

The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments  
Council Weekend #4  
January 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Academic Affairs Committee Minutes  
Room 107**

Director: Brant Porter

Associate Director: Conner James Mangan

Minute Taker: Donnesha McBride

*January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 Academic Affairs Committee Minutes*

- Meeting called to order
  - The meeting was called to order at 8:30 p.m. on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 by the Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan.
- Introduction of Speaker
  - The Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan introduced the speaker for the committee meeting.
  - Janet Schulenberg is:
    - an associate director of the Division of undergraduate studies here at Penn State with a PH.D in Anthropology.
    - Tonight she will be speaking to us at the co-chair of the General Education Oversight and Planning Task Force.
    - The other two co-chairs are:
      - Mary Beth Williams- Professor of Chemistry and Associate Dean in the college of Science
      - Maggie Slatteruy- Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Program Coordinator for Biomedical Engineering.
- Speakers' Presentation - Janet Schulenberg
  - Background of General Education for the University:
    - Around 1974 the university developed a program that was required for all Penn State bachelor of arts students
    - In 1982 the university turned it in the bachelor of degree requirements, which looks like the general education requirements today.
    - 1997 was the last time general education was thoroughly looked at and revised
    - In the 2000s higher education started paying more attention to general education and the purposes of higher education.
  - THINK Group:
    - Mary Beth Williams was an original member of the THINK Group
    - Penn state put together a study group called THINK group to look at general education nationwide and compared it to what Penn state was doing and identify some places Penn State could do better.
    - Main purpose of the group was to modernize general, challenge faculty and students to create opportunities.

- March 2013 identify the task force identified the main areas Penn State could look into.
- TASK Force identifies issues at Penn State:
  - The task force took up some issues and started looking at ways the university could do an obvious job at general education.
  - One of the things the TASK force started doing was taking the message out on the road.
  - Spring semester of last year, a group came to regional campuses and invited people to polycom in, spoke with faculty and students about general education and the opportunities for growth.
  - Students at commonwealth wanted a real desire to connect with general education and skills needed in real life, on the job, make it practical and make it transparent (the TASK force is on board with accomplish this goal).
- Learning Objectives:
  - TASK Force has identified a set of learning objective that is focused on developing learning objectives that are based on what the university currently does well, Penn state mission and values.
  - Attended an AACU, met with expertise scholars and betted ideas based on research and came up with seven key objectives.
- An effective General Education curriculum shall facilitate teaching and learning through seven key object.
  - a. Effective Communication- the ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchanged, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.
  - b. Key Literacies- the ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts.
  - c. Critical and Analytical Thinking- the habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion.
  - d. Integrative Thinking- the ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information.
  - e. Creative Thinking- the capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.
  - f. Global Learning- the intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures
  - g. Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning- the ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of setting.
- Senate Report:
  - The Report contains a summary of the logic for redeveloping the revised goals for general education and the learning objectives. The further detailed in a massive report was submitted to faculty senate last October, which is all available on the website [gened.psu.edu](http://gened.psu.edu).
  - The senate will vote on the report Tuesday, January 27, 2015.

- Concerns about the report from students, faculty and staff:
  - What would this really mean?
  - How will this change things at Penn State?
  - How will this impact the way faculty teach?
  - The number of course sections that will be required.
  - The impact of student's ability to move from campus to campus.
  - How will students transfer in with other credits?
    - The TASK force has kept these all of these concerns in mind but does not want it to stop them from thinking big about what the task force can and should do.
- Fundamental commitment to foster student learning:
  - Even amongst the concerns, the commitment to fostering student learning is a positive aspect.
  - Offered the students the kind of education they deserve and the education the schools says they offer to students.
- How can this work?
  - Faculty has to understand the seven key objects, the content of their course but the other learning objectives that the course is required to accomplish.
  - Defining creative and innovative ways to accomplish the goal.
  - Paying more attention to teaching.
- How do we help faculty hired on a fixed termed basis?
  - What are some resources to help?
  - The connections that needs to be path for them?
  - What are the rewards and recognition?
  - What are some ways we can protect them?
- 2 Report submitted to Senate- Institution support and resources for general education:
  - Recommendation 1- Faculty senate voting to ask the president and provost to provide support through an interim university faculty lead strong structure for general education collaboration support assessment and research. (This would be available to serve all Penn State campuses and instructors).
  - Recommendation 2- President and Provost will work with the TASK force and appropriate senate committees in figuring out what exactly is needed. (The TASK force will ask for support and help figure out what is needed along with the president, provost and committee).
  - The idea in the recommendation is; the strength of curriculum is only as good as the teaching that is a part of it.
  - The TASK force will have to find a systematic way to make it a focus and priority.
- Objectives are:
  - teachable, measureable
- As a whole, are we achieving what we set out to accomplish as an institution?
  - In some areas we are doing great and in others there are gaps.
  - As an institution, this will allow the university to seal those gaps.
- Gened.psu.edu:
  - The general education report can be found on the website.
  - All questions, comments, advice and concerns can be placed on the website.
- Speakers' Closing Message- Janet Schulenberg

- Thank You:
  - Thank You for having me, I really appreciate it.
- Closing Message
  - Brant Porter (Director of Academic Affairs) Thank You Janet Schulenberg. We will discuss more of general education tomorrow.
- Announcements
  - Connor James Mangan (Associate Director of Academic Affairs) bring your thinking caps and voting hats tomorrow.
- Adjournment
  - The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 by the Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan.

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Academic Affairs Committee Minutes

- Meeting called to order
  - The meeting was called to order at 2:05p.m.on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015 by the Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan.
- Introduction
  - Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan introduced themselves to the committee.
- Roll Call
  - Campus Roll Call
    - Abington- Present
    - Altoona- Present
    - Beaver- Present
    - Berks- Present
    - Brandywine-Absent
    - DuBois- Absent
    - Erie (The Behrend College) - Present
    - Fayette- Present
    - Harrisburg- Present
    - Hazleton- Present
    - Lehigh Valley- Absent
    - Mont Alto- Present
    - New Kensington- Present
    - Schuylkill- Present
    - Shenango- Absent
    - Wilkes-Barre- Present
    - Worthington Scranton- Present
    - York-Absent
- Gen Ed. Reform Resolution
  - Amendment to the Gen Ed. Reform and Common Scheduling Resolutions
    - Bryan (Schuylkill): I believe we should amend the theme approach to chosen topics.

- Keith (Fayette): Is GETF CCSG acronym or the general education task force acronym?
      - Brant and Connor (Academic Affairs Directors) GETF is the general education task force acronym.
    - Bryan (Wilkes-Barre): I would like to make a statement. We are asking for less credits of the gen eds credits to be require for graduation but after that we say we want a larger amount of general education classes offered. You're not contradicting yourself but it seems as if you're asking for something irrational.
      - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs Committee) Instead of students being limited to general education courses, they would be able to have a diverse selection of general education courses. More geneds touching on the learning objectives gives students more options to relate to their field more.
    - Ryan (Wilkes-Barre): I agree, but wouldn't that be covered more with what the task force is doing? I think we would change the direction of what the task force is doing, instead of altering the amount of courses offered to students.
    - AJ Fink (Altoona): I think we should focus more on the classes and objective than credits. Focusing on the classes and objectives is realistic than focusing on credits at this point.
    - James (Abington): If we are saying we support what the task force has, for example the learning objectives and the institution, that would mean we are supporting 25 credits, so that means we are not supporting this bill.
    - Awele (Abington): Where did you get the number 40 and did you want a reduction of required general education courses?
      - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs) the number 40 is used as an example.
      - Connor (Associate Director of Academic Affairs) we wanted a straight reduction.
    - Awele (Abington): I actually sat on the gened task force 2 months ago when they came to Abington. I was saying that there should be a reduction on general education courses required. As we research the perfect number of geneds credits, we noticed that 45 credits is actually a really good number. It works for the institution and there is no other number. If anything the number of geneds courses required would increase before decreasing.
      - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): so we will remove the clause that mentions anything about credit numbers.
  - ***Revised Gen Ed. Reform Resolution is being read for approval.***
    - Josh (Beaver): What is the engaged scholarship and why is it capitalized?
      - Brant and Connor (Academic Affairs Directors): It is a program at Penn State.
    - Voting:
      - In Favor- 30
      - Opposed- 0
      - Abstentions- 0
- Common Scheduling Resolution
  - Review of what the Common Scheduling consist of:

- Connor (Associate Director of Academic Affairs): All commonwealth campuses and University Park will be on a common schedule and have the same common hour.
- Brant (Director of Academic Affairs) in general the schedule is very similar to what we currently have now. Everyone would be on the same time scheduling and this will give students the opportunity to take classes at other campuses.
- Thoughts of Common Scheduling:
  - Josh (Beaver): I like the proposal but I would like to say one thing. As I was talking to my chancellor, she was saying she does not like the common scheduling because a 20-25 minute wait between classes for the commonwealth campuses would be too long of a wait time for students and faculty. She suggested that University Park has its own scheduling while the commonwealth campuses have a combine common scheduling.
  - Edgar () what are the cons for this common scheduling?
    - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): There is flexibility for scheduling and it allows students to travel to different campuses to take classes not offered at their campus.
  - Elly (Worthington Scranton) Doing regionalization scheduling of campuses that already share majors would be better than common scheduling for every Penn State campus. Doing common scheduling would push students back one semester or maybe a year or two.
  - Josh (Beaver): At the beaver campus, we have a lot of people who are in the industry coming back for a business or communication degree. Our classes and scheduling times are designed where people can have classes only from 8:00am-12:00pm and all of your classes could be done. Common scheduling would mess our system up for our non-traditional population, at least for the beaver.
  - John Shaffer (CCSG President): All presidents received the common and hour scheduling in October.
  - Ryan (Wilkes-Barre): I agree that there should be regional common scheduling. It still keeping the differences between different campuses that share the same majors, faculty, and student population.
  - James (Abington): I think the common scheduling would be a great idea. It keeps the one university geographically dispersed going, instead of one university split in three ways.
    - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): There are more pros than con for common scheduling.
    - John (CCSG President): What opportunities can we provide to other campuses with this common scheduling?
  - Victoria (Mont Alto) how would common scheduling tie tuition rate?
    - Conner James Mangan (Associate Director of Academic Affairs): We have never discussed the rate of tuition due to common scheduling. There is no data for that area pertaining to common scheduling. We were given the spread sheet of common scheduling and common hour.
  - Keith (Fayette): There is something designed in the system where you register for your classes your main campus and then you have to ask permission to take classes at another campus.

- Awele (Abington): The common scheduling is not changing what we are doing now. It is just another option for students. Just like hybrid classes are an option, you choose what you can do.
        - Ryan (Wilkes-Barre): Yes, that sounds good but that is not what is happening. We are running into a situation where, there is no longer a way you can complete a degree of AOJ at the Wilkes- Barre campus. They do not offer class, so now AOJ students are forced to go to another campus or do polycom in order to complete your degree in four years.
        - Keith (Fayette): There are many ways you can complete a degree other than driving to another campus. The University is trying to find a commonality in scheduling courses for students to complete their degree. Everyone is not going to agree to the common scheduling.
      - Is this something we should continue?
        - Marine: I think we need another quest speaker for this topic. In my opinion I do not think all of our questions have been answered.
          - Conner James Mangan (Associate Director of Academic Affairs): I will get John Shaffer to get another quest speaker for March council.
  - Academic Credit for Student Leaders Formal Discussion
    - Thoughts of Academic Credit for Student Leaders:
      - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): Essential student leaders would get credits for going above and beyond the average student as far as leadership.
      - James (Abington): Do any campuses already give credits for student leaders because Abington SAG does?
        - Awele (Abington): It is one credit per semester but it is conducted as a courses. Abington SGA advisor gives us a syllabus the first meeting of the year with requirements in order for us to get the credit. It is based like a course but an experience at the same time.
        - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): The syllabus makes giving the credit more structured for student's leaders.
        - Awele (Abington): It does. For example if you have a student leader who is slacking, they could possibly not get credit. We have to give journals, reports and other things for the grade.
- Everyone agrees to academic credits for student leaders!!!***
- Topics for next time
    - Open Suggestions:
      - Keith (Fayette): In regards to lion path, the board is thinking about getting rid of late drops and letting students take the courses over multiple times. I don't know it that is something we would like to discuss next council.
      - Keith (Fayette): Discussion on waitlist and watch list before it is implemented in to lion path system.
      - Preferred Scheduling for student leaders
      - Brant (Director of Academic Affairs): Re-take courses not begin averaged into students GPA.
  - Adjourn
    - The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m. on January 24, 2015 by the Academic Affairs Director Brant Porter and Associate Director Conner James Mangan.