

Colonnade General Education Committee
Western Kentucky University

Report to the University Senate Executive Committee

Date: November 23, 2015

From: Dr. Marko Dumančić, Chair

The Colonnade General Education Committee met on October 17, 2015 and submits the following report for consideration to the University Senate:

1. Information Items:

The Committee spent most of meeting discussing ways in which the Colonnade program could be made more efficient for students and user-friendly for faculty. The committee identified ways in which the program could better serve students and also assist faculty in enriching the program by submitting proposals and teaching relevant courses.

- The committee is currently discussing the lack of Connections-level courses in the Colonnade program. This is a serious issue since a lack of Connections courses is creating a backlog of students needing to complete the General Education program. The issue is compounded by the fact that many first-year students are arriving to campus with as many as 27 credit hours completed. To incentivize faculty to submit more Connections courses, the committee is considering implementing one-time Professional Development Fund that faculty could draw on to develop new Connections courses for the Colonnade program.
- In the works is a more streamlined application form that more clearly spells out the criteria for application requirements.
- The committee is considering short- and long-term ways of helping students satisfy the foreign languages requirement prior to reaching 60 credit hours. The current focus is on better publicizing the STAMP test and making it more easily available to students. The STAMP Assessment is currently the easiest route for students who have taken the pre-college curriculum of 2 years of a World Language to demonstrate their skills and complete the WKU language requirement. For STAMP tests taken at WKU, the result is recorded in Topnet and marked in iCAP as fulfilling or not fulfilling the requirement. STAMP results, however, do not yield college credit. Although the pass rate is high, not enough students are taking the test, creating a backlog of students needing to satisfy the university foreign language requirement. In addition to publicizing the test, the committee plans on considering ways to make the test more easily accessible to more students, which is a logistical and technical issue. There is also a long-term solution of collaborating with area high schools and encouraging students to take the STAMP test while still in high school.