

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES [OCTOBER 17, 2012]

Members Present: Joe Palardy, Robert Beebe, Rebecca Curnalia, Julie Felix, Hillary Furhman, Abby Kulisz, Peter Reday, Guy Shebat, Greg Sturuss, Alan Tomhave

Meeting commenced: 10:00 am

The minutes for the September 24th meeting were approved.

The agenda for the meeting was announced as follows:

1. State of the ROAD project
2. Current proposal for the assessment of the Knowledge Domains
3. Ideas for assessing Communications and Math
4. Development of criteria for approval of the capstone courses
5. Changes to the submission forms and the possible development of Rubrics to help with the submission and approval procedure

The meeting focused exclusively on item 1, the ROAD project.

Angela Messenger provided an update on the ROAD project. After a review of the two phases of the project (submission of papers from Writing 2, English 1551, and submission of capstone writing projects from across the disciplines), Angela noted three concerns that arose from the Spring 11 pilot assessment of capstone submissions:

1. **READER LIMITATIONS.** The quality and credibility of the assessment of capstone documents might be compromised if all the ROAD readers are English Department instructors (with limited cross-disciplinary experience).
2. **LACK OF SUFFICIENT CONTEXT FOR SUBMISSIONS.** Very few of the capstone submissions contained information about the writing assignment or the required documentation style.
3. **DIFFICULTY ASSESSING CRITICAL THINKING.** The capstone submissions, in some cases simply summaries, often made it hard for readers to judge critical thinking on the part of the writer.

Discussion focused primarily on item 2. For item 1, Angela noted that any additional readers would need to go through the ROAD assessment training process. For item 3 it was noted that, ideally, all capstone writing assignments should engage the students in forming conclusions.

For item 2, the committee arrived at the following recommendations:

- Each department should designate a ROAD contact person to whom questions could be directed about submitted documents.
- If possible, instructors in designated ROAD submission capstone courses should do the following:
 - note on their course syllabus that a particular course assignment will be submitted to ROAD
 - provide students with a digital version of the directions for (or a description of) the writing assignment that students will be asked to submit to ROAD
 - provide students with a common set of directions for how to prepare and submit their document to ROAD. [This common set of directions would be made available digitally to instructors by the General Education Committee chairperson.]

Additional discussion on ROAD focused on what departments can/might do to help ROAD meet its goals:

- Departments (or chairs) should reevaluate their designated ROAD capstone course to make sure that the selected course integrates that department's key learning outcomes and goals.
- Departments should consider ways to link the ROAD assessment document to general department assessment procedures, particularly those procedures dealing with the department's capstone course.

Meeting concluded: 11:00 am
