

General Education Committee  
November 29, 2012  
10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Mason Hall, D101

**Attending:** Janette Muir (Chair), Dominique Banville, Rick Diecchio, Kelly Dunne, Kim Eby, Becky Ericson, Doug Eyman, Marcy Glover, Stephanie Hazel, Mack Holt, Frank Allen Philpot, Hugh Sockett, Mark Uhen, Peter Winant

**Out:** Cliff Sutton, Carol Urban

### Vision Statement – Kim Eby

President Cabrera has tasked the faculty and staff with the creation of Vision and Mission Statements for the University (who are we and who do we want to be). Once this process is complete the University will move to strategic planning. Kim Eby is a member of the “Mission, Values and the Mason Graduate” Working Group. She shared with the gen ed committee the background of the project, the work to date, and requested their feedback on “concepts that should be captured by our mission statement, our core values, and signature characteristics of a Mason Graduate.” Kim shared a questionnaire (Handout #1) with the committee which was followed by a thirty minute discussion after several minutes of quiet reflection. If you would like more information about the working groups or the project in general, please go to [vision.gmu.edu](http://vision.gmu.edu).

### Proposals for Discussion

#### **GAME 210 – IT ONLY – RETURNED FOR REVISION**

After general discussion it was decided that the course would be returned to the author/unit for revision. It was requested that more information be provided. The committee feels that this course would intuitively meet the requirement, but as currently written, it is difficult to determine if and how the learning outcomes are met. They need more information on how the work is completed (how do they do it; what are they doing). The committee requests a more detailed syllabus and that the author map out the assignments to the learning outcomes so they can see exactly how they are met.

#### **GAME 490 – SYNTHESIS – APPROVED**

### Revision of General Education Proposal Forms

The committee members requested the following changes to the proposal forms: explicit mapping of learning outcomes to assignments; the weekly schedule of lectures and readings.

### Discussion of Synthesis Category

This is a difficult category to assess. Many departments use this as the capstone to the major. What can we do to improve this category? Should it be a general education requirement or a major requirement as the capstone?

- Decouple from the capstone – it should not serve a single discipline, but several
- There is very little room in many majors to do this, often due to accreditation or state regulations.
- The assessment revealed that the critical thinking is either missing or a weak component of the course.
- The synthesis assessment went well; the critical thinking assessment did not.

TASK – If synthesis is somewhere else – what would it look like?

Recommendations to revise learning outcomes:

- #1 need to add performance and visual
- #2 is most problematic
  - Remove “from two or more disciplines,” let them explain the connections
- #3 is clear

If we move the requirement to the department level, the Faculty Senate must approve first. We are allowed to make minor changes/clarifications without a Senate vote.

Janette would like to have a full package to take to the Senate, followed by the Board of Visitors, rather than one category at a time.

Janette requested that the last meeting (December 13) be a working meeting to discuss the learning outcomes for the overall program. We would like to change the language in the catalog and we have until February to do so.

#### General Education By the Numbers

Marcy has created a spreadsheet that shows the general education inventory by enrollment, FTE and empty seats. The report is broken down by category to show the impact of changes to the curriculum. Janette has been instructed that any changes to the general education program must be budget neutral. Marcy will add additional break downs by college, 100/200 and 300/400 level courses and post in the org. She will also include the spreadsheet that shows courses not taught in the past five years. Currently there is no mechanism to automatically remove courses for dormancy.