

**General Education Curriculum Committee
Meeting of November 11, 2011, 2:30 p.m.**

Minutes

Attending (Voting): Crespo, Futrell, Koerselman, Leichty, Mansfield-Jones, Maron, Martin, Menezes, Masolo, Mattingly, Reynolds, Singleton, Weinberg, Wolfe, Zimmerman.

(Non-Voting): Bays, Billingsley, Carden, Dietrich, Karega-Mason, Reed, Steinberg.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of September 23, 2011, were approved.

Membership Updates

William Biles is the new Speed School representative who replaces Mark French. Bill Weinberg is retiring in December; his outstanding long-term service on the GECC was acknowledged and his presence will be missed.

Syllabi Review Project Update

Karega-Mason reported that the university is storing all course syllabi using Share Point. However, to make the general education syllabi review project more user-friendly for the assessors, she worked with Katie Hunt to develop a LiveText model (uses a generic web browser), to bring together all documents in one central place. Coordination with Shumake and Institutional Research is required to get the project moving. Since this is the first official mandate to post all syllabi to Blackboard, sample extractions will be run and a count on missing syllabi will be determined.

***Action:** A demonstration of the model and brief training will be scheduled in January, 2012.

A&S Aggregated Report (2008, 2009, 2010)

Dietrich shared information (handout) on trend data from A&S class surveys which reflects positive feedback on the general education program. Progress has been made since the first survey in 2008. One noteworthy improvement is in the area of critical thinking, which is probably related to i2a (“ideas for action”) initiatives.

CD Petitions Update

Karega-Mason reported that the number of petitions for CD credit (mostly study abroad) is increasing. However, the rate of approvals is not.

An issue arose with one particular proposal for international service learning. It was denied because it is a UofL course that has not been approved for CD credit. That process requires specific course syllabi guidelines and approval by the A&S Curriculum Committee and the GECC within a designated time frame. Steinberg reminded the committee that general education codes become part of the official course title after formally approved; it would be logistically difficult to track courses any other way. Also, the monitoring of syllabi for special topics courses (a course taught in different countries) would require that the core of the course be the

same. In response to the instructor's plan to ask all students in this course to petition, it is the consensus of the GECC that it is the instructor's responsibility to seek CD approval of a course. If approved next year, credit will not be retroactive based on established policy. Discussion surrounding this issue resulted in several recommendations to clarify eligibility for CD petitions:

- 1) Students are not eligible to petition for CD credit for completion of a UofL course not previously approved for general education.
- 2) Revise the language of the general education guidelines to clarify the intention of study abroad credit. (Courses offered in other countries are not to be confused with UofL study abroad courses; there is a distinction between ISLP and study-abroad programs.)

***Action:** Carden will follow up on wording changes to the general education policy guidelines. Karega-Mason will clarify the CD petition guidelines in consultation with Steinberg, noting the distinction between ISLP and university-sanctioned study abroad programs.

Additionally, Futrell recommended that in some special cases, consideration be given to new study abroad courses within a short window of time following the course proposal deadline. The GECC was in favor of this one exception given the range of planning entailed for study abroad. Koerselman questioned the November 15 deadline since the university no longer prints a catalog.

***Action:** Carden will consult Roselle Taylor and Scott Burks regarding the proposed extension of the internal GECC deadline, working in cooperation with the A&S Curriculum Committee process, course schedule publication, and catalog proof deadline. It was noted that the January 15 Institutional Research CIF deadline is firm for submission of course inventory changes to CPE each year. Various actions hinge on that cut-off date.

LiveText Pilot Assessment Report

Karega-Mason gave an overview of the 2010-2011 assessment report using the LiveText model and requested feedback on the four questions (page 8) related to 2011-2012 initiatives. She pointed out that a number of courses (especially in History, Anthropology, etc.) could not be assessed because of their use of multiple-choice questions and scantrons. To address the problem and improve the assessment process, several suggestions were brainstormed. To follow the practices of Mathematics and Natural Sciences for some courses, departments (not instructors) could be asked to design specific questions in advance. The question remains as to whether the design of a new assessment model applies only to large lecture courses or departments with a large number of currently unassessed courses. Solutions must fit large classes, and one model may not fit all departments. Notifications about changes in practice need to be timed well. Zimmerman commented that, before finals, Mathematics includes several short-essay questions along with multiple-choice. Dietrich commented that Edna Ross has designed multiple-choice questions that require critical thinking skills. Wolfe offered several examples of how this could be done. The assessors would look at the scores. Bays is concerned about the design of a comparable assessment using the 1-4 point scale. It's crucial that questions be matched to the rubric. Dietrich suggested talking with faculty members to develop solutions; Koerselman agreed that it's important to work together. The next assessment is targeted for Spring 2012; documents currently are being collected.

***Action:** Karega-Mason will set up a meeting with Dietrich, the CEHD team, and Drs. K'Meyer and Markowitch of Anthropology.

***Action:** In response to a question from Mansfield-Jones, Karega-Mason will find out whether the missing Natural Science courses were lectures or lab sections.

Regarding the Pilot LiveText Assessment Model, Dietrich positively commented on the ease of the system, the rationale for three readers (one resolve reader), and the quick results. Bays appreciated the level of detail in the data. Also, beginning in the spring, Blackboard can be used to upload rubrics when grading assignments.

The GECC approved the Assessment Subcommittee's recommendation to revise the scoring heading of the Critical Thinking Rubric and match it to all five assessment rubrics (page 7 of the report). The details of this change will remedy the previous broad jump between scores that were problematic for some readers. Also, the GECC approved the addition of a "Not Requested" category to remedy the previous "X" notation. This change does not affect the four-point rating scale. However, Koerselman expressed concern about the comparative analysis. For future reports, Bays suggested a disclaimer about the comparisons between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 models and commented that it's best to clean up the assessment method now.

***Action:** Karega-Mason will align the scoring headings for all rubrics; Carden will post the revised rubrics to the web site and distribute them to the GECC.

Bays reported that Wolfe (absent during this part of the discussion) plans to look at the assessments for her department and what they mean and then review past assignments to determine how courses can be strengthened. Karega-Mason commented that this works for Composition because it was the only department assessed. Wolfe is following up by conducting workshops with faculty and instructors to try to improve outcomes. Billingsley recommended that the GECC consult the A&S Chairs to re-visit the original agreement about assessment results, which were not to be de-aggregated by department. Koerselman supported the initiative with the thinking that the first round of assessments would serve as base-line data; a second-round comparative analysis might assist departments in determining whether they are doing better, worse or not changing in the outcomes of their general education curriculum. Dietrich commented that it's less threatening if data is shared within the department and not published.

***Action:** Billingsley and Karega-Mason will consult the departmental chairs.

Dietrich raised the question of assessing distance education courses since the numbers are increasing. Billingsley recommended working with the Delphi Center and talking with instructors, such as Deborah Wilson and Al Futrell, who teach many of the distance education courses. There is an obligation to those courses, and the Delphi Center is preparing an interim report for SACS.

***Action:** Incorporate Distance Education courses into the assessment process.

Next Meeting

The next GECC meeting was set for December 9 at 2:30 p.m. in the Jouett Hall Conference Room.