

Social Sciences Department Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2013

1. ATTENDING

Jared Bartels	Truman Bass
Cynthia Chausse	Kathy Clark
Mark Cole	Tom Donaldson
Terri Heck	Mark Herman
Sabine Maetzke	David McLaughlin
Randy Moffet	Brian Page
Marty Roland	Eric Seelau
Sheila Seelau	Tom Stahl
Harold Van Boven	Laura Weir
Phil Wisely	

2. DR. KATHY CLARK

- Dr. Clark briefly explained her decision to step away from the chair of the Social Sciences Department.
- She spoke about the increasing scope and responsibilities for the QEP program.
- Volunteers were requested for any of the numerous committees functioning this year for QEP.
- Several faculty members expressed their gratitude for her leadership during her time as Chair.

3. GENERAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

- Dr. Page reported several important points that emerged from the Gen Ed Task Force meeting held earlier this morning.
 - The report recommends 15 Core hours per subject
 - As noted in Professor Van Boven's narrative, Economics is not one of the recommended Core courses for Social Sciences.
 - Implementation of the Core course requirements is scheduled to take place in the academic year 2014-2015. The implementation *might* be delayed until 2015-2016.
 - The rationale for the specific Social Sciences course recommendations is not clear however, Dr. Page posited the choices were based on the need to have course credits transfer to other institutions and enable students to finish college in an expeditious manner.
 - Dr. Harrel would like our response as a department no later than Thursday, January 31st.
 - If anyone has further questions or comments, please follow up with Dr. Page.
- Professor Harold Van Boven submitted a narrative to Social Sciences faculty that expressed, in part:
 - The learning objectives for Social Sciences in the Draft Recommendations Report highlighted behavioral, social, and cultural issues but neglected to include economic issues as an important aspect of behavioral sciences.
 - Economic literacy is essential to the basic core college education.

- ○Edison State College should offer either ECO 2013 (Principles of Macroeconomics) or an Introduction to Economics survey course that includes the basic concepts of both Macro and Micro Economics.
- Dr. Sheila Seelau stated that decisions for Core requirements should be driven by data that demonstrates the most commonly taught Social Sciences courses across the United States and not by what our department currently offers.
- Dr. Donaldson made the point that the suggested Core courses had an obvious global/international bias to them while basic courses American history or American government were neglected. He also suggested the option of reciprocity with other local institutions if there would be a time lag of getting new Core courses approved through curriculum committee.
- Dr. Philip Wiseley submitted a written narrative on the broader consideration of the required Core courses for Social Sciences. Dr. Wiseley noted that his narrative made the following points:
 - The rationale for required Core courses revolves around two principles: a) move students through a degree program in an expeditious manner and b) reduce the costs of degree programs to the students.
 - The recommended Core courses for Social Sciences defeats these two goals.
 - First, several courses not listed on the Core courses list must be taken to fulfill requirements for several degrees. Business degrees require both Macro and Micro Economics. Both Education and Nursing degrees require Human Growth and Development. Pre-law degrees require both American History and American Government.
- ○Students pursuing any of these degrees will find their course of study to actually be longer and more expensive (and, therefore, worse) than the current constellation of courses offered by the Department of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Herman made a motion, “Economics should be included in the required ‘Core’ course requirements for Social Science.” The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.

4. HONORS COLLEGE INITIATIVE

- Dr. Herman introduced an initiative Dr. Edith Pendelton is working on known as “The Honors College”
 - Edison State College historically has offered this option to students.
 - Building on the existing program, which has begun to regain vitality, the Honors College would offer a reliable sequence of Honors classes for cohorts of qualified students at each campus.
 - Courses would be customized according to the discipline interests of that cohort (Humanities, Leadership, STEM, Creative Arts, etc.)
 - Additionally, the Honors College would offer:
 - a. International study
 - b. undergraduate research opportunities
 - c. generous scholarships
 - d. guest lectures and seminars designed to invigorate the mind.
 - e. Purposeful use of dormitory space
 - f. Valencia College has a thriving Honors College (donor-named) with international study and other opportunities embedded. This

is a good model to begin the consideration of developing an Edison State College Honors College.

- Professor Van Boven noted Dr. Pendelton would need to seek finding and/or donors for the initiative
- Professor McLaughlin stated an Honors College would be a great public relations idea.
- Dr. Maetzke asked how many students would be involved in such a program.
- Dr. Herman noted currently there about 50 students who receive the Honors Scholarship which comes out of Foundation funds.
- Dr. Page suggested another feature of the program would be a partnership with other Florida institutions with an offer of automatic admission with the successful completion of the Honors College program at Edison.
- Dr. Herman requested feedback from all faculty to bring back to Dr. Pendelton.

5. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Dr. Maetzke has generously offered to present the workshop for Social Sciences in the TLC Wednesday, February 6, 2013. The topic is TBA.
- The next Community of Practice meeting will be held March 6, 2013.
 - The workshop will help faculty who are required to administer a “Common Assessment” for courses involving DE students.
 - Canvas can be used to embed the common assessment.
 - a. Students can take the assessments through Canvas.
 - b. Canvas can score the tests and generate the assessment data needed for the assessment narratives that need to be reported to the state.
 - c. This is important because the Department of Institutional Research is no longer offering this support to faculty. Using Canvas is one solution.
 - d. Computer labs can be reserved on each campus to administer and proctor the assessments.
 - Dr. Wiseley noted Canvas needed to be checked for glitches as he has been told that certain cohorts of DE students don’t get populated into Canvas.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- Dr. Maetzke requested Psychology faculty to contact her.
 - Courtney Overstreet of McGraw-Hill would like to present options regarding the “Connect” program either Friday, February 1st or Friday February 15th at 1:00PM.
 - Psychology faculty need to respond to Dr. Maetzke with their preference no later than Friday, January 18th.

7. APPENDIX A- NARRATIVE SUBMITTED BY DR. PHILIP WISELEY RE: SOCIAL SCIENCES CORE COURSE RECOMMENDATIONS

The stated goal of the General Education revisions and reduction in hours from 36 to 30 was to reduce the cost and time for students to complete their degree.

The reduction in the number of classes seems like a reasonable strategy - and for some areas of study this might be reasonable. Unfortunately in Social Sciences we are a very diverse group of related fields of study. For our area, this strategy will likely have the opposite effect (both increasing the expense and the length of time for students to graduate. Here is why:

1) Majors often use, recommend, or require particular Social Science general education classes because of particular needs of students that plan to work in particular occupations.

2) Because of limited resources most schools do not have all fields of Social Science represented. The fields that are represented are often simply driven by the occupational needs of students.

3) When a class meets a General Education requirement - typically three groups of students enroll in the class. First, some students take the class simply because it satisfies a general education requirement. Second, some students are majors in the area that the general education class is offered (e.g., History majors taking History classes). Third, some students are advised to take the course - they major in another area and are advised to take a particular Social Science General Education course because it is more helpful to their field of study.

The problem with Social Science is that we are made up of a variety of fields of study that exceed five. The unintended consequence of having the state select five and only five courses in Social Sciences for the entire state is that it creates an added expense for individual schools. It creates an added expense because schools tend to emphasize those Social Science offerings that best meet the needs of the students at that particular institution. The actual occupational needs of our students will not change - we will still offer the classes we need to satisfy the occupational needs of students - but we now have an added burden of ADDING instructors to cover Anthropology.

Solution:

In our area of Social Science it would make much more sense to simply require reciprocity in the Social Science category. Allow colleges the flexibility to offer the Social Science offerings that best serve the needs of the students at that particular institution. What does make sense is to simply mandate reciprocity in Social Science across the state. Then a student that satisfies the Social Science portion of the General Education requirement at one school - automatically has satisfied it at all other Florida institutions regardless of the specific course taken.

**8. APPENDIX B: NARRATIVE SUBMITTED BY PROFESSOR HAROLD VAN BOVEN
RE: ECONOMICS REQUIREMENTS IN THE CORE COURSE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

General Education Core Course Options
Pursuant to Section 1007.25, Florida Statutes

Adding ECO 2013, Principles of Macroeconomics, to the core course options for the social sciences

Recommended by Edison State College

Prof. Harold Van Boven

January 9, 2013

The Initial Draft Recommendations, December 2012 reads:

Social Sciences

Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local and global.

PSY X012	Introduction to Psychology
SYG X000	Principles of Sociology
WOH X040	20 th Century World History
CPO X001	Comparative Politics
ANT X000	Introduction to Anthropology

Reasons to include or add ECO 2013, Principles of Macroeconomics, to the core course options for the social sciences.

(1) Economics is the only social science to receive the Nobel Prize, technically the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences. It was established by the Bank of Sweden in 1968, thus making it a rather recent addition to the Nobel series. The first Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded in 1969.

Many technological innovations arose from the work of Nobel laureates in chemistry, physics, and medicine. But we must remember that this scientific knowledge became useful knowledge through the mechanisms of economics. With the guiding signals and incentives of the price system, entrepreneurs can determine from all the many technologically feasible projects those that are most likely to survive. Absent this knowledge of economics, technological ventures will be afflicted by a systemic waste of resources.

(2) British economist Lionel Robbins gave a good definition of economics (1932): “Economics is the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means (resources) which have alternative uses.” Scarcity, a condition of life, implies that what everybody wants adds up to more than there is. This means that people are forced to make decisions. Those decisions and their consequences can be more important than the resources themselves. Thus there are no easy win-win solutions but usually only agonizing trade-offs. The best that we can do is to promote the efficient allocation of resources, but always recognizing the limits of what is possible. Unfortunately, some wants will go unsatisfied, some moral efforts will linger unfinished, and some social injustices will remain. This is the soul of economics, limited resources, opportunity costs, and the material well-being of society as a whole.

(3) Understanding the economic issues discussed in the media, examining the pros and cons of markets and commerce, and deciding how we should use our material gains to improve our personal and civic life all requires knowledge of the basic principles of economics.

For example: Our nation's gross domestic product increased last quarter. What is GDP?

The unemployment rate fell last month from 9.8% to 9.2%. Why might this be bad?

What is the difference between the public debt and the deficit? What are the sources of the public debt? Will an ever increasing public debt bankrupt America?

Why will the War on Drugs enrich the foreign drug lords and increase crime in America?

If the price of a product either increases or decreases, under what conditions will the firm's total revenue and, thus, consumer expenditures, increase?

We can render two cheers to the market, but not three. Why?

Why is there a permanent shortage of kidneys for transplant in America?

Policies which led to inflation under Alexander the Great have led to inflation in America, thousands of years later. How is this possible? What is the commonality between then and now?

What are the economic roots of our environmental crisis?

Many economic disasters have been the result of policies intended to be beneficial and those crises could have been prevented if policy makers and the public had a better understanding of economics. A good example is the recent real estate boom and crash.

In 1970 economist and Nobel laureate George Stigler said: "That the public does concern itself more frequently with economic questions . . . is a true and persuasive reason for its possessing economic literacy. The public has chosen to speak and to vote on economic problems, so the only question is how intelligently it speaks and votes." The conceptual, analytical nature of economic thinking is a transferable skill that benefits all members of society.

(4) Economics creates beauty. Just fly over America, or any developed nation, and you will see miles of perfectly cultivated land, well-ordered ribbons of highways, vibrant

centers of urbanization, and awe inspiring wilderness areas. It's beautiful to look at. That's the aesthetic look of the market. The public must understand that the role of the market is to rearrange scarce resources in an attempt to create more value and thus more beauty.

(5) Economist Ludwig von Mises once said (1949): "The body of economic knowledge is an essential element in the structure of human civilization; it is the foundation upon which modern industrialism and all the moral, intellectual, technological, and therapeutical achievements of the last centuries have been built. It rests with men whether they will make the proper use of the rich treasure with which this knowledge provides them or whether they will leave it unused. But if they fail to take the best advantage of it and disregard its teachings and warnings, they will not annul economics; they will stamp out society and the human race." The best hope for civilization is for people to acquire, along with competency in other disciplines, economics literacy. The best hope for progress towards this goal is for the General Education Steering Committee when making its decisions and marginal adjustments to the core course options is to include economics as one the gen ed requirements.