

Core Curriculum Implementation – Open Forum

3/2/2010

Each number indicates a speaker (some spoke more than once, and some identified their area)

1. English Dept and taught in CORE – Various skill sets were not well integrated so it was hard to do a thorough job of teaching writing. There were way too many learning objectives, so the result was that each was watered down.
2. English Dept and Mentor to two grad students – there was not enough time to go through the teaching process pedagogy. I could not show mentees a consistent pedagogy.
3. English Dept – The number of graduate teaching assistants will grow from 12 to 20, so the department needs new mentors. However, the current mentors do not want to do it again.
4. Library – The Core Curriculum is not perfect, but after all the work wouldn't it be foolish to throw it away? There has not been a systematic evaluation of the Core, but one student wrote that she really liked the Core. The argument about the syllabus being too rigid and not flexible could be made for other courses that have official syllabi. He argued to keep the Core and noted that some faculty have told him that students did not have the basic skills under the old General Education program.
5. POSC - Instructors may have taught a given skill in CORE 102, but this does not mean students can actually perform that skill on their own. It needs to be reinforced over and over again.
6. Advisor – The logistics of the last three years was a huge challenge (not enough time). But to go to a new core would be devastating. To turn around and change our minds would really hurt our PR with community colleges. We need to help students progress, so we should have at least two years to come up with a better core curriculum.
7. English Dept – The level of specificity in CORE 101 and 102 syllabi is high. It is much more specific than other official university syllabi, which are far more general.
8. Library – But CORE 101 and 102 should be consistent. The designers wanted consistency throughout the sequence. It should be an organic document, so it would be better to change that to scrap it.
9. We should not scrap the Core Curriculum until we have had enough time to assess what has been done. Don't throw something aside. Let's accept it and get the proper assessment data to review it.
10. CHBS and CSAT chairs are working out differences to present a unified proposal. Old curriculum was abandoned without proper assessment. We were coerced to do the CORE. Go back to this modified General Education proposal and take the time to do it right.

11. Appalachian State's program is a lot closer to the one CHBS and CSAT is proposing. Logistically can we staff all those sections in the CORE sequence?
12. Waldron advising – A third system would ruin advising with three different catalog years, and three programs running at the same time. Don't scrap it before it is assessed.
13. COMM – With respect to assessment, faculty are saying it is impossible to teach. The advising problem is fixable. Hiring new people is not a fixable problem.
14. Between the staffing and the advising issues, advising is fixable but staffing is insurmountable.
15. ESHE – Some say this was not well thought out, but no it was well thought out. Revising General Education has been discussed for years, but no action was taken. I support the whole process and believe it is erroneous to say it was not well thought out, although it was implemented quickly.
16. With respect to staffing issues, the CORE was not supposed to be taught by adjuncts. Contract said that the best faculty would teach it, but that contract was never carried out. If the class size of CORE 201 and 202 is increased to 30, then that is not what was promised.
17. In the Senate, we were told that we would go back and tinker, but we have not tinkered.
18. Anything can be fixed with the right attention and the right people. We need stability and transparency. How can we present RU to the public with no stability or transparency?
19. Biology – I would like a breakdown by college of the staffing for CORE 201 and 202. [A rough breakdown was given.]
20. Physics – I am concerned about SACS accreditation and whether enough resources are being provided and whether they could contest our areas of expertise.
21. Skills and not disciplines – multiple skills does not equal multiple disciplines. CORE 201 and 202 are not multidisciplinary.
22. When people tasked to teach these classes are saying they have intractable problems, then we have to listen to them. If chairs cannot supply the people, then system should be changed.
23. English Department – Thanks for clarifying the meaning of an interdisciplinary course. It is more difficult to teach research skills than in the past, so our infrastructure is sagging.
24. I acknowledge some bumps in the new courses and appreciate the comments, but remember that there are more than two colleges that have an interest in gen. ed. Multiple discussions were held to design the Core Curriculum.
25. There was never a serious by-in with what GECAC came up with. Then the Senate swallowed the pill. It is time to clean up Will Stanton's messy legacy.

26. English Dept. – Teachers in English did not have enough time to get together a new course and instruct the mentees.
27. Advising – The train has left the station and fall counseling has already begun. We cannot really pull off a third gen. ed. program.
28. The cap on CORE 201 and 202 going to 20 is not serving students well. We cannot get the quality of labor (teaching) that we need.
29. People have no idea of the complications of three gen ed. sets.
30. EDUC – A big issue is working with transfer students and we depend on transfer students. I am with advising on this issue. Three gen. eds. that feed into accreditation agencies would create a serious problem. We had to revise over 300 syllabi to meet requirements.
31. We need to look at what is good for the student in the long-run.
32. FORL – When people involved in this say there are problems then we need to listen to them. If 50 staff are needed, that translates to roughly \$300,000. Issue is a budget issue and where are these new resources coming from. We have a zero-sum game here.
33. The only real problem for changing to the CHBS proposal is the advising problem, and all we have to do is wipe the slate clean and simply erase CORE courses.
34. It will require 5-7 years of Catalog changes to teach this thing out. So leaving this in place for 5-7 years would be a disaster. There has to be a way to fix it.
35. For CORE 201, the same text is being used for critical thinking as in current course offerings [numbers given, but missed]. So there are relevant courses on the books that cover roughly the same thing.
36. The administration said you could stop CORE and blanket wave students into these courses that we are currently teaching.

Core A Open Forum – Tuesday, March 2 (second note-taker)

(Comments in italics indicate responses made to questions)

Speaker A

English department

taught Core 101 and currently teaching Core 102

believes the various skill sets covered by the Core A sequence are not well integrated, making it hard to adequately teaching writing while also covering all of the other objectives

Speaker B

an English mentor who had a “dismal” experience teaching in the Core

supporter of “process pedagogy” – doesn’t feel like there is time to revise and revisit skills in the Core A sequence

Speaker C

Chair of the English department

the English department is increasing its number of GTAs due to budget issues but English faculty no longer want to work as mentors

Speaker D

Library

the current core curriculum is not perfect, but it would be “foolish” to throw away all of the work that went into implementing it

the only assessment he’s heard is the column in the *Tartan* last semester, which was very positive

although some faculty complain about the rigidity of the courses, all courses rely on a common syllabus

faculty often complain about a lack of students’ writing and research skills

Speaker E

Political Science

juniors and seniors need reinforcement of writing and research skills *(I’m sorry, I don’t think I wrote down her whole thought, so I’m not sure if she was saying that the Core will help reinforce these skills or fail to reinforce these skills)*

Speaker F

advising

the logistics of implementing the new core curriculum have been very challenging, but trying to implement another new core curriculum would be “a huge devastation”

another new curriculum would seriously harm Radford’s public relations with students and other institutions

we need to help students progress toward their degrees, and in order to do so we need at least a couple of years to implement a new core

Speaker G

the level of specificity that is present in the official syllabi of the Core A courses has not been present for classes she has previously taught at Radford

Speaker H

Library

the specificity of the Core A syllabi reflects what faculty asked for

the syllabi need to change based on faculty experiences, but it’s easier to change the current syllabi than to start over

Speaker I

it’s hard to make a judgment about whether the courses work based on only one semester

other schools, such as VCU and Appalachian State, have similar programs; we need to look at the results of assessment they have done

Speaker J

political science

the chairs of the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences have introduced a proposal for a new core curriculum

the old general education curriculum was abandoned without assessment

the new core curriculum is a broken system

we can go back to the old curriculum without logistical problems

Speaker K

Appalachian State’s program is not that similar to our current core curriculum

Speaker L

Waldron College Advising Center

current students will have to follow the requirements that are in place

changing to a new curriculum would result in three different curricula going on simultaneously

Speaker M

School of Communication

we've heard all the assessment we need from the faculty teaching the core courses

we don't have faculty to teach Core 201 and 202 next year

advising is a fixable problem, lack of faculty is not

more than half of the sections of Core 201 we need in the fall are staffed with full-time faculty;
currently talking to adjuncts to staff the rest

Speaker N

GECAC voted to allow students to substitute English 101 and 102 for Core 101 and 102

[this is denied]

Speaker O

athletic training

the core curriculum was implemented quickly but a lot of work went into it

she's been here for nine years and there has always been talk about reforming general education

Speaker P

how many sections of Core 201 do we need for the fall? (55)

how many are currently staffed? (*half*)

what is the number of sections based on? (*based on the current number of students in Core 102 and assuming 201 sections with 30 students*)

when implementing the curriculum, the Core A Committee consistently said they wanted only the best tenure-track faculty teaching Core A courses

Speaker Q

nothing is being done to tinker with the Core A courses

faculty are not really able to teach writing in Core A courses

Speaker R

any of the issues can be fixed if the right people put their minds to it

we need stability and transparency in how we present Radford and we aren't getting that now

Speaker S

what is the percentage breakdown by college of faculty who have agreed to teach Core 201?
(most from CHBS but 1-3 from each of the other colleges)

Speaker T

Physics

concerns about accreditation

SACS will be concerned about a lack of resources and a lack of faculty with terminal degrees teaching the courses

Speaker U

skills are not disciplines

these courses blend skills but are not interdisciplinary

Speaker V

when people who are asked to teach the courses see intractable problems we have to listen to those concerns

if chairs can't provide faculty we can't fix the staffing issues

Speaker W

English mentor

having taught an interdisciplinary course, these courses don't really provide the opportunity to be interdisciplinary

faculty are concerned about student's writing and research skills but the Core A sequence makes it more difficult to teach those skills

when faculty complain about students' writing and research skills things like dual-enrollment are often to blame

Speaker X

it is always difficult to teach new courses

other colleges feel steamrolled by the proposed changes

Speaker Y

CHBS chairs' proposal will probably end up having a health and wellness requirement (in response to Speaker X's concerns)

GECAC came up with the core curriculum very quickly and without real support from the faculty we need to "clean up Wil Stanton's messy legacy"

Speaker Z

the faculty teaching Core 101 and 102 are experienced teachers – the problems with the courses are not their fault

Speaker AA

advising might not be that important compared to some other concerns, but students are already registering for their fall classes

what do we tell transfer students who have been told to expect one curriculum and might now be told they should have prepared for a different curriculum?

Speaker BB

speaking as the mother of a potential transfer student, she's not sure she wants her daughter to go to school here

one way to lose transfer students is to fail to give them what they need

large classes and adjuncts teaching the core courses are big concerns

Speaker CC

faculty in the speaker's college (*I'm sorry I didn't catch which college*) each advise 50 or more students; it's difficult to see how they can deal three different core curricula

Speaker DD

Education

the College of Education depends on transfer students

for accreditation purposes, having three different general education curricula going on at the same time will cause problems with matrices provided by the State Department and other agencies

Speaker EE

in addition to staffing issues, we might have problems finding rooms for all of the core classes
we need to consider what's best for the students

Speaker FF

Foreign Languages and Literatures

when the people most directly involved see a problem, that's important

we need a lot of money to staff all of the sections

Foreign Languages and Literatures is willing to help, but overall the money just isn't there

Speaker GG

advising is the only real argument for keeping the core

we should allow students in the 09/10 cohort to just not take the Core A courses; this approach would result in only two core curricula in play at once

(we can't forcibly move students to a new catalogue year, we have to keep the requirements the same for that cohort for five to seven years)

Speaker HH

leaving the core curriculum in place for five to seven years would be a disaster and it would be difficult to switch back at that point

Speaker II

we could use Philosophy 113 and 114 as substitutes for the Core A courses

Speaker JJ

the acting registrar says that if we adopted a new curriculum the 09/10 cohort could fulfill their requirements with course substitutes

Notetaker #3

- Speaker A
 - Teaching in Core 101 / 102
 - 101 remarks – the skill sets are not well integrated / it is impossible to do primary writing / becomes “drive by” teaching of various skills / Too many learning outcomes – watered everything down.

- Speaker B
 - English – mentor to the graduate students
 - Dismal in Fall for 101
 - Research in process pedagogy says to revisit skill sets – this is hard to do
 - Difficult [?] for mentors
- Speaker C- Chair
 - Graduate college is increasing the number of graduate teaching assistants in English
 - Need new mentors and the ones we already have don't want to be mentors again
- Speaker D
 - Not perfect – it could be improved
 - But after all the work done – should not throw it away
 - Strong agreement from student in Tartan [about strength of program]
 - There are complaints because of the rigidity of the course – but all courses have a common syllabus
 - All students learn same skills [?]
 - With students and faculty – students don't have skills to perform
 - English 102 did not teach research skills with consistency
- Speaker E
 - With junior and seniors students doing political science research in labs – 102 students always said they were taught [skills] but students need reinforcement
 - Not making it any better
- Speaker F
 - Advisors work with core – and faculty develops
 - Huge challenge for [advisors] to work with students
 - New Core by Fall or next – huge devastation
 - Advisor – PR work to get back on track with transfers / Hurt PR with transfer counselors / worked through issues and it has taken a year to figure it out.

- Advising in the trenches – agree we need to help students progress to degree in a timely fashion
- Speaker A
 - Statement that it should not matter who teaches the course because they teach the same thing – it is the level of specificity that is present in CORE 101 [this isn't with the other course]
 - Syllabus for upper level courses – does not explain what [specifics] need to be in a paper
 - CORE syllabi do not look like other syllabi
- Speaker G
 - Course syllabi are very different
 - Faculty stated that they wanted a consistent experience for students / know what level students were after 102 / all students have certain skills
 - It is easier to change the CORE than to scrap it
- Speaker H
 - How can you make a judgment when it was only taught one semester
 - VCU has a similar program – also Appalachian State
 - Look at what has been done
 - Let's assess it – get data to back it up
- Speaker I
 - Science proposal – go back to 08-09 year
 - Not revolutionary change
 - Old curriculum abandoned without assessment
 - Coerced in adopting new core
 - Implementation broken – staffing matter – advising ok if you go back to 08-09
- Speaker J
 - Logistics at Appalachian State – to suggest Appalachian State similar to our current is inaccurate
 - Traditional program – know we can teach and we can advise students

- Don't know if we can handle logistics of core
- Speaker K
 - Advising – new core for students for next four years
 - Even if old system – it will be new for 10-11
 - Three different catalogue years – three programs at the same time
 - Advising students who are coming in now – advising them to new core
 - Logistic nightmare
- Speaker L
 - Heard some assessment here – all the assessment we need
 - Staffing problems for next year – advising is a fixable problem -New faculty for teaching – is not fixable
 - More than ½ of the sections not filled
 - Assessment argument – believe the experts [faculty in courses] have already assessed
- Answer: ½ sections are filled with full-time faculty
- Speaker M
 - Speak to staffing – believe GECAC substitutes 101 / 102 – there is a way of doing substitution
 - Staffing is insurmountable
 - How staff w/o adding faculty – adding another layer of courses with staffing issue
- Speaker N
 - Heard that people saying it was not well thought out- a lot went into this program
 - Forums on what students are missing – research / writing
 - Learning over time curriculum
 - Erroneous to say it was not well thought out.
- Speaker A
 - Questions: how many 201? ½ are staffed? What are you basing 55?

- Seems potential need more sections than you have staffed
- In CORE A committee when staffing was discussed – it was not to be taught by adjuncts – they were contracted to be taught by tenure but also best and brightest – recommended by their departments
- Speaker O
 - Concern has to do with when approve syllabi it was said we could go back and tinker – we are not tinkering
 - Writing courses should be capped at 15
- Speaker P
 - Don't know ins and outs – and understand frustration
 - Anything can be fixed
 - RU needs stability and transparency – how do we present to students – coherent presentation to others beyond us
 - Common ground – fix what is fixable
- Speaker Q
 - Q: percent of people teach 201 in fall by college
- Answer: most from CHUBS – [also gives numbers for other colleges]
- Speaker R
 - SACS accreditation – just as willing to have Qs as CORE not terminal degrees in content areas being taught – is this a SACS accreditation issue?
- Answer: SACS accreditation allows for interdisciplinary courses
- Speaker E
 - Skills are not disciplines
 - Classes require multiple skills
 - Teach multiple skills and blend skills which is good but it is not interdisciplinary courses.
- Speaker L
 - Issues of staffing and assessing

- People tasked to teach say there are problems and we need to listen to people teaching classes
- Department chairs saying they can't staff – if chairs cannot supply people for 201 /202 and problems with 101 – we shouldn't do
- Speaker S
 - Teaching mentor for three years
 - Huge difference in teaching outside the discipline
 - People are concerned about how students write and research but this way is more limited
 - More difficult to teach this in CORE – more to teach – huge strain – if goal is to instruct students – teach writing and research course (? If correct)
- Speaker N
 - Bumps to smooth out
 - As we approach more than two colleges want to have a say – steam rolled on what general education should look like.
- Speaker I
 - Looking gout for Health and Wellness
 - F07 agree whether CCC [original committee] was legit – in short order GECAC was quick to develop – Sp09 – whether Senate would swallow – 08-09 make sense of Core A – F2009 – investigating provost – cleaning up Wil Stanton's messy legacy
- Speaker C
 - 101/102 experienced teachers who had to hit ground running and teach others as they went
- Speaker F
 - Now advising students for Fall already – classes are out there
 - Talk about changing course – not change in transfers again for Fall is a nightmare for counselors
- Speaker A
 - As mother of potential transfer student – hearing cap on 201 is going to 30 or less include to have daughter come and to not take course in all skill sets with adjunct and 29 other students

- Speaker H
 - Advising – my faculty advise at least 50 plus students – don’t know what faculty will do with 3 different systems
 - Think about all ramifications for everyone
 - Some way to make this work
- Speaker T
 - Working through transfers – we depend on transfer – how to work it through with advisors
 - Look across the university – in education – for accreditation – we would be faced with 3 different general educations – needing state department matrices – etc.
 - Revised over 300 syllabus in STEL – there are things also to be considered
- Speaker U
 - People involved in programs make quality programs – if people say problems – serious
 - 201/ 202 – these are new resources – how staff with less than \$200K – ultimately if full-time faculty up to \$250 K
 - We are in a zero sum game with way economy looks – if we are going to spend new resources – is this highest priority
- Speaker I
 - Only serious argument in advising problem – reminded one of CHUBS chair group – how do we deal with cohort of 90-10 - wipe slate clean for those students – move students to 10-11 curriculum
 - Solving problem in radical ay – go to route
- A: can’t move students to a new catalogue – needs to be in place 5 to 7 years
- Speaker R
 - If deep concerns of faculty are right – leaving in place 5 to 7 years if irreparable – be disaster
 - School to be prepared to solve problem – is way to fix – also drain on resources
- Speaker V

- Core 201 textbook is same as Phil 113 – these courses are legit for transfer credit – course on book
- Speaker I
 - Spoke to Registrar – solvable problem to stop teaching CORE 2010 / 202 and blanket courses

Core Feedback Forum, March 5

Speaker one, from history: iterated his belief that the message from English about implementation problems, combined with messages from CHBS and CSAT, are not being heard. People closer to the level of implementation are facing a crisis and we should listen to them.

Speaker 2, from English: focused on concerns with the implementation of C101/2. IN addition to lack of preparation time before implementation, the courses do not have adequate time to teach writing skills and the other skills involved. This dilution of writing will leave students less prepared for 202/2. Second concern: lack of structured training in the other disciplines which are included in the course, leaving instructors inadequately prepared.

Speaker 3: see attachment which she provided.

Speaker 4, from history: the program was rushed when adopted with details to be worked out later. Now that the chairs are trying to work them out, they should be listened to, as they are the ones most closely involved with logistical implementation.

Speaker 5, from Qwest: Identified herself as speaking “from the outside”: neither for or against the core, but at this point, there is a major concern with a new curriculum by fall. Issues enumerated included recruitment, students’ perspective, the logistics of change at this time, the impact of making changes again on Radford’s image.

Appreciation for her viewpoint is expressed, but followed by the assertion that people understand that faculty do disagree with 1 another; things can be worked out but they need to be worked out.

Speaker identifies the belief that a common denominator at this point is the feeling that someone is not being listened to, depending on whose concern it is. Speaker 2 speaks for the core 101 mentors; she reasserts faculty commitment and the importance of listening to the perspective of the mentors.

Speaker 5 returns to the issue of what we have told parents and students already. We have marketed the core even if we didn’t agree with it; what do we say to parents, for example, or students being advised for the fall; this was given us last summer; how can we put something else into place before fall without producing another catastrophe.

Speaker 4 asserts that from the beginning, problems with 201/2 are the lack of content; specific skill sets exist but not disciplinary content. Why can’t a department be taken and provided with skills training, which they apply to their own content?

Another speaker: What happens if we only have 19 sections of 201 if we need 55? This will be more of an advising nightmare than changing the program. What about programs which require core completion before admission into the major? Backlog will get worse over ti me.

Waldron college advisor: is the problem the core curriculum or just these 4 classes? Should everything be scrapped including elements which are good or should this problem be solved? The provost yesterday assured us that the 55 courses will be staffed. There are different faculty who are planning to teach the 200 levels and planning to bring their content to it.

Another speaker: If the money is here this year, will there be money for training? The old 200-level cores had 45 students, twice as large as the new ones will have. Release time was promised for development, but where will the money come from when the stimulus money runs out?

Why can't students have option of using the old GE or the new one? Would prefer to go back to the old one but could students choose between Engl 101 or Core 101 for a limited time? Reiterates the position that CHBS and CSAT should be listened to. We need to make decisions on basis of what is best academically, not on the basis of image; this program was not made with that in mind; it is a train wreck and will blow up and this will hurt the image anyway; why do we need 12 hours of univ 100 (students mix up univ 100 with core 101 and 102)?

Speaker: this was devised when we thought we would have the resources that we do not have

An adjunct response: yes, we are exploited but throwing out the core will be more exploitation; what happens to the work he put into 101 and getting it to work; there were good ideas in core 101 and 2 and he would continue to use them in English if we revert; but asks what can we keep?

Students rated their experience of core 1 and 2 as being good but does this mean the courses are sound or the instructors fantastic?

For some the concern is the 200 level which are primarily writing and communications courses and will be taught by people who are not specialists in writing

Another speaker raises the question about premed students: if premed students need to have engl 101 and 102, should they go to community college?

A response is that medical students also need critical writing and thinking

Someone asks where were these questions last year? Answer: They were out there but not being addressed

From a different perspective: the core A committee was characterized by a lot of commitment to working together on interdisciplinary courses and with IT

If people are not trained in ethics or logic, they cannot offer instruction in those areas

Questions raised about the assessment of the old gen ed: have we looked at the data? What were we doing well and or badly? How can we not look at that data? And how can we make

the argument that we can't change without assessment if we haven't looked at the former assessments?

Someone notes that this conversation is interesting, but why didn't we have it a year ago?

Someone else raises the question of pedagogy versus course: if gains have been made in teaching skills, should we assume that they will be lost if the courses are changed?

The issue of writing problems is brought up and the need to address this in more places than the core sequence.

The present reaction could have been predicted because the core was "forced" on faculty; a/p faculty have even less voice in this and yet they also have to respond to the changes; do not forget the a/p faculty.

Notetaker #2

- Speaker A
 - Would like to express concern - message from the English department is not being heard
 - Folks are talking a lot about process and implementation but the message is not getting through
- Speaker B
 - Mentor discussion – bottlenecked semester
 - A lot of writing projects are coming at the same time
 - Once in 201 / 202 students won't have support or intense writing instruction like before
 - One week training in summer and [other training] did not give us the confidence to teach
- Speaker C
 - [Document read by Susan Kowalski – will give document to Roann]
- Speaker D
 - When program was first adopted – rushed matter
 - Details are being worked out by the Chairs in CHUBS and CSAT
 - Chairs unanimously voted for it to be eliminated
 - Was a chair for seven years and no one know how difficult it is to schedule and advise as Chairs
 - Need to listen to comments
- Speaker E
 - Outsider – mother perspective and talk to students
 - What is seen from outside looking in – really concerned about another curriculum by fall because of bad publicity and with transfers
 - Not just about logistics – how does Radford look
 - Worked six months to get core working – logistics can't be worked out the CORE

will fail – need to fix how appear to students – students are worried

- Speaker F
 - Appreciate your comments – any change would be very difficult
 - Concerned about publicity – people understand that faculty do disagree with each other – faculty argue
 - Love to sit down and work on logistics
 - Students in CORE can go into new curriculum and get equivalency
 - Think something can be worked out
 - Advocate for advisors to get help
- Speaker B
 - Common denominator – lack of being listened to
 - Mentors many concerns were ignored
 - If we listed at get go – a lot would have been avoided
 - Deeply passionate about students – to make a workable situation
- Speaker E
 - At least 1000 students to change curriculum
 - We went and sold it
 - What do we say to parents this summer
 - No way able to put something new in place by Fall – logistics would be bad
 - Take a year to work together
 - Students are here and this is all they hear
- Speaker D
 - CORE 201 / 202 problem – classes have no content
 - Why can't you take History and teach the skill sets / Same with English Literature course – assign to other skill sets
 - No one wants to teach CORE 201 and 202 because no content
- Speaker G
 - Glad to see the advisors here and respect their opinion
 - What is going to happen next year if we have 19 sections of 201 and we need 55 – might end up having juniors still taking 201 – won't be long before students can't graduate because don't have CORE course
- Speaker H
 - [Advisors] – we love faculty but have seen some mean attacks from one to others – not discourse – that is ok
 - Change what needs to be changed
 - Provost said \$ for the CORE and 55 sections will be staffed
 - My understanding – their CORE courses can be taught with different content
 - Attract students to a neat topic
 - I am for the CORE
 - My son is graduating – great education – only bad side is the bad publicity
- Speaker I
 - I was there when provost said we will have \$ for it – the \$ might be there this year but need training also – 201 / 202 courses – need to be small because of

- the skill
 - [Richard Alvarez] said we are headed off a cliff financially
 - We need more training – more people and more money for training
 - Need to take a look at that
- Speaker C
 - Why can't students have option of going with old GE program or new one until we wouldn't be embarrassed about getting rid of the CORE
 - People are saying it is not working – people teaching – people should take notice
- Speaker J
 - Respect for advising coordinators
 - Need to stop decisions based on image – rather needs to be based academically – than worry about controversy
 - Have to think what is best for the student – students mixed up CORE 101 with University 100 – don't need 12 hours of University 100
- Speaker K
 - Say to community college it is a financial problem – promised full-time faculty – these won't be staffed with adjuncts – when asking adjuncts to teach skill set in [non topic course] - \$ is not fair – not enough adjuncts to back fill with competence
 - Staffing largely with adjuncts
- Speaker L
 - [Adjunct]- yes we are exploited
 - If we completely throw out the CORE it will be difficult to go back – CORE 101 worked for me
 - Overall pedagogy – purposes of assignments are fine
 - Problem areas were put to the side until infrastructure is there
 - Will teach ENGL 101 same as CORE 101 because a lot of great resources – but would hard to find own resources
- Speaker B
 - Praise adjuncts
 - Overall student experience of CORE 101 / 102 is good
 - Instructors are fantastic but doesn't mean the CORE unsound
 - 200 Level is problem because not same group of instructors to step in – writing courses take time
- Speaker L
 - [Adjunct] – best individual evaluation from doing things they had to do through the CORE
 - Was hoping to teach 202 course because had a great idea for it
- Speaker G
 - Medical students / schools require English 101 and 102
 - Should I send them to community college?
- Speaker E
 - Medical students need [?critical thinking] – seniors want some of these skills

- Students are looking at out classes
 - If go to 101 /102 – we never had enough literature English section
 - Where was this a year ago?
 - This is what we have now
- Speaker M
 - A year ago is exactly where it is now – questions were out there but was less urgent
- Speaker N
 - What I don't understand to institute a new program when is hasn't been assessed
 - We haven't looked at if objects were being met
- Speaker O
 - Devoted to CORE – large part of professional life in CORE A committee – one of the best professional experience I have had – people worked together to meet goals and make things work together
 - How do we wrap it up – give instructors resources – goals – outcomes
 - See it through
 - Formative Group – unbiased – getting in the trenches
 - To throw out a curriculum before work is done
- Speaker P
 - Still don't have 102 feedback
- Speaker Q
 - Other faculty do want to teach 200 level courses
- Speaker R
 - Want to defend Candice and Susan's class
 - Objectives laid out and design is one of the best
 - Spent a lot of time and training
- Speaker L
 - [adjunct] – Stole some of their stuff for own class – pedagogy and teaching are sound
- Speaker D
 - Last general education was never assessed
 - No one is in the trenches more than chairs in CHUBS
- Speaker C
 - Attacking pedagogy of 200 level courses
 - Started out with students coloring (*this comment was based on a web site and contained incorrect information; later retracted by the speaker*) – critical of course that starts like that
 - Instructor discipline is not critical thinking [?]
- Speaker S
 - Part of old general education was assessed – don't know if proving [?]
 - Now to say we have to assess – started and stop before in middle
- Assessment –brief discussion

- Speaker B
 - Wish we would have had this conversation a year ago
 - As somebody that taught 101 that went through training – I wouldn't want to lose that but that doesn't mean courses should stand
 - Things have to be fixed
- Speaker E
 - Going back to general education concern – that we have something in writing [?]
- Speaker T
 - We could have wonderful general education if we looked at Appalachian State
 - Too many skills in courses at beginning of students education
 - Writing intensive – senior capstone in discipline
 - Burden of writing cannot fall on four courses
 - Take four years to do the job right
- Speaker U
 - Commended off the record to colleagues – I said this was “dead on arrival” because it was forced on people and people will fight to the bitter end
 - Ask – please – whatever you decide – consider we have to react (a/p folks) – if you mover to fast – growing fatigue on A /P – some colleagues will have to react
- Speaker V
 - We have 2 curriculum – using what we had before with minimal change
 - Using old catalogue – don't see as sudden change – change was last year – 201 /202 harder to implement
- Speaker W
 - Only 19 people want to teach 201 – throwing money won't solve problem
- Speaker X
 - 1000 or so student in new curriculum – most only took 101 / 102 – blanket to cover students
- Speaker Y
 - Can't go back - recreate all changes to make it new – can't mess with this year because it is their contract – can't mess with requirements – can't change
- Speaker Z
 - Apologies to advising – we created rule set, we can change rule set
- Speaker AA
 - Can't make catalogue disappear – we would be running 3 curriculums

In my judgment, the following aspects of the Core could stand improvement.

1. **The distinction between “University” and “College” requirements.** What function does it serve? Why not stipulate from the outset that students will take 8 hours of science rather than distributing those hours in separate “University Core B” and “College Core B” requirements? (The same applies to the humanities, mathematics, and social science components.) So far, CHBS is the only college that has specified a particular course menu, and that one is limited to the stipulation that students must take another social sciences course in lieu of a health course. To the extent that colleges continue to allow students to select what they want from the general options, the college distinction is pointless. To the extent that colleges take advantage of the opportunity to name their own requirements, students who change majors or double major will be penalized. In all, while I understand the intent, I think the distinction is more trouble than it’s worth.

Recommendation: To prevent the system from becoming an advising nightmare, GECAC should consider eliminating as much scaffolding as possible. In my view, the distinction between university and college requirements is expendable, as is the puzzling designation of the National and International Perspectives areas as “College Core A.”

2. **University Core A courses.** There are several seemingly insurmountable problems intrinsic to the interdisciplinary format of these courses: (a) *Staffing.* As of midterm, the need for teachers in the fall 200 level courses has been only half met. This suggests a general unwillingness of instructors to teach in areas in which they are not qualified. Faculty from departments other than English (say, nursing) cannot possibly be equipped through summer workshops to teach writing as effectively as English instructors. The same applies to the speech, computer literacy, logic, and ethics components of Core A courses. I fear the administrative solution will be to foist these courses on new hires—a strong incentive for otherwise qualified job candidates to go elsewhere.

(b) *Transfer credits.* It has been repeatedly observed that students who transfer into and out of Radford will be at a disadvantage because Core A courses do not correspond to courses at other schools. Generally, discussions I have heard place the rate of exchange at two outside courses for one Core A unit. Already, we have been told, GECAC has made provision for English 101/102 at other schools to be accepted as Core 101/102. Similarly, our department was recently forwarded an e-mail from Dr. Susan Van Patten concerning a policy change whereby “For a minimum of three years, *transfer students* can meet the requirements for CORE 201/202 by taking COMM 114/240 and PHIL 111/112/113/114.” Despite the inequitable two for one exchange rate, this provision moves in the right direction. I wonder why it will apply for only three years. What is expected to happen during that time to eliminate the equivalency problem?

(c) *Cost.* The interdisciplinary nature of Core A courses means that faculty training will be an ongoing expense. Since every student must take four courses, a substantial number of faculty—not just a few—must be routinely inducted. The big picture is that the courses that are offered the most frequently at RU will be the most costly (instructor training + salaries)—a serious concern given the present (and probable future) budget crises.

Recommendation: Give English 101 and 102 back to the English Department; let the logic, ethics, and other Core A components remain as options taught by departments—not requirements taught by anyone. Optimally, in my view, Core A should be purged before more time and money are wasted on it. Sometimes the wisest course is to move in reverse.

3. *Insufficient faculty in-put.* The framework for the present Core system was designed during Winter Break of 2007-2008 at two GECAC meetings, each attended by a mere 4 or 5 faculty members. Since January 2008, when GECAC submitted this plan to the Senate, faculty opinion has been solicited about certain aspects of the framework (such as learning outcomes) but not its overall structure or logic. We have had no real say on, e.g., whether the old GE system needed to be changed at all, whether a complete over-haul of the existing system (as opposed to minor internal changes) was justified, whether learning outcomes rather than course content should define the program, how many hours of GE should be required, and whether the university-college distinction is useful.

Recommendation: Open the floor to a new wave of Core proposals from faculty. In particular, GECAC should attend closely to the recent CHBS and CSAT proposals for changing the Core. It is absurd to maintain that all faculty have the same knowledge of and stake in GE, and thus their voices should be counted equally in decision-making. Clearly, instructors whose primary teaching load consists of GE courses have greater insight and investment than colleagues who seldom, if ever, teach a GE course. When the two colleges that overwhelmingly staff GE speak almost in unison, *GECAC should listen*.

4. *Number of hours.* The 45 hour maximum was arbitrarily imposed by former Provost Stanton. Whether we should go with more or fewer hours was never discussed, let alone decided, by faculty. Proper consideration of the matter should begin with what we think students should learn in GE, and not with a figure pulled out of thin air. At present, instruction in areas that assure RU's status as a comprehensive university—as opposed to a vocational-technical school—has been cut too drastically. Students are not required to take a course in history, literature, or religious and philosophical traditions—subjects at the core of a liberal arts education.

RU cannot possibly compete with the more cost-effective and intensive vocational programs offered by ITT, National, and other technical schools. Our students, however, have chosen to earn a bachelor's degree and accordingly are entitled to what that bestows, viz., a perspective on life broader and deeper than occupational proficiency. This distinctive outcome should be advertised and enhanced, not minimized. Students enrolled in a four year college degree program are shortchanged by the spurious attempt (the basis of the BOV mandate to revise GE) to remake RU into a more efficient vocational school by eliminating “useless” liberal arts courses. In a four-year comprehensive university, tuition should buy at least one course each in literary, historical, *and* philosophical/religious studies.

Recommendation: GECAC should consider GE proposals from faculty in which the number of hours is not pre-determined by the existing Core.