**Charge**

This *ad hoc* committee is charged with a comprehensive review of the Core Curriculum, Millsaps general education program. The final product of the committee’s work will be a proposal to the Faculty of a Core Curriculum built around well-defined Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). My hope is that we emerge from this process with a coherent general education program that is constantly improving by way of routine, thorough assessment based on student performance and outcomes. The Core Curriculum should also be both relevant to and easily understood by current and prospective students and parents. The focus of the review will be on developing a curriculum that serves all students and maximizes the potential of their Millsaps education. We should also be deliberate about linking the Core Curriculum to the unique and distinctive components of a Millsaps education.

**Background**

This committee will build on the recent work of several groups. Mike Galaty, then Core Directory, led a Core Working Group in the fall of 2011. The result of this group’s work was a clear message from the Faculty that we did not need to “nibble around the edges” with our Core Curriculum; we needed to do a comprehensive review. The Student Learning Outcomes subcommittee of the College’s Assessment Committee, led by Patrick Hopkins and Marlys Vaughn, also worked throughout the fall of 2011 and produced a report, presented to the faculty in the early spring of 2012. A group of five faculty members and the dean attended an AAC&U General Education Workshop in New Orleans in February. This group also produced a report that has been made accessible to the *ad hoc* Core Review Committee. Finally, the Academic Excellence strategic planning committee, co-chaired by the dean and Bill Storey, made several recommendations relevant to the College’s general education program. The Academic Excellence Committee’s report has also been presented to the *ad hoc* committee.

**Committee Makeup**

Jamie Harris (chair), James Bowley, Connie Campbell, Anita DeRouen, Blakely Fender, Amy Forbes (temporarily replaced by Anne MacMaster), Megan James, Julian Murchison, Penny Prenshaw, Holly Sypniewski, Marlys Vaughn, Keith Dunn (*ex officio*)

**Timeline**

- Present well-defined and assessable SLO’s to the Faculty for formal approval during the fall of 2012. This means having the recommendation from this committee for the October faculty meeting, so the faculty can act on it in November.
- Break into subcommittees for researching different aspects of general education and identifying model programs in the fall of 2012. Examples might include:
  - First year experience
  - Living and Learning Communities
  - Civic Engagement and Professionalism
  - Business Education
  - Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning
  - Creative and Performing Arts
  - Cross-Cultural Issues
  - Writing Program/Freshman Seminars
  - Culminating Educating Experiences (Capstones)
- Core Curriculum Proposal to Faculty for discussion/action by the end of the spring 2013 term.
- Course Development (Faculty) and Approval (Curriculum Committee), fall 2013-spring 2014.
What’s getting in the way of your general education reform?

Campus Curmudgeons and Disinterested Parties
Resource Limitations
Campus Tradition and Established Programs
Turf Wars and Enrollment Drivers
Questioning the process: WHY are we doing this?

Choose a table designated with a problem you’re facing and share your experiences.

Garnering Support through Meaningful Revision of Your Curricular Proposal

Holly Sypniewski, Keith Dunn, Jamie Harris - Millsaps College
February 20th 2015
Who We Are and Where We Started

- Affiliated with United Methodist Church
- Located in the Heart of Jackson, MS
- Approximately 1000 Students, 90 Faculty
- Degrees: BA, BS, BBA, MBA, MACC, EMBA
- Phi Beta Kappa, AACSB Accredited

Who We Are and Where We Started

- Shared Governance
- 3 Divisions
  - Arts and Humanities
  - Sciences
  - Else School of Management
- Faculty meets and votes as a whole, no senate
Who We Are and Where We Started

Campus Climate

• 2011-12 was a VERY busy year (Dean’s first)
• Year-long Strategic Planning (began previous spring)
• Program Review of All Academic Departments
• SACSCOC 10-year Reaccreditation Process
• Began discussions about modifying our Core
• Low enrollment causing budget deficits

Who We Are and Where We Started

Core Background

• 22-year-old Core Curriculum
• 40-year-old, 4-course Interdisciplinary Heritage Sequence
• Designated Core in Arts and Humanities
• Largely distribution in Social and Natural Sciences
• Unsuccessful Efforts in fall 2011 at modest adjustments
I. How to Develop an Aggressive Timeline

Committee Information

- Consensus building starts with committee makeup
- Shouldn’t be the Curriculum Committee
- Goldilocks size considerations
- Combination of appointment for experience and skill set and elected for representation

Millsaps Committee (12 members)

**Appointed (8)**
- Core Director
- Writing Director
- SLO Development
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Cross-Culture Issues
- *Heritage* Director
- CEL/Civic Engagement
- First-year Experience (Student Life)

**Elected (4)**
- Business School (2)
- Arts and Humanities (1)
- Sciences (1)
I. How to Develop an Aggressive Timeline

Divisional Breakdown (very important at Millsaps)
- Arts and Humanities – 5
- Sciences – 4
- Else School – 2
- Student Life – 1
- Dean

Leadership Roles

Chair, elected by committee
- Face of the group to faculty
- Set agenda
- Communication conduit

Core Director
- Provides college-wide perspective
- Lead in preparation/research (AAC&U meetings)
- Organizer, task master, and morale officer

Every Member
- Provide consistent updates through divisional meetings
- Receive and pass on faculty input/reaction
- Participate fully in consensus building in Faculty
Leadership Roles

Dean

- Give clear charge
- Determine scope of project, empower committee
- Define timeline, hold feet to fire
- Voice of authority for resource allocation
- Make sure all voices are heard and considered

I. How to Develop an Aggressive Timeline

Clearly Identify Intermediate Milestones

- Faculty Approval of SLOs (Fall ‘12)
- Research Group Work (Fall ‘12)
  - 1st Year Experience
  - Civic Engagement
  - Culminating Experiences
  - EAB Reports
I. How to Develop an Aggressive Timeline

Clearly Identify Intermediate Milestones

• Proposal to Faculty by end of Spring ‘13
• Develop Assessment Tools and Process (Spring ‘13 – Fall ‘13)
• Course Development and Approval (Fall ’13 – Spring ’14)
• Launch Curriculum in Fall 2015

II. How to Build and Sustain Momentum

Set the Stage Correctly at the Start

• Location
• Atmosphere
• Time
• Tenor
II. How to Build and Sustain Momentum

Outline Your Process

- Minutes
- Repository of Information
- Meeting Agendas and Email Reminders
- Consistent Rules for Moving Forward
  - Will you have votes?

II. How to Build and Sustain Momentum

Build in Moments to . . .

- Retreat from Campus
- Break into Small Groups
- Celebrate Accomplishments and Victories (no matter how small)
II. How to Build and Sustain Momentum

Don’t Let the Bastards Get You Down

• Keep meeting
• Use the Committee to Provide Moral Support
• Know When to Change Your Process –
  • shift from large group to small group meetings
  • use breaks for more intensive work

III. How to Maintain an Open Dialogue

Opportunities for Faculty and Staff Feedback

• Face-to-Face
  • Standing Monthly Meetings
  • Faculty Meetings
  • Division Meetings
  • Chairs Meetings
  • Faculty Fora
  • Focused, Small Group Discussion
  • Hall Talk
III. How to Maintain an Open Dialogue

Opportunities for Faculty Feedback

• Electronic Media
  • Campus-Wide Survey (Anonymous and Private)
  • Moodle (Public)
  • Invited Email Input

Opportunities for Community Feedback

• Student Focus Groups
• Student Body Association
• Alumni
• Short Presentations to Board of Trustees
IV. What Really Happened?

Proposal Submitted on time, Sept. 9th 2013

- Many avenues for discussion: two faculty meetings, survey, faculty forum, division and chairs meetings
- Vote planned for Faculty Meeting on Oct. 8th 2013
- Emergency Small Group Meetings
- Decision to Postpone the Vote and to Revise the Proposal, Sept. 29th 2013

Proposal – Round Two, December 3rd 2013

- Same avenues for discussion: faculty meeting, two faculty fora, division and chairs meetings
- Vote planned for Faculty Meeting on Feb. 11th 2014
- Q&A Sessions on Individual Parts of Proposal
- Affirmative Faculty Vote, Feb. 11th 2014
  - 81% of faculty in favor
V. What Did We Change?

- Added
  - Experiential learning requirement
  - STEM requirement
- Altered the Fine Arts requirement to include both production and analysis
- Radically Redesigned First-year Experience
- Removed
  - J-term course
  - Senior Capstone Course
  - Intermediate Assessment point