



Civic Literacy Meeting Notes 10/20/17

2:00pm to 3:00pm Eastern

Meeting Attendees:

Faculty Members

- Bruno Baltodano
- Victoria Brower
- Melissa Buehler
- Alfred Cuzan
- Kevin Evins
- Terri Fine
- John Hilston
- Christopher REenock
- Steve Tauber
- Elizabeth Trentanelli
- Dawn Dyer
- Eric Hanne
- Steve Noll
- Nicola Foote
- Gary Paul
- John Phillips
- David Proctor
- David Sheffler
- Jason Welch
- Eric Wolters

Staff Support

- Todd Clark
- Jan Ignash
- Karinda Barrett
- Cathy Oakley

The meeting of the civic literacy faculty committee began with a review of the previous meeting and the civic literacy statute. The question was raised about the delivery method of the course designated to meet the civic literacy requirement, and it was clarified that the legislation does not specify the mode of delivery.

In a phone call the morning of October 20, Jan Ignash (BOG staff), Todd Clark (ACC/DOE staff), Karinda Barrett (FCS/DOE staff) and Cathy Oakley (BOG staff) discussed the possibility of using more than one general education core course to fulfill the intention of the new civics law. Senior legislative staff, including staff general counsel, confirmed that students should be allowed to demonstrate civic literacy through a 3-credit hour general education core course, and that more than one course (either AMHX020 or POSX041) may be recommended to meet the civic literacy requirement. It was also clarified to work group members that the assessment alternative to meet the civic literacy requirement is still an option, and that the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education are charged with determining the assessment.

The question was raised whether Advanced Placement credit for either AMHX020 or POSX041 would satisfy the civic literacy requirement, if these general education core courses were to be designated as meeting the civic literacy requirement. State agency staff responded that they would address whether AP credit for these courses met the competency requirements as part of their review of existing assessments after this faculty committee had tendered its draft recommendation.

A concern was raised about whether either the Florida Board of Governors or the Department of Education would possibly modify the existing course(s), after they were chosen to fulfill the civic literacy requirement. Questions of where funding would come from and who would teach the course were also raised. Todd Clark confirmed these courses are or will be part of the Statewide Common Number System and will ensure articulation among institutions. A faculty member stated that it is most likely the state is going to have the expectation for learning outcomes to be reported. Jan Ignash reported her recent phone conversation with Belle Whelan at SACSCOC concerning the fact that institutions going up for reaccreditation would simply need to acknowledge that they were following Florida law in implementing the civic literacy requirement and that the requirement can be satisfied by either successfully completing an existing general education core course or a designated assessment. There should not be any difficulties in implementing the new law regarding SACSCOC.

A question was asked whether an existing course in African American Studies may be considered to meet the requirement, and it was clarified that because this course is not a general education core course it would not be eligible. A follow-up question was asked whether the course could be considered as a “new” course. Clarification was provided that the statute states that the course must be an existing general education core course and a “new” course may be developed.

A concern was expressed about the number of students enrolling in the designated course(s), the potential pass rate, and the ability to meet course demand, all of which make an online delivery method a good option for some institutions. There was also discussion focused on the number of times students may take the assessment and whether students will be required to pay to take the assessment, as well as whether a limitation on the number of times students may take the assessment should be considered. State agency staff clarified that the legislation is silent on these issues.

To meet the civic literacy requirement, faculty committee members made a recommendation to offer three options, which will give institutions flexibility, and include designating both POS X041, AMH X020, and the creation of a new course. The timeline of Fall 2018 for implementing the requirement and processes involved in developing a new course was restated. If a new course is created, it would need to be created at the state level, rather than at the institutional level. Jan added that the State University System provosts are aware of the possible constraints and issues related to implementation. It was clarified that there is nothing keeping institutions from offering tutorials, if they choose.

State agency staff restated that approximately 80,000+ students are anticipated to enter the FCS in the fall and they will have to meet this civic literacy requirement; however, they will not all be attempting to meet the requirement at the same time as they will have until graduation. Staff also clarified that the requirement effects beginning students in the 2018-2019 academic year.

The discussion shifted to the course competencies that were developed in the previous meeting and determined by a vote of the faculty committee members. Karinda, Todd and Jan all stressed that it’s best to keep the language in the competencies general to allow for more flexibility, and a “less is more” approach is best to avoid the curriculum from being too prescribed. The work group then determined that competencies 1-4 would be kept, in competency #4 the word “order” will be replaced with “actions” and “executive actions”, and competencies #5 and 6 will be deleted.

Next steps were discussed which include getting consensus on developing a new course, and designating both AMHX020 and POSX041 as meeting the civic literacy requirement.