

Proposal to the BCC Faculty Senate

March 11, 2003

Introduction and Rationale

Hitherto, BCC has had no common format for its General Education (GE) course syllabi. As a result, classroom syllabi* for the college's GE courses vary significantly in form and content from department to department, discipline to discipline, and (often) from instructor to instructor. During the past two or three years, members of the BCC Committee on General Education have reviewed and analyzed all of the existing syllabi for the college's GE courses. In addition to the inconsistency of form and content mentioned above, the main conclusions of our "syllabus review project" are as follows:

- Many classroom syllabi for GE courses contain too little necessary and/or important information.
- Some syllabi contain too much information, i.e., more information than is useful to students at the beginning of a course.
- Some syllabi contain misinformation (e.g., course descriptions other than the ones listed in the BCC Catalog; incorrect statements of the college's Attendance Policy; and so forth).
- Some syllabi are poorly presented (e.g., sloppy typography, misspellings, grammatical errors, unclear statements on requirements and grading, unconventional bibliographic listings, imprecise course calendars, and so forth).

Therefore, we are proposing that the college adopt a common classroom syllabus format for all of its GE courses. This common format is a general one, allowing for appropriate departmental, discipline, and individual variations and at the same time providing a uniform schematic structure for the college's GE course syllabi.

Attached hereto are the following three documents:

1. Classroom Syllabus Form for BCC General Education Courses / "Box" Version
2. Classroom Syllabus Form for BCC General Education Courses / "List" Version
3. "Writing a Syllabus," by Altman and Cashin, which supports and supplements the GE Committee's rationale for the present proposal.

*For the purposes of this proposal, a "classroom syllabus" is the syllabus or "student guide" or "student course of study" distributed by an instructor to her/his students at the beginning of a course. This proposal is not directed to "departmental policy or file" syllabi although the forms included herein may be adaptable to such documents.