

# University High School Keystone Council Meeting

[Dec 2, 2009]

**1:00 pm, Library Conference Room**

**In attendance:** Kim Rojas, Janeice Ives, Andy Davis, Brian Conant, Shyla Anderson, Tom Holbrook, Diane Walker, Michelle Panizzi, Dixie Lewis, Mark Feaster, Jeff Hill, (2009-2010 Council), Steve Wilder

**Absent:**

**Approval of (month) Minutes:** Shyla\_\_ motioned to approve the minutes.  
        Marc         seconded.

## **I. Informational Items**

School Development: Essential qualities of UHigh Graduate statement. Dr. Dean suggested two additional qualities. Departments will be asked to examine how they might assess the qualities one at a time. Social Studies proposal to increase requirement for graduation. The committee is moving the proposal forward and is suggesting that the proposal should not be passed. UHigh quality statement sent back to committee to seek Dr. Dean's idea behind the "understanding of other languages" statement.

Social Science proposal to add a civics requirement for graduation. After an extensive amount of research what other schools were doing and the UHigh councilors the conclusion was that it would limit choice of electives. The committee is not in favor of the proposal. A suggestion was that there should be a global look at graduation requirements not by department.

Roll Call Vote on Social Studies curriculum issue:

Diane moves that we move to a vote Marc seconds

Andy Davis moved for a role call vote, Diane Walker seconds

Kim Rojas n

Janeice Ivesn n

Andy Davis y

Brian Conant, n

Shyla Anderson, n

Tom Holbrook, n

Diane Walker, n

Michelle Panizzi, n

Dixie Lewis, y

Mark Feaster, abstained

Jeff Hill, Not present

Steve Wilder n

Motion does not carry. Tom is not opposed to having civic components to UHigh curriculum but is concerned graduation requirements. The issue of requirements should be global as a school not by departments

Brain Conant added:

The Keystone Council School Development Subcommittee has discussed the Social Science Department's proposal to change the graduation requirements (and add a civics requirement) extensively at its last two meetings. At its last meeting the committee reached an impasse: after discussing the proposal with department chairs and in departments, most of the members of the committee do not anticipate the proposal will have the support it needs to be passed by the Council, but it was compelled to honor the social science department's request to forward the proposal to the Keystone Council.

The School Development Subcommittee understood the desire to have strong civics education for the students at University High School. Civics should be a vital part of our school's curriculum, and the committee looks forward to helping the social science department find a way to meet its goal of supporting this vital part of our students' education. Changing graduation requirements, however, is not likely the best way to achieve that goal.

The primary argument against the social sciences department's proposal is that increasing the graduation requirements in social sciences would likely result in limiting course choices for students. While the social science department argues that the impact would be felt most significantly within the social sciences department, other faculty (including the guidance counselors), predict that the change could significantly impact enrollments in elective programs across the curriculum. It is important to note here that the counselors feel even a single semester civics course requirement could ultimately lead to similar problems in the curriculum as there are very few single semester courses that can be "paired up" with a single semester civics requirement. **Consensus from the Keystone School Development Subcommittee was that it does not feel that this proposal presents a problem significant enough to warrant diminishing the appeal of student choice.**

At the same time, the School Development Committee developed the following suggestions should the social science department continue considering alternatives to meeting this curricular need

The social science department may want to consider these possibilities:

- The social science department could continue to develop civics components in several of its courses (Civil Rights/International Relations, Philosophy/Multimedia Relations, and World Geography/Non-Western History) even as these courses will not be required in order to meet a new graduation requirement. The department could also require a course with a civics component as a prerequisite for a fourth year of social sciences (sociology,

- psychology) much as English requires a literature course as a prerequisite to its fourth year electives.
- The social science department could consider curricular change to its existing required courses (World Studies, U.S. Studies) in order to develop a more civics-based curriculum.
  - In the document “Creating a Civic Blueprint for Illinois Schools” (2009) The McCormick Foundation identifies a wide variety of extra-curricular programs and initiatives vital to the development of civic virtue in Illinois schools (some of the programs include competitive constitution teams, development of relationships with civics organizations such as the Center for Civic Education and the Choices Foundation, and service-learning or community engagement programs and requirements. The social science department could lead the way in developing excellent additional civics-based extra-curricular programming.
  - The social science department could initiate staff development opportunities which develop our faculty’s ability to implement civics oriented lessons and pedagogy across the curriculum.

**A. Co-Curricular –**

**B. Clinical Experiences –Dixie Reported. Two corrections: Keep NA as a category and all criterion written in present tense.**

**C. Personnel –**

**D. School Development –.**

**E. Parent/School Relations –need to recruit addition members. “Do parents need any training to help their students be successful at UHigh?” A parental workshop? Orientation?**

**F. Shared Governance –**

**G. Student Conduct –**

**H. School Safety –**

**I. Diversity –**

**Leadership Minutes:**

**II. Other Information or Reports:**

**III. Discussion Items:**

**IV. Action items:**

**Move to Adjourn:**     Diane     made a motion to adjourn. ?     Marc     seconded.

**The next Keystone meeting: First wed of Jan. 1 PM .**

**Submitted by:**

Andy Davis, 2009-2010 Keystone Council Secretary