

Minutes of the Council of HEOs March 19, 2009

Opening:

The third general meeting of the Council of HEOs for the academic year 2008-2009 was convened by President Carina Quintian at 12:15PM in room 630T.

Members Present:

A list of members present is attached.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes for the meeting on November 18, 2009 was made by Nancy Marshall and second by Irene O'Donnell.

Announcements:

Secretary Nilsa Lam acknowledged the amount of responses received for the Elections Committee. The selected members for the Elections Committee – based on the order the emails were received – are Katie Pszeniczna, Paul Giovine, Anila Duro, Jean Louis, and Judy Coverdale. This year, the Elections Committee is charged to tally the votes for the College Council Elections. Details on meeting dates and logistics will be emailed to the committee members.

President Carina Quintian announced that Bill Devine is the elected HEO representative on the HEO Screening Committee. There will be no consideration for step increases this year. Only reclassifications will be reviewed. Bill also advised those members who are up for reclassification to make sure that the arguments for reclassification are strong. The first HEO Screening Committee will be held in late April.

President Carina Quintian announced on behalf of Frank Marousek that the CUNY Alliance and its candidate will be in room 610T at 3:15PM today. HEO members are encouraged to attend the meeting since CUNY PSC leadership voting is coming up.

New Business:

The Executive Board is also planning workshops for staff professional development. As part of the College's effort to prepare staff for crisis management, the Executive Board is working with Dr. Lewis-Coles and her counseling team to offer a workshop dealing with students or staff facing crisis. Once the Executive Board works out the details with the Counseling Office, an email will go out to the members.

Nominations for the College Council:

Nancy Marshall
Sandra Palleja
Helen Cedeno
Katherine Killoran

An email will be sent to the above members in order for them to formally accept nominations. Members are also welcome to self-nominate or nominate another member to the College Council. There are 5 positions for HEOs on the College Council in which one is a non-voting alternate. One of the members on will also be selected to be on the Executive College Council Committee. The Executive College Council Committee will decide on agendas set for all College Council meetings.

Budget and strategic planning updates will be sent out in a separate email.

Professor Amy Green, chairperson to the General Education Task Force, along with Vice President of Enrollment Management Richard Saulnier, Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies Jose Morin, and Professor Valerie Allen were invited to speak to the Council on the General Education Report. Professor Green and Dean Morin noted that in looking at the general education component of a degree program, it is important that general education courses provide the foundation that will build on to higher level courses. General education should not be a separate entity to the major. Equally important is that the general education portion should be a living document and should be changed as the needs of our students and degree requirement changes. Furthermore, there should be a common educational experience for all students who graduate. It can be a course or a seminar that future alumni can say they have all experienced. Vice President Saulnier noted that many of our graduates are transfer students who have either completed or are exempted from our general education requirement. Thus, creating this common course/experience becomes more difficult. Professor Allen pointed out that as new majors are created at the College, it is important to consider including academic departments that are current not included in the general education requirement.

The Council is advised to pay special attention to the principles part of the General Education Report. The Task Force urges the Council to review the General Education Report and provide any suggestions or observations from your own dealings with students, as alumni of the College, or suggestions provided from the staff that report to you. The General Education Report is available on *Inside John Jay* under Resource Center. Suggestions and questions should be sent to Professor Amy Green agreen@jjay.cuny.edu.

Agenda for Next Meeting:

No notations.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Carina Quintian at 1:15PM. Next Council of HEOs meeting is April 23, 2009 at 12PM in room 630T.

Minutes submitted by: Nilsa Lam

HEO Meeting Attendees

March 19, 2009

	Last Name	First Name
1	Carrington	Janice
2	Coverdale	Judith
3	Crespo-Lopez	Sylvia
4	Davis	Christopher
5	Devine	William
6	Dikambi-Caldwell	Judith Sandrine
7	Doney	Michele
8	Duro	Anila
9	Greenfield	Jessica Lynn
10	Kaci	Agron
11	Lam	Nilsa
12	Louis	Jean
13	Marshall	Nancy
14	Mendes	Susy
15	O'Donnell	Irene
16	Palleja	Sandra
17	Parker	Debra
18	Phillips	Anthony
19	Quintian	Carina
20	Rutherford	Sandra
21	Scaduto	Michael
22	Silva	Lucy
23	Sukhan	Premwati
24	Tatro	Kimberly
25	Torres	Doris
26	Trimboli	Dana
27	Ward	Cherryanne

Executive Summary

The Task Force on General Education was convened in the Spring of 2007 by Jane Bowers, who was then Dean of Undergraduate Studies and is now Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Bowers charged the group to study General Education at John Jay, at our sister CUNY campuses, and at colleges and universities around the country and to produce a report to the community that would help us to assess the status of our nearly four-decades-old General Education program in the contexts of a national General Education reform movement and a parallel CUNY-wide initiative. This report is the result of the Task Force's research and deliberations. It does not propose a new or modified curriculum but rather lays out an array of issues and options that may guide curricular development.

“General Education is so important to our students that institutions should always be seeking to improve the program,” says a leader in the field.¹ John Jay's General Education program was first developed in the 1960s and underwent revision in 1975 and 1989 when requirements in ethnic studies, philosophy and physical education were added. In the 1990s, the General Education program requirements were reduced slightly because CUNY mandated a cap of 120 credits for the baccalaureate degree at all campuses. Beyond these minor modifications, however, the structure of the program has remained essentially unchanged for more than thirty years.

The Task Force found that the original design, intent, and coherence of our General Education program have eroded over the years, due in large part to fiscal constraints and a lack of program oversight, and that today's students and faculty are neither aware of its pedigree nor excited about teaching or taking the courses. By examining both traditional and innovative General Education programs at institutions from the Ivy League to urban community colleges, the Task Force discovered a wide variety of designs and strategies that might serve as models for revitalizing our own program. For example, while our current program is foundational—all of the courses are at the 100 and 200 levels—many campuses have General Education programs that scaffold the undergraduate experience from first semester to senior year.

In June 2008, six members of our Task Force attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Institute on General Education, a selective, annual program that brings together campus representatives and national and international experts in establishing goals and devising General Education programs tailored to the specific needs of individual institutions. One of the most important ideas the team brought back from the experience was the value of adopting a set of transparent learning objectives, not just for the General Education program, but across all aspects of the undergraduate curriculum, including majors and co-curricular activities (e.g., internships, study abroad, service learning, club activity, student governance, etc.).

The report offers two sets of goals and objectives gleaned from the Task Force's multi-faceted study of best practices in General Education. First are the Proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College. Second are Guiding Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College (see pages 3 and 5). The Task Force invites the College community to participate in a campus-wide conversation about the Learning Objectives and

¹ Ann Ferren. “Models of General Education,” AAC&U Institute on General Education (2008), p. 1.

Guiding Principles so that they can be revised and presented for adoption by the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards and, ultimately, by the College Council in Spring 2009.

The report is organized into seven chapters on

- Rethinking General Education at John Jay College
- The Process and Methodology used by the Task Force on General Education at John Jay College
- The History and Status of the General Education program at John Jay College
- Proposed Institutional Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College
- Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College
- Models of General Education
- The Future of General Education at John Jay College

John Jay's General Education program is poised at the confluence of sweeping transformations. We are witnessing the rapid emergence of what President Jeremy Travis calls "the New John Jay." Among the many changes underway, we are in the process of phasing out associate degree programs and transitioning to senior college status; raising admissions standards; reintroducing liberal arts majors; reorganizing academic departments; and assimilating more than 145 additional tenure-track faculty hired since 2005. We are also stepping up our emphasis on global study, implementing educational partnerships with the six CUNY community colleges, and preparing to welcome the additional transfer students those partnerships will channel to the College in the next couple of years.

In this context, the Task Force offers its findings and is excited to welcome the rest of the faculty, as well as students, staff, and administrators into the conversation about the purpose, goals, and strategies that will re-shape our General Education program. Over the coming months, members of the Task Force will meet with the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Standards, the Council of Chairs, the Faculty Senate, the Council of Coordinators of Majors and Programs, the Student Council, and individual departments when invited, to hear feedback on the report and its recommendations.

We understand that discussions about changes to John Jay's General Education program have been difficult in the past and that caring and well-intentioned people may hold widely divergent views about what will best serve the College and our students. The Task Force intends the process of sharing our findings and collecting reactions to be positive, transparent, and inclusive. We are confident that the mutual commitment to student success that has always distinguished the John Jay College community will keep our purpose, our discourse, and our aspirations high.

Proposed Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Education at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Reasoning and Analysis: the ability to

- observe, sort, prioritize, and structure evidence;
- analyze different kinds of data;
- understand the distinction between evaluative and factual statements;
- solve problems through evidence-based inquiry (i.e., recognizing, using, and evaluating evidence in support of a hypothesis, theory, or principle);
- employ mathematical methods in the service of inquiry and quantitative and comparative analysis.

Communication Literacy: the ability to

- communicate clearly in standard written and spoken English;
- understand and target an audience;
- comprehend and discuss complex material, including texts, media, and numerical data;
- comprehend not only the broad or general points, but also the small details and nuances that contribute to (or complicate) the larger meanings of texts and other sources of information and knowledge;
- maintain self-awareness and critical distance as a reader/viewer/listener or as a producer of texts and other sources of information.

Information Literacy: the ability to

- understand how information in various formats is generated and organized;
- find and navigate appropriate resources in print and electronic formats;
- critically evaluate information for usefulness, currency, authenticity, objectivity and bias;
- recognize the importance of point of view in understanding, interpreting, and evaluating sources of information;
- understand issues surrounding plagiarism, copyright, and intellectual property and cite sources appropriately;
- use information in an effective and responsible manner.

Technological and Computer Literacy: the ability to

- conduct complex and dynamic Internet and database searches;
- use technologies to construct and disseminate their own knowledge and opinions;
- use common workplace software applications.

Ethical Practice: the ability to

- cultivate self-understanding by situating one's own experiences and perceptions in historical, cultural, and psychological contexts;
- use cross-cultural knowledge to explore multiple perspectives and ways of understanding;
- articulate the ethical dimensions of personal, academic, social, and political issues and choices;
- be an informed and responsible citizen of the world.

Creativity: the ability to

- understand artistic expression as a form of inquiry and problem solving, and problem-solving as a form of creativity;
- recognize and experience some of the methods and forms of artistic and imaginative expression.

Intellectual Maturity: the ability to

- be curious, tolerate ambiguity and disagreement, persist in the face of obstacles, and achieve critical distance;
- live a "good life" by developing the habits of introspection, personal and civic responsibility, and communication necessary for effective interaction with others;
- understand and embrace learning as a life-long process that enriches and gives meaning to daily experience.

Essential Knowledge: some familiarity with

- world history and the historical contexts of world languages, religions, and cultures;
- science and scientific methodologies and approaches to knowledge;
- the ideas of major thinkers and the works of major writers and artists;
- the nature and operations of various economic and political systems;
- the grammar, vocabulary, and syntax of another language;
- the social, political, and economic institutions of the United States;
- global interdependence; the impact on other parts of the world of seemingly disparate social, political, economic, cultural and environmental phenomena;
- the ways that technologies, information, and culture interact.

Proposed Principles for Effective General Education at John Jay College

To provide a framework for decision-making and the design of a revised General Education program at John Jay, the Task Force on General Education distilled its findings of best practices into a set of nine guiding principles. They are presented below and followed by extended discussions of Principles 1, 3, 5 and 9. We also provide examples of those principles in action at other institutions. As with the Learning Objectives, our goal is to achieve campus-wide consensus and have the principles ratified by the College Council in Spring 2009.

An Effective General Education Program at John Jay will:

1. **Have a clear purpose** that can be succinctly stated and explained and has a distinct identity at and beyond our campus. The purpose can relate directly or indirectly to the mission of the college.
2. **Foster, assess, and certify an agreed-upon set of learning objectives**, including skills and/or areas of knowledge.
3. **Scaffold undergraduate education at all stages and include cornerstone, milestone, and capstone experiences.** Learning objectives should be embedded across the curriculum at developmentally appropriate stages throughout the student's career. The General Education program should include upper-level courses that provide opportunities to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge acquired in lower-level courses and to demonstrate progress toward meeting the learning objectives. There should also be a reciprocal relationship between General Education and the majors, so that the learning objectives are reinforced consistently across all facets of the student's academic program. Co-curricular activities might also be incorporated into the overall structure of the General Education program.
4. **Enjoy high institutional priority.** The college could demonstrate this by: 1) establishing a faculty committee to oversee General Education; 2) creating the position of a faculty coordinator or dean for General Education; 3) funding faculty development programs and providing incentives for faculty to create, teach, and assess the General Education program and courses; 4) recognizing the scholarship of teaching and learning as equal to traditional disciplinary scholarship (thus the Office for the Advancement of Research would value and reward both, as would the faculty personnel process); and 5) recognizing faculty participation in pre-major advising.
5. **Focus on pedagogy.** An integrated General Education program considers not only what is to be taught but how. A variety of learning-centered teaching strategies should be marshaled to meet the Learning Objectives. The college should provide significant support for teaching faculty through formal training and informal curricular and pedagogical exchange. The new Center for the Advancement of Teaching provides a faculty-centered venue for these development activities.

6. **Be deliberately and explicitly student-centered.** The General Education program should be tailored to the particular needs and interests of the John Jay student body and responsive to changes over time in those needs and interests. This student-centered approach might be achieved by some or all of the following: 1) availability of pre-major academic advisement for students; 2) acknowledgement and accommodation of different perspectives, learning styles, and “ways of knowing”; 3) development of interactive pedagogies; and 4) engagement with Student Development staff to develop a holistic approach to supporting student achievement.
7. **Provide one or more common experiences for ALL students.** General Education puts its “signature” on all graduates. All students would share one or more common academic experience(s): these might be one or more core courses, a research project, a service-learning experience, or something else yet to be imagined.
8. **Build community among all JJC constituencies** by: 1) building on a shared commitment to the Learning Objectives; 2) encouraging cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary communication and collaboration among faculty; 3) developing a sense of “JJC citizenship” in students; and 4) creating and strengthening connections among students, faculty, administrators, staff, and alumni/ae through research projects, discussions, mentoring and advisement, internships, and other activities.
9. **Be Flexible and Accountable.** Assessment, review, and revision should: 1) be built into the General Education program; 2) occur regularly and systematically; and 3) involve alumni, potential employers, and graduate programs, as well as current students and faculty.