MEMO

To: Curriculum Committee  
From: General Education Committee  
Date: November 19, 2007  
Re: GE Core Course Assessment—Review and Recommendations

This semester, the General Education Committee initiated a process for designing and implementing a comprehensive assessment of the college's general education program. The first step in this endeavor involved surveying departments and programs responsible for core courses to determine whether and how they use standard content and assessment methods to achieve course outcomes. The committee was primarily concerned with how departments and areas maintain consistency among multiple-section courses in the college's general education core.

In reviewing the survey results, the committee found substantial variance among standard elements in courses. Some courses use common syllabi, assignments, and tests to maintain consistency. However, a few courses utilize no common elements or measures to ensure that course outcomes are being attained uniformly across course sections.

The committee feels that consistency is best maintained by using common syllabi for each course, or, at a minimum, incorporating a mixture of common elements and instructor-determined elements in syllabi and instruction. Such standard curricula (including components such as common finals and assignments) enable departments and areas more easily to assess course outcomes and to implement changes in the curriculum and instruction that will improve student learning and proficiency.

To this end, the committee has developed a set of recommendations for each area and a timeline for progress and implementation of recommended standard elements. The committee requests that the Curriculum Committee discuss and take action on these recommendations before the conclusion of Fall semester.

Thank you.