

General Education Curriculum Committee 2003-04
Meeting of February 9, 2004 - 3:00 p.m., Strickler 126B

Minutes

Voting members attending: Berman, Black, Boyd, Clancey, Crim, Dugger, Gray, Johnson, Kolers (Chair), Nahata, Schultz, Weinberg, Williams. *Others:* Billingsley (non-voting), Carden (staff).

1. The committee chair, Avery Kolers, called the meeting to order and suggested devoting an allotted amount of time to each agenda item. New and continuing members introduced themselves. Regrets from absent members, Dogbe, Hartzog, Holloman, and Hughes were noted. Malana Hartzog and Jennifer Hughes are the newly appointed student representatives.
2. The minutes of January 12, 2004 were approved and will be posted on the General Education page of the Provost's web site.
3. Carden reported that in cases where modifications to general education course proposals and/or syllabi were "required," acceptable revisions were received. However, where "suggestions" for modifications were made, there was no faculty response. Nevertheless, CIFs have been processed to approve all submitted proposals.

The only *pending* matter is a decision on whether HPES will drop two courses for general education credit: HPES 387 and 418. Once resolved, the general education course listing for Fall 2004 will be publicized (web posting, standard mailings, course schedule, etc.).

4. Billingsley gave a brief overview of the purpose of the General Education Curriculum Committee in relation to the newly formed Undergraduate Council. The UC is a smaller group of unit reps, and the GECC is a larger group with a smaller focus, which reports to the UC. Both are elected bodies. Any member not able to continue serving on the GECC needs to inform their dean before the spring elections.
5. Billingsley reported that he is collecting syllabi of lower-level general education courses from General Education course instructors. The purpose is to determine whether all instructors are following General Education syllabus guidelines. Reviewing proposals and requiring that syllabi include the established learning outcomes is a laborious task.

6. The committee discussed the following issues:

■ **Establishment of a policy on general education transfers and equivalencies**

Karen Gray raised this issue. Discussion focused on unit practices and Admissions procedures. Some cases are assessed individually, and flexibility in evaluating courses outside the state system and feeder schools is encouraged. One-time exceptions can be made in special cases. However, established equivalencies (over 20,000) are recorded in the system and followed as a general practice. Billingsley pointed out that the units hold the authority over degree requirements (departmental decision), but that the committee could make recommendations to the University Council. The consensus of the committee was that current practices seem to be working, at least in departments such as Communication.

■ **Assessment of general education courses**

The initial course offering is not a problem (must meet the guidelines), but ongoing assessment is needed, given the number of sections and delivery by various instructors (including GTAs and part-time faculty). Assessment practices in specific departments/units (Humanities, Nursing, Dentistry) were discussed, as were the constraints in large classrooms such as ECON. Limited resources play a part in assessment measures. Nevertheless, assessment is an ongoing issue that must be addressed not only to satisfy CPE, SACS, and other accrediting bodies but to improve the overall quality of the general education program. Billingsley gave a historical overview of past practices and reported that Brian Huot has begun a pilot assessment project and will provide a report.

■ **Plus/Minus grading for general education courses**

This policy has a cumulative effect on grades and has turned into an equity issue for students. Many students are choosing professors and shopping for courses based on the grading practices. Currently, the grading system is left to the discretion of instructors unless there are multiple sections. This committee questions whether this policy should apply to all general education courses.

Outstanding issues on the agenda were carried over until the next meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:20 p.m.

Kathy Carden, recorder