

**General Education Curriculum Committee
Meeting of November 21, 2008, 3:00 p.m.**

Minutes

Attending (Voting): Beattie, Busch, Cox, Downs, French, Haworth, Koerselman, Maron, Menezes, Singleton, Weinberg, Williams, Zimmerman, *(Non-Voting):* Billingsley, Carden, Dietrich, Robinson, Steinberg

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 10, 2008 were approved.

CPE-mandated Assessment: Conference Call

The scheduled conference call with Bob Goldstein was canceled since involvement of the GECC is not needed. This statewide mandate is an assessment of the range of students who take general education courses.

Course Proposals

The GECC was in agreement with the Course Proposal Subcommittee regarding the approval of the following courses for general education credit, effective Summer 2009:

- ANTH 317 – Anthropology of China-CD2
- HUM 219 – Introduction to Western World Religions-HCD2
 - *A motion was made to require a commitment from the department to offer this content course on an annual basis, per the frequency of offering guidelines.
- PAS 204 – Introduction to African Studies-CD1

However, the JA 300 proposal (Career Development & Cultural Intelligence-CD1) was approved “pending modifications” to the outcomes. More specificity is required concerning how the course content will meet the stated outcomes. The assessments are satisfactory.

***Action:** Williams will outline the requested modifications, and Carden will follow up.

The GECC would not consider any late proposals that were not first reviewed by the subcommittee for their scrutiny prior to the deadline.

***Action:** Carden will inform the appropriate contacts in the School of Music Re: the status of MUH 219. This new course can either be offered without general education credit this year or proposed for reconsideration for general education credit during the next academic year.

Update on Assessment

Robinson reported that a subcommittee is in place to finalize the draft of the Natural Sciences rubric. Members include Arnold Karpoff (Biology), Lenore Hoyt (Chemistry), David Brown (Physics), Marti Zimmerman (Math), Thomas Tretter (Center for Math and Science Education).

GECC Guidelines and Recommendations to Provost

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

CD Competency: Proposal to Change Wording

Busch discussed his proposal and reasoning for alternative wording for the CD requirement (replace “understanding” with “exposure to” and require CD1 courses in two different departments if a student opts out of a CD2 course). This proposal was triggered by an approved course in Chinese Art that claims to provide an “understanding” of cultural diversity. He explained why the change in wording would more accurately reflect the outcomes since “understanding” denotes comprehension. Counter concerns and questions included the following:

- More difficult to exclude courses if the term “exposure” is used (example of history courses)
- The term “awareness” encountered the same objection, although it might be more assessable. Another term for consideration was “an appreciation of” cultural diversity.
- The wording “engagement with issues of cultural diversity” was proposed as being more assessable and in line with the general education preamble; however, not all agreed.
- Choose a word that best reflects what happens in the classroom and use language that is attainable to avoid assessment pitfalls.
- If the wording is changed, do the outcome statements also need to be changed—statements that are assessment drivers?
- If the outcomes are met, can we claim that the students have an understanding of cultural diversity? Are the minimum standards high enough to accomplish this task?
- Developing a “sensitivity to” cultural diversity issues and the way different people live in our global world is a starting point--a basis for continued inquiry and learning.
- There’s not a single course that goes through the evolution of the different aspects of cultural diversity.

There was a motion to change the title and first sentence in the outcomes, but concern arose about how the term “exposure to” could be assessed. “Exposure” is the general sense of being generally educated. The offending word (“understanding”) could be omitted in order to streamline the overall outcomes in the general education preamble; however, such a change would require the process of university-wide approval which could jeopardize the cultural diversity requirement.

Although the issues of the wording change and departmental requirements were not resolved (no vote), it prompted new thoughts about the three distinct areas of competency in the general education preamble that currently are being assessed. A suggestion was made to consider general education coding for newly proposed CT (critical thinking) and EC (effective communication) courses, as well as CD (cultural diversity) courses. Of course, students are encouraged to think critically and communicate effectively across the curriculum. Establishing general education requirements in two additional competency areas may be problematic. The history of the general education program was to differentiate the competency area from the specific content areas.

GERs and Transfer Students

Although the numbers are not confirmed, the small number of students given degrees who escape the CD requirement is a minimal cost for retaining the program requirement. Students are also allowed to double count (combined CD and content-coded courses). Parallel competencies are an efficient way to address CD without requiring a single course.

Upcoming Meetings

The December meeting was canceled.

Prepared by Kathy Carden