Jake welcomed everyone and introduced Dr. Keel, who thanked the GEC for the opportunity to express support for the GEC and its work. Dr. Keel added that the GEC’s work was infinitely important, and he appreciated the time and attention the group has given. He stressed that the GEC is a faculty-driven committee and that General Education is not just about educating students; it is about providing growth for our students that they can carry beyond graduation. General Education is about making young people productive citizens.

Jake thanked Dr. Keel and stressed that the GEC’s goal is to do more than check off an accreditation box. Dr. Keel acknowledged that — accreditation aside — what the GEC’s work is the right thing to do for ourselves and for our students.

Jake then asked about potential meeting times for the GEC. After a brief discussion, the group decided to meet on the first Friday of each month at 2:30. Ellen was charged with finding a meeting space for those meetings.

Jake then asked the GEC who should have access to the Sharepoint site and to WEAVE and what level of access they should have. All GEC members, including ad hoc members, will have read access. Jake, Ellen, and sub-committee chairs will have read/write access to both.

Jake then reported on the work that has been going on over the summer, including Institutional Effectiveness, Program Review, and the GEC Summer Workshop. He shared background and information from the summer workshop. He asked Ellen to put the report from the workshop up on Sharepoint so that all members of the GEC could read the recommendations and the revised General Education Outcomes that the workshop group drafted. He asked GEC members to please read the report so that plans for moving forward can be made at the next meeting.

John O’Malley asked that the Chancellor’s comments from the August BOR meeting be added to Sharepoint as well. Ellen stated that she would post both immediately after the meeting.

Jake added that General Education is very broad and includes faculty and student support services. He suggested that the GEC might eventually include ex-officio members outside of faculty. Barry Joyner asked about students possibly being included. Jake agreed, adding that the GEC is getting a clear signal of buy in as General Education becomes the way we do business. Eventually, Jake added, ex-officio representation on the GEC should include more stakeholders.

John added that as a result of the summer workshop, campus understanding of General Education was moving away from being conflated with the core curriculum. He also stressed the need for General Education to be assessed in different contexts and in at least two points in students’ academic careers. Fred agreed that learning extends through time, that it is not a magic bullet fired at one time. Therefore, assessing student learning should occur at different points in time.
Kathy noted the positive impact that the QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) has had on student learning through the First Year Experience program. She then responded to questions about Student Engagement, the current QEP. She noted that the QEP had gotten a “clean bill of health” on the SACS fifth-year report and that the committee will soon be considering a new QEP. She added that she would have Chris Caplinger send Ellen a copy of the fifth-year QEP report so it could be added to Sharepoint. In response to a question about a QEP’s relationship to SACS, Kathy asked Steve to clarify. Steve noted that the QEP addresses education in the future, and through a QEP, SACS is looking for campus-wide involvement toward that future.

Jake noted that the QEP then changes over time. Kathy added that the QEP changes regularly. Jake suggested that the QEP and GEC provided an opportunity for synergism: the QEP changes but General Education should not. General Education is simply what we do.

Kathy suggested that Ellen sit in on QEP and Undergraduate Committee meetings so that the GEC can know what these committees are doing and also respond to questions the committees might have about the GEC. Fred suggested that Chris Caplinger should be an ex-officio member of the GEC.

Jake then focused the conversation on the General Education Outcomes and added that what the GEC does/needs to do will not affect the structure/work of the senate curriculum committees. Michelle asked how reporting to the senate affected GEC membership. Jake noted that ex-officio membership could include anyone, including non-faculty. Caren expressed the importance of having a senate connection to insure that GEC work is reported in the minutes and to minimize uncertainty about the GEC’s work.

Jake reviewed several handouts he had created, including visual representations of the relationship between programs and General Education and how General Education is reported. Jake added that General Education data/activity will be reported in WEAVE and that data needed to be pulled together to inform ourselves; Steve added that part of the report should include action plans for program improvement.

Jake proposed that some work would be continuous and some would be periodic. He suggested that new courses would need some type of linkage to General Education and that General Education Outcomes need to be linked to course outcomes. He added that part of the GEC’s annual plan should include assessments, including what instruments we want to use, how many samples we will need to be representative, and how faculty might implement the assessments.

Jake then reviewed a matrix that outlined the roles that different constituencies play and a timeline for reporting and following through with the GEC’s work. He suggested that the Curriculum Sub-committee focus on getting the revised GE Outcomes vetted and work with mapping those outcomes. The Assessment Sub-committee should review the report from the summer workshop and prepare an assessment report for WEAVE.

Fred offered a brief overview of the summer workshop group’s finding and added that the group worked well together. He commented that he was not sure what we need to assess next. Jake suggested that the committee focus on closing the loop and reporting what has already been done. Jody agreed, adding that the new outcomes needed to be approved before we could move on. Barry asked if some of the same assessments could be used again. Ellen responded that the summer group had recommended that the JMU Scientific Reasoning instrument be used again; she added that the writing assessment had been more problematic. Fred agreed, adding that perhaps writing should be assessed again to work out some of the problems.
Jake concluded the meeting by asking GEC members to reflect on all of the information that had been shared and to email questions and ideas as they came up.

**Next Meeting:**
October 7, 2011
2:30 – 3:30
CTLS (1st floor of Library)