

# Meredith General Education- Taking a Closer Look

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Fri., Jan. 11, the entirety of Meredith College's faculty was asked to attend a meeting concerning Meredith's General Education program. All of Meredith College's programs—including General Education—come up for review every five years. This meeting was to promote a free exchange of information concerning the recommendations that the outside review team and General Education work group—consisting of Meredith faculty—produced.

As the dance department's Carol Finley masterfully conducted a sea of confused, concerned, and (the way we like them) feisty personalities that make up the Meredith College faculty, a series of issues brought forth by the outside and internal reviewers were sorted through one by one.

Two faculty members had spent several days with the outside reviewers, guiding them through the Meredith course guide book and the current construction of the General Education program. They relayed Bill Craft's, one of the outside reviewers, views of education which he used to shape his ideas and suggestions about Meredith's program. Craft saw education as a three sided triangle: one side being our CORE, an interdisciplinary program; the second being the major (or depth in a field of study); and the third being "breadth of knowledge," or a chance to explore outside one's major.

With this triangle in mind as scaffolding, the review team constructed eight broad goals for the entire college instead of the current 30 goals in place for General Education. Please remember that these are a.) not all of the suggestions/recommendations and b.) that they are JUST recommendations—not things that are guaranteed to actually happen. There are many more meetings, proposals, and voting sessions that will go on for several months before any definitive changes are made to the General Education program.

1.) Incorporating the summer reading book into CORE 100.

CORE 100 is about American diversity—the summer reading book does not always fit this category.

What about the CORE 100 classes held in the spring and those students who read the book the semester before?

2.) A required 50 hours outside of the majors.

Are they adding more hours in hopes of scaling back majors?

What about larger majors that cannot handle the larger course load?

Do they mean for this requirement to eliminate so called "double-dipping" where a course counts for both a major and General Education?

This suggestion was very controversial—Betty Webb suggested that, with this type of requirement, we were merely bringing students from helicopter parents to helicopter schooling.

3.) Eliminate English 200 as well as our science

and society and social science requirements—among others.

There had been some complaining earlier in the meeting about how students are already poor readers and writers (in the broad sense), so cutting programs like English 200, which is an integral (and may I say quite fun) portion of the English equation for Meredith College students, seems counterproductive if our hope is to promote students' ability to analyze and critique form of textual information.

One of the suggestions of the outside team was to promote a world view and global awareness on campus—through the classroom. Faculty felt that eliminating classes which count as a science in society or social science would be counterproductive as well. The report from the outside reviewers said that this kind of class already existed within the major or perhaps in the CORE classes. Those promoting the classes above—Bob Vance and Pamela Winfield—argued that the existing classes would not be enough.

Some faculty members suggested that we raise the entry scores in math for our students instead of incorporating a statistics or calculus class into the General Education curriculum. There was also a concern of the variance in texts used in CORE and other classes taught by multiple teachers. Apparently there have been some changes since I took CORE three-plus years ago. A varied text

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## Star Tech

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I don't own an iPod. I'm serious, I really don't! That's not to say I'm mp3 player-less, however. I am the proud owner of a pink 30 GB Zune. Zune, Microsoft's lesser known answer to iPod, is now in its second generation of design. While it may not be as "cool" as its Apple counterpart, Zune still offers many features and has great bang for the buck.

Zune is available in flash-based 4 GB (starting under \$140) and 8 GB (starting under \$175) models and hard drive-based 30 GB (starting under \$160) and 80 GB (starting under \$245) models. Zune comes in black, red, pink, green, white and brown (color choices depend on the model). Similar to iTunes, Microsoft offers Zune Marketplace to its customers. According to the official Zune website, the Marketplace has includes 3 million songs, albums, DRM-free MP3s, music videos and audio/video podcasts.

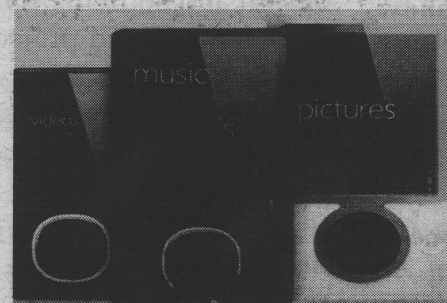
So, Zune or iPod? Let's compare the two 80 GB models. iPod comes in two colors, has a 2.5" screen, weighs 4.9 ounces and costs \$249. Zune comes in five colors, has a 3.2" display, weighs 4.5 ounces and costs \$245. iPod does offer contacts,

a clock, calendars, notes, games, alarms and a stopwatch, none of which are found on Zune. Zune includes wireless syncing and wireless Zune-to-Zune sharing (send full-length songs, good for three plays, and pictures to in-range Zune friends). It also has a built-in FM radio, which is handy. Both devices offer audio, video, movie, TV, picture and podcast capabilities, not to mention landscape and portrait viewing options.

The two competitors offer solid, comparable products; if you're more into goodies and extras, perhaps iPod is your answer. However, if you want a bigger screen (a major plus in my book) and don't really care about the fluff, Zune might be your answer. Hey, it works for me!

If you're in the mood for an interactive, graphically amazing, sensory-pleasing Zune website, visit <http://www.zunejourney.net/>. The site must have required countless hours of work from a gaggle of masterful graphic designers and animators. Listen to tunes, take a tour of a colorful galaxy and learn more about Zune all in one stop!

Check out <http://www.zune.net> for product information, Zune Marketplace, forums and more. Happy Zune-ing!



The Zune Family: 4GB/8GB, 80 GB, 30 GB  
Photo courtesy <http://www.zune.net/en-us/products/zune4gb8gb/default.htm>