and student outcomes together. This lack of consistency in curricular language is confusing.
4. **Lack of Consistency** - Due to the inconsistent language in the JBAC document, some areas appear to be in need of greater revision than others. The JBAC Math “criteria” identifies six student learning outcomes; Writing “criteria” on the other hand, had only two learning outcomes, seven instructional strategies and three suggestions for course content. It is unclear which curricular information the JBAC document is clarifying: course content, instructional strategies, or student outcomes.

Building a General Education Curriculum from the SOU Perspective

SOU built its general education program on student learning outcomes for three fundamental reasons: (a) The “outcomes-only” approach gives instructors clear targets for what students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of their general education courses; (b.) the outcomes can be assessed; and (c.) the outcomes-only approach provides instructors leeway to design courses that will best support their students’ academic development and that will best utilize the instructor’s expertise.

To rationalize this process the SOU University Studies (general education) committee has documented a “**general education syllabus template**” (see Appendix 5 for a sample set of guidelines for Arts and Letters courses). These templates provide guidance to instructors designing general education courses and provide Curriculum Committees a documented *frame of reference* for reviewing syllabi. With these templates curriculum bodies can evaluate whether proposed courses are meeting the designated outcomes with appropriate content and appropriate instructional methods.

Summary & Recommendations

SOU supports the JBAC’s state-wide initiative to assemble and describe course criteria for general education courses. We suggest that information literacy and critical thinking learning outcomes be included in the JBAC Draft Outcomes and Criteria Statements.

After reviewing the activities to date, we also encourage JBAC to amend its “criteria-based” model and narrow it to an “outcomes-based” model. This simpler, more narrowly-focused approach would facilitate the process of creating a user-friendly, state-wide guide. We also believe that focusing on learning outcomes would better serve the diverse needs of state’s university and community college systems, for the reasons stated in this report.

Appendix 1

JBAC Campus Discussion on General Education and the AAOT
Southern Oregon University; Jan. 12, 2007

Attendees

SOU Faculty members

1. Chambers, Anne achambers@sou.edu
2. Harvey, Dan harveyd@sou.edu
3. Levin, Eric Levine@sou.edu
4. McBee, Joan mcbeej@sou.edu
5. Morgan, Mada morganm@sou.edu
6. Ruggerio, Alena alena.ruggerio@sou.edu
7. Slattery, Dennis slatterd@sou.edu
8. Stillwell, Craig stillwec@sou.edu
9. Vidmar, Dale vidmar@sou.edu
10. Whitman, Elizabeth whitmane@sou.edu
11. Young, Laura lyoung@sou.edu
12. Yates, Kemble kyates@sou.edu

Ex-officio

1. Mercer, Robert (PSU) Robert_mercer@ous.edu 503 725-5735
2. O'Bryon, Laura obryon@sou.edu 541 552-6223
3. Sprague, Karen (UO) KUS@uoregon.edu 541 346-1246
4. Sagmiller, Kay sagmillk@sou.edu 541 552-6447
5. Steinle, Paul steinlep@sou.edu 541 552-6114

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Appendix 3

JBAC Campus Discussion on General Education and the AAOT
Southern Oregon University; Jan. 12, 2007

Review Teams

SOU Faculty members

- I. Writing
 - a. Morgan, Mada morganm@sou.edu
 - b. Young, Laura lyoung@sou.edu
 - c. Stillwell, Craig stillwec@sou.edu

- II. Speech/Oral Communication
 - a. *Did not review*

- III. Mathematics
 - a. Harvey, Dan harveyd@sou.edu
 - b. Yates, Kemble kyates@sou.edu

- IV. Arts & Letters
 - a. Vidmar, Dale vidmar@sou.edu
 - b. Whitman, Elizabeth whitmane@sou.edu
 - c. McBee, Joan mcbeej@sou.edu
 - d. Levin, Eric Levine@sou.edu

- V. Social Science
 - a. Chambers, Anne achambers@sou.edu
 - b. Ruggerio, Alena alena.ruggerio@sou.edu
 - c. Slattery, Dennis slatterd@sou.edu

- VI. Science, Computer Science and Math
 - a. Harvey, Dan harveyd@sou.edu
 - b. Yates, Kemble kyates@sou.edu

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Appendix 5

JBAC Campus Discussion on General Education and the AAOT
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General Education Syllabus Templates

Attached are two samples :

- 1.) **Guidelines for Exploration course: Strand E – Arts and Letters** (humanities)
 - a. This document is a set of guidelines for designing an Arts & Letters course that is designed to meet SOU's general education learning outcomes for A&L.

- 2.) **Goals and Proficiencies Evaluation Sheet; Standard E: Arts and Letters** (humanities).
 - a. This is a screening document. It is a template that SOU's general education curriculum committee uses to evaluate whether proposed courses are addressing the targeted learning outcomes for A&L.

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Guidelines for Explorations Course E – Arts & Letters

Course number and title: _____

Instructor(s) name(s): _____

.....
▪ Course frequency: fall winter spring summer ▪ Next term/year scheduled: _____
-- Please circle as needed.

1. Course Design

- a.) What questions will students investigate in this course?
- b.) How does this course address each of the goals of Strand E-Humanities and their proficiencies? (All proficiencies do not need to be met with the same emphasis, but each should be present to some degree.)

To be considered as an Explorations Course, at least one goal must be considered “primary,” with all proficiencies clearly present in the assignments and design of the course. An “addressed goal” will have proficiencies that students will be exposed to during the term but may not have specific emphasis. Please check each goal as either Primary or Addressed.

E. Arts and Letters

Recognize human accomplishments in the arts and humanities and understand their role in clarifying individual and social values.

SOU defines study in the arts and humanities as focusing on intellectual and cultural expression approached through historical, cultural, and aesthetic investigations and interpretations.

Goal 1.

Understand basic formal elements, principles, and composition structures in written, oral, visual, or performed texts, works, and/or artifacts.

 Primary Addressed

Proficiencies: Students will be able to

- a. Describe how technical, organizational, and aesthetic elements in human expression reflect ideas and emotions.
- b. Classify and compare intellectual and artistic endeavors according to recognized criteria and genres.
- c. Understand how differences in form affect meaning.

Goal 2.

Understand how cultural and historical factors impact the creation of written, oral, visual, or performed texts, works, and/or artifacts.

 Primary Addressed

Proficiencies: Students will be able to

- a. Compare works from different time periods and cultures.
- b. Demonstrate how cultural and historical forces influence a creative process.
- c. Analyze individuals' creative processes within a specific art and/or discipline.

Goal 3.

Understand how the reception of texts, works, and/or artifacts influences individuals, cultures, and societies.

 Primary Addressed

Proficiencies: Students will be able to

- a. Explain how individuals respond differently to intellectual and artistic endeavors.
- b. Recognize and explain how intellectual and artistic endeavors influence cultural and societal assumptions and values.
- c. Recognize and explain how intellectual and artistic endeavors change culture and society.

2. Assessing Student Progress in Designated Primary Goal(s)

What tasks (activity, assignment) give the students the opportunity to display the proficiencies in the primary goal(s)? Examples could be testing, papers, presentations, team projects, or specific oral or written assignments.

3. Presence of Foundational strands:

Briefly describe how this course gives students the opportunity to use their skills in these areas:

- a.) **Communication** - Communicate effectively in various ways: written, oral, and visual.
- b.) **Critical Thinking** - Use appropriate modes of inquiry, including identifying and framing problems, investigating and supplying evidence, and conceptualizing.
- c.) **Information Literacy** - Access and use information resources effectively and ethically.

4. Syllabus (condensed):

The requested condensed syllabus should include documentation addressing the following issues. (Schedules and similar details are not required, but may be included.):

- a.) Course description (same as catalog copy or longer as needed).
- b.) Learning objectives of the course.
- c.) Required texts or other media.
- d.) Other – please add any other relevant materials needed to explain the goals and teaching methods of this course to the reviewing committees.

Instructor

date

Reviewed and approval signature:

Chair/Program Director

date

Goals & Proficiencies Evaluation Sheet: Explorations Strand E - Arts & Letters

Course Information			
	Department	Course ID	Course Title

Faculty Information	
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Strand E - Recognize human accomplishments in the arts and humanities and understand their role in clarifying individual and social values.

Goal 1. Understand basic formal elements, principles, and composition structures in written, oral, visual, or performed texts, works, and/or artifacts.			
Proficiencies: Students will be able to			
	EXPLICIT	IMPLICIT	Not Present
a. Describe how technical, organizational, and aesthetic elements in human expression reflect ideas and emotions.			
b. Classify and compare intellectual and artistic endeavors according to recognized criteria and genres.			
c. Understand how differences in form affect meaning.			

Are all proficiencies EXPLICIT?	Primary Goal	
Are any proficiencies IMPLICIT?	Addressed Goal	
Are some proficiencies NOT PRESENT?	Revise to Meet Goal Expectations	

Goal 2. Understand how cultural and historical factors impact the creation of written, oral, visual, or performed texts, works, and/or artifacts.			
Proficiencies: Students will be able to			
	EXPLICIT	IMPLICIT	Not Present
a. Compare works from different time periods and cultures.			
b. Demonstrate how cultural and historical forces influence a creative process.			
c. Analyze individuals' creative processes within a specific art and/or discipline.			

Are all proficiencies EXPLICIT?	Primary Goal	
Are any proficiencies IMPLICIT?	Addressed Goal	
Are some proficiencies NOT PRESENT?	Revise to Meet Goal Expectations	

Goal 3. Understand how the reception of texts, works, and/or artifacts influences individuals, cultures, and societies.			
Proficiencies: Students will be able to			
	EXPLICIT	IMPLICIT	Not Present
a. Explain how individuals respond differently to intellectual and artistic endeavors.			
b. Recognize and explain how intellectual and artistic endeavors influence cultural and societal assumptions and values.			
c. Recognize and explain how intellectual and artistic endeavors change culture and society.			

Are all proficiencies EXPLICIT?	Primary Goal	
Are any proficiencies IMPLICIT?	Addressed Goal	
Are some proficiencies NOT PRESENT?	Revise to Meet Goal Expectations	

Foundation Goals Present (Must have at least one):

	Present	Not Present
A – Communication		
B – Critical Thinking		
C – Information Literacy		

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	Yes	If NO	Comment
Are ALL goals and proficiencies present?			
Is at least one goal PRIMARY (100% explicit in all proficiencies)?			
Is at least one Foundation Goal present?			
	Approve		Revise & Resubmit

Approved for Explorations	
Please Revise and Resubmit	