
Members Absent: Aida Brhane, Maria Nieto-Shahsavarian, Jennifer Rainey,

Guests: Developmental English Redesign Leaders Susan Givens and Ray Orkwis, Monica Chenault, Program Manager, Academic & Student Services.

Dr. Lynch called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and welcomed guests.

A motion was made to approve the January and February minutes with the two additions to the January minutes, seconded without objection, and carried.

Developmental Redesign Update

Mr. Orkwis introduced the redesign presentation by reiterating that the new structure for developmental English was created to better prepare students for college-level English, shorten the amount of time needed to complete developmental English requirements, and, ultimately, improve student success outcomes through higher persistence and graduation rates.

Dr. Givens and Mr. Orkwis explained that there are six factors demonstrated by the CASP model that can also hinder achievement: academic competence, operational competence, personal autonomy, instrumental autonomy, self-efficacy and purpose. They have as much to do with grades, retention and graduation as how well a student writes or how competent a student is in mathematics.

Their hypothesis is that students are not being prepared for college level English and other courses beyond that. They also do not have good understanding of why they are in college and what instructors need to do is help them understand the importance of education. There are qualitative areas that affect quantitative areas.

The RISE Team (Redesign in Support of English) reported that 46% of the faculty respondents indicated they would like more professional development in “promoting non-cognitive skills.” Non-cognitive skills includes things like study skills, attendance, work habits, time management, help-seeking behaviors, empathy and emotional maturity.

While the overarching goals are laudable, the data Mr. Orkwis presented showed that after taking the VPT test many students are being placed in higher levels than they are ready for. In addition, 44 percent of faculty across the college feel that students are being placed too high with the VPT test.
The instrument is felt to be flawed and in addition does not look at multiple measures to determine placement. More data is needed as there is currently no breakdown about grades students are earning. For instance, ENG 111 success rates combine students who are in ENG 111 alone and those in ENG111/ENF 3. There are many similar questions that remain to be answered as the data are examined.

Permission was received by Dr. Templin to have a pilot program that allowed instructors to move ENF 1 students who were not completely prepared into ENF 2 so they could take another semester of developmental English at a 4 credit level. However, instructors do not have the ability to override the test results and place students where they feel appropriate and they feel this is a problem.

VCCS claims success with the new model but data from NOVA do not reflect this.

Committee members asked about any correlation that might exist between Developmental English and Developmental Math. If they are doing poorly in both, they may be very negatively affected in terms of continuing their college education.

Dr. Givens and Mr. Orkwis officially requested that the ENF 1 to ENF 2 program be expanded and the student support systems be expanded in order for the situation not to degrade any further. They also emphasized the importance of all campuses “climbing on board” to do things consistently, particularly in the area of tutoring.

**A motion was made, seconded without objection and carried to support ENF faculty to move students from ENF 1 to ENF 2 as needed and to continue to expand the support for the ENF program, including embedded tutoring and the possibility of a link with SDV.**

**Discussion of NOVA Cares Reporting**

Dr. Harper and Ms. Chenault distributed several NOVA Cares reporting forms for the selection of one form preferred for college-wide usage. The Committee provided feedback.

They reported that student conduct issues have spiked on some campuses. There is also a level of reporting inconsistency across campuses and they are looking at tools to improve this.

The Senate rejected the ISSC request to add a sentence to the faculty handbook stating that NOVA does not provide mental health services but can provide referrals. They referred the request back to the ISSC to develop instead a more expanded definition of the services offered by the college.

Committee members echoed the Senate view that there is still considerable confusion over when and what to report to NOVA Cares. Some committee members noted that some faculty do not want to use the system because they were concerned reports became part of a student’s permanent record and could not be expunged. The NOVA Cares team responded that this system is not part of the academic record. More education of the faculty about how NOVA
Cares works might prevent confusion and increase usage. Members also suggested that it might be helpful to add NOVA Cares module to the yearly mandatory training.

Dr. Harper offered to meet with the Academic Deans to clarify some of the concerns and will develop and share a training power point with the Committee before requesting that it be placed in the NOVA training academy.

**Discussion of Revised Final Exam Policy to include Hybrids**

Dr. Lynch distributed the following changes to the final exam policy for discussion and approval:

**Current Wording in Faculty Handbook Section 3.1200:**

Students are expected to take tests and examinations at the regularly scheduled time; exceptions are to be arranged in advance with the faculty member. Tests and examinations should be kept in the personal possession of the teaching faculty or under lock until the scheduled time. Each teaching faculty member is required to give a final examination, or provide an appropriate evaluation, or continue instruction during the scheduled final examination period. It is the faculty member's responsibility to consult with the academic dean concerning the method to be used, reaching an agreement that is consistent with the content/concept of each course. Divisional files must contain copies of all such agreements. Faculty is required to keep the final examination papers, online exams, and evaluative instruments of students on file for one semester, in case any question arises concerning grades.

**Suggested Revision:**

Students are expected to take tests and examinations at the regularly scheduled time; exceptions are to be arranged in advance with the faculty member. Tests and examinations should be kept in the personal possession of the teaching faculty or under lock until the scheduled time. Each teaching faculty member for face-to-face or hybrid courses is required to be present during the final examination time and to provide an appropriate evaluation activity or to continue instruction if a final examination is not given. It is the faculty member's responsibility to consult with the academic dean if they will not be present during the scheduled final examination time to agree on an alternate plan that consistent with the content/concept of each course. Divisional files must contain copies of all such agreements.

Final exam periods are a maximum of 100 minutes.

Entire classes cannot be sent to the testing center to take final exams during final weeks. Only individual students with accommodations or special circumstances may take exams in the testing center during finals week.

Faculty are required to keep the final examination papers, online exams, and evaluative instruments of students on file for one semester, in case any question arises concerning grades.

Committee members suggested that additional wording be added to the sentence that states “Students are expected to take tests and examinations at the regularly scheduled time in the designated classroom” to the first sentence. It was also suggested that the sentence about the
length of final exams be removed “Final exam periods are a maximum of 100 minutes.” It was noted that 100 minutes may not be sufficient time for essay exams and does not follow VCCS guidelines. This issue of length of the final exam period will be added as an agenda item to the next year’s ISSC meeting.

A motion was made to approve the proposed changes to the handbook with the two revisions above, seconded without objection, and carried.

Discussion of Standard Syllabi Statements and Resending them to the Senate

Dr. Lynch reported that the Senate rejected the additional statements that the ISSC requested be added to the standard syllabi that would include: communication, safety and security, disabilities and accommodations, academic integrity, course drop/withdraw, mental health issues and discrimination and sexual harassment. No one from ISSC was present to explain the request, that this information could easily be added to Blackboard, and the goal of providing additional information for the benefit of the student.

A motion was made to resend the request back to the Senate with someone from ISSC present, seconded without objection, and carried.

Discussion of Policy when College Closes Early

Dr. Lynch indicated that while information on college closing has been provided for morning classes, no information exists on the timeframe for closing the college in the afternoons and evenings. This should be something ISSC might address next year.

Selection of Three Members to Serve on ELI group

Committee members who volunteered to serve on the ELI group were: Charles Kellermann, Preston Davis, and Anne Loochtan.

Election of New ISSC Chair

A motion was made to nominate Preston Davis as the new Chair of the ISSC, seconded without objection, and carried.
Dr. Lynch will craft a document summarizing all of the year’s Committee accomplishments. Committee members thanked Dr. Lynch for all of her exceptional work as Chair of the Committee for the past three years.