

## **Response to Senate Recommendation 2012-03-04**

While the academic content and purpose of the WKU Colonnade program are both very sound, I believe that there are several issues that should be addressed before I can approve a Senate Recommendation based on this program.

First, the intended implementation date of Fall 2013 (page 14) is too early. Given the inevitable complexities associated with implementation of such a program, I believe that the implementation date needs to be moved back to Fall 2014 at the earliest.

Second, upon careful review of the ACTFL definitions, I believe that the “Novice Mid” level of language proficiency (pages 5 and 14 of the Task Force Report and General Education Committee rule change A) is too basic. I would support a proficiency level of “Novice High” from the outset, without waiting until 2016, as suggested in the Task Force Report.

Third, the word “discipline” on page 12 is too vague. This term needs better defined, such as in terms of course prefix, or by a requirement that the discipline of a given course will be established by an appropriate group based on (say) syllabus content.

Fourth, while I support the intent of the 21-hour/junior requirement prior to taking Connections courses, I believe that the additional requirements for Connections courses to be upper-division (page 12 of the Task Force Report) level, and outside the General Education core (page 4 of the Task Force Report), are unnecessarily restrictive and indeed detrimental to the program’s purpose. As the Task Force acknowledges in their Report (page 2), a major impetus for their efforts was to create a general education program that would provide a “more robust assessment plan for General Education as a program.” Classification of all Colonnade program courses as General Education courses, rather than placing some as upper-division courses outside of General Education, would serve to strengthen WKU’s commitment to the highest quality General Education experience for our students through the strong academic content and learning outcomes of the Colonnade program, while also providing the strongest possible basis for assessment of this innovative General Education program.

A. Gordon Emslie  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
April 6, 2012