

General Education Curriculum Committee
Meeting of September 21, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attending (Voting): Bernstein, Biles, Desoky, Futrell, George (student), Koerselman, Mansfield-Jones, Menezes, Reynolds, Romesburg, Singleton, Song, Tillquist, Yakkanti (student)
(Non-Voting): Billingsley, Carden, Dietrich, Karega

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of May 9, 2012, were approved.

Introduction of Committee Members and Reference Binders

Introductions were made. New committee members were welcomed and presented with a general education resource binder, including many documents that also can be found on the general education web site at <http://louisville.edu/provost/GER/>.

Review of Committee Charge

Koerselman gave an overview of the function of the GECC, a recommending body to the Provost. Current work includes the addressing of student learning outcome (SLO) concerns, review of cultural diversity (CD) petitions, and review of general education course proposals.

Election of Committee Chair

After several years of service as a re-elected chair, Koerselman asked for nominations for a new chair. Jackie Singleton, a seasoned member of the committee, was elected.

Subcommittee Service Volunteers

Course Proposal Subcommittee (coordinated by Kathy Carden): Ram Yakkanti will serve as the new student representative; other volunteers include Futrell, Mansfield-Jones, Singleton, and Song.

*ACTION: The subcommittee will meet as soon as possible following the November 15 course proposal submission deadline. Carden will provide advance copies of the proposals for review.

CD Petition Subcommittee (coordinated by Joy Karega): Albin George will serve as the new student representative; other volunteers include Desoky, Reynolds, Romesburg, and Masolo.

*ACTION: Karega will convene the meeting ASAP and set the schedule for the academic year.

Assessment Subcommittee (coordinated by Joy Karega): The work of this subcommittee is a collaborative effort with the CEHD team. William Biles volunteered to replace Joanna Wolf and continuing members include Dietrich, Bays, and Karega (Program Coordinator for General Education Assessment).

Publication of Assessment Data

Karega received approval from the GECC to use public assessment data in a journal. Next, she and Ann Larson will go through the institutional review board (IRB) before publishing the materials.

CD Petition Review Update

Karega reported that ten CD petitions need to be reviewed quickly since the subcommittee did not meet during the summer. Billingsley explained the desperate situations of some students who find out just prior to graduation that they are deficient in a CD requirement; therefore, their appeal for approval of a non-UofL transfer course, study abroad or life experience to fulfill a CD requirement may fall outside the parameters of the regular review schedule. Consequently, he would like to see a shortened lapse in time between petition reviews. Karega suggested that the subcommittee might read petitions through e-mail during summer months and consider adjusting the deadlines. The cultural diversity rubric is applied during the review and a score of 3 is the baseline. The rubric and essay criteria are posted on the web site. She conducts a preliminary review of the packet upon receipt to make sure that it is complete, including submission of the student transfer evaluation (STE). If a petition is denied by the subcommittee, based on the criteria, there is one opportunity for an appeal. A student whose petition is denied is informed of the reason based on specific criteria and re-directed to the guidelines in case the student wants to submit a revised essay. An international trip does not automatically qualify as a cultural diversity learning experience.

To remedy past confusion caused by a particular department or advisor telling a class or multiple students to appeal for CD credit through the petition process, the criteria have been clarified.

Transfer Issues and Mapping of SLOs Statewide

General education policy prohibits course substitutions if a UofL course is not on the approved general education course listing. A process for evaluating transfer courses entails collaboration between departments and the transfer office. Billingsley reported that the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) has approved a new state transfer process that incorporates an appeal if a course taken at a sending institution is rejected by the receiving institution. The goal is not to penalize transfer students. An example of an appeal would be an architectural history course that doesn't have an equivalent match. Given the increasing detail work required, the SLOs are indexed for all state institutions.

Billingsley distributed a draft document of the statewide general education assessment plan and approved SLO categories. The statewide SLOs did not replace UofLs gen ed outcomes but were matched in a wider context. Now CPE (a coordinating body) wants to determine how each institution assesses their SLOs. Pages 4-11 of the document outline assessment practices and schedules for each state institution. Gaps in information for UofL's SLO's and assessments need to be identified and filled in. Possible effects of a more uniform statewide curriculum were discussed, including the impact on community and technical colleges. Concern was expressed over the ability to continue offering quality courses and a true collegiate experience, not sacrificing quality to efficiency. State oversight and budgetary constraints are part of the concern.

*ACTION: Although Billingsley, Karega, Bays and Dietrich will confer to map the assessments, the GECC's feedback is sought. In preparation for discussion at the next meeting, the committee was asked to review the document and familiarize themselves with UofL's assessment rubrics.

Quality Collaborative (QC) Project/AAC&U Grant

Billingsley reported that UofL, ECTC, and CPE each have received a \$40,000 Lumina grant through AAC&U, with the intent to advance the goals of the Quality Collaborative (QC) project. An overview of this initiative was discussed with more to be revealed as the project unfolds. Basically, the money will fund a study on how transfer work is used most efficiently. The Biology

Department has a special interest in determining how its program is affected by the block transfer policy. Drs. Fell, Dietrich and Billingsley are serving as the grant team. Again, this is a matter of how to align curricula to accommodate transfer students while maintaining a quality educational experience. Dr. Debra Humphreys from AAC&U will visit UofL on the afternoon of November 28 and meet with UofL, ECTC, and CPE representatives to discuss the QC vision and framework, including its relationship to Kentucky's Tuning Project.

*ACTION: The GECC was asked to save the afternoon of November 28 for participation in the meeting. The detailed agenda is forthcoming.

Assessment Reports

Karega prepared and distributed the pilot report for the Syllabus Review Project and the results of the May 2012 Assessment.

2011-2012 Assessment: Karega briefed new members on the history, methods, and current focus of UofL's assessment initiatives. In the 2011-2012 report, the aggregated results reflect scores for each area of competency (critical thinking and cultural diversity). Assessment challenges and limitations were explained. For example, the rubrics apply to written work, not to multiple choice and scantron-administered tests in large lecture courses. As a possible solution, Dietrich reported that i2a has given A&S a grant that can be used to assess scantron tests. She proposed a pilot assessment project. Karega and Mansfield-Jones commented on the importance of carefully mapping the questions to the rubric so that the aggregated results come out in the same categories. The current model did not accommodate many of the Anthropology courses. For the next (spring) assessment, the Political Science and Economics departments will be combined with Women's and Gender Studies, Art History, and Theatre Arts. Although the original intent was to assess the general education program, with no identification of specific courses or instructors, disaggregated data results can be made available at the departmental level. Specific departments have requested their results, and the GECC approved release of that information (but not for publication). Also, Koerselman requested a comparative report of the assessment results over time, which Karega will provide for the GECC.

*ACTION: In preparation for discussion at the next meeting, the GECC was asked to review the report, paying particular attention to the two questions posed on pages 6-7.

Syllabus Review Project: Following a charge by the GECC to revise the criteria for reviewing a random sampling of general education course syllabi, Karega and Bays conducted a 25% random sampling of Fall 2001 courses. The results of their reviews reflect that only 42.7% (41 of 96) of the course syllabi contain a statement of the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes. The questions to discuss are what the GECC wants to do with the results, whether this is a representative sampling, and what the results mean. Also, should departments be contacted about deficiencies? Billingsley commented that the intent was to assess whether the courses are teaching to the SLOs and doing what they were intended to do when first approved for gen ed credit. Now the syllabi are public on Blackboard as required by CPE and by direct order of the Provost as part of external compliance and SACS expectations. Although he has reminded general education faculty about the general education syllabus guidelines prior to each semester, as a next step he will ask the undergraduate deans to inform their departments about the required gen ed SLO statements and corresponding assessments for inclusion in the syllabus and course content. Koerselman stressed the importance of making departments responsible for monitoring. Bernstein recommended that departments be informed about the deficiencies. Part of the problem is that instructors are not aware of the gen ed syllabi requirements. Billingsley commented that evidence of compliance should be reflected in the next SACS accreditation review. A directive from the Provost might be a key action.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, October 19, in Ekstrom W210.

Prepared by Kathy Carden