

General Education Curriculum Committee
Meeting of December 7, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attending (Voting): Biles, Desoky, George (student), Mansfield-Jones, Pack, Reynolds, Romesburg, Singleton, Song, Tillquist, Yakkanti (student), Zimmerman
(Non-Voting): Bays, Carden, Dietrich, Gilchrist, Karega, Partin, Reed

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 19, 2012, were approved with a couple of minor edits.

Introductions

Alona Pack, new rep for Nursing, and Cheryl Gilchrist, non-voting rep for Undergraduate Assessment and Retention, were introduced.

General Education Course Proposals

Carden reported that the following general education course proposals were reviewed and approved by the course proposal subcommittee. In several cases, approvals were contingent upon recommended syllabus modifications to comply with the syllabus guidelines:

- GEOS 219/PHYS 219 Contemporary Issues in Meteorology Lab—SL
- HUM 224 Introduction to Film--HCD2
- ML 270/AST 270/CHST 270 Chinese Contributions to the World—HCD1
(already approved for CD1 but not for H)
- PAS 200 Introduction to Pan-African Studies—SBCD1
(already approved for CD1)
- PAS 272 Reggae Music & the Politics of Black Liberation—ACD1
- PAS 273 Rhythm & Blues Revolution & American Culture—ACD1
- PAS 308/ARTH 349 Contemporary Trends in African American Art—WRCD1
(also a WR course)

*ACTION: Carden will follow up with the departments to secure final modifications in electronic format, process the CIFs, and update the general education course listing, effective summer 2013.

General Education Syllabus Guidelines

Mansfield-Jones, one of the general education proposal reviewers, recommended an edit to the general education syllabus guidelines, changing the word “should” to “must” to clarify the literal practice of compliance to the guidelines. That is, syllabi that don’t comply are sent back for modifications, typically for not incorporating the general education learning outcomes and assessments as outlined in the course proposal template.

*ACTION: Carden will post the updated document for 2013-2014 to the gen ed web site.

Singleton requested clarification of the syllabus guidelines regarding the three overarching goals of the general education program in relation to the more specific student learning outcomes. Karega and Mansfield-Jones explained that these broad competency outcomes, stated in the preamble, are addressed through all of the general education courses working together, not by one single course.

CD Petition Review Update

Karega reported that one previous appeal was approved following amendments, and two new petitions were denied. Also, the recommended changes to the CD petition guidelines were made and posted to the gen ed web site.

Spring 2012 Assessment Report: Next Steps

Karega sought feedback on the two questions posed on pages 6-7 of the 2011-2012 assessment report regarding 1) what the results reveal about the general education program and students' performance in the program and 2) how improvements can be made. For new members, she summarized the history of the Cycle I assessments and explained necessary modifications to the rubrics. Even though there was an agreement with faculty that the data would be aggregated, four departments have requested disaggregated data and this information is now shared upon request. Dietrich highly recommended sharing assessment results with as many of the general education faculty as possible and in a way (beyond the numbers) which solicits an invested response and next-step commitment. The assessment subcommittee hopes that the Cycle I baseline data will be used constructively by departments to make improvements in weak areas where students seem to be having difficulties. Since Karega received no feedback from the deans when she distributed the abbreviated assessment report, Dietrich and Tillquist suggested that the A&S Faculty Assembly may be a good forum for presenting the data. Song suggested that such a forum be expanded to include any college that has general education courses and that deans be included.

Although current assessments are structured to focus on student performance, rather than the delivery of the courses, Biles expressed interest in an academic unit-level assessment and he wondered if there were enough samples. Karega responded that sample sizes from some departments are not large enough to make them credible if shifting to an assessment model relying on the disaggregation of assessment results based on departments. Also, Bays reminded the committee that the artifacts are blinded.

There is, however, a large sample size in A&S for CD and the assessment against the rubric raised a flag as to why that score is low. Tillquist questioned the validity of the instruments in terms of getting a true pattern of the results.

*ACTION: Karega and Bays agreed that reliability checks could be run.

Zimmerman questioned how the CT scores (hovering around 2.5 out of 4) could be interpreted. Karega responded that CT clearly dies at "point of view" (Table 1) and that a department chair could see this noticeable trend. A narrative to accompany the tables might be helpful in explaining what the numbers mean. To accompany the narrative, Mansfield-Jones suggested putting together a more colorful graph (a simple poster format without too much busyness) with a link to the narrative report and prompt that more information could be provided upon request. Reynolds wondered if the narrative would include answers to the questions. Karega reiterated the need for feedback on the key questions: "What does the GECC want to do with the data and what does the committee want to say to the faculty at large?" Gilchrist commented on an approach that asks departments what they will do with the findings.

Karega commented that the GECC assessments are an evolving work in progress and that Cycle I gave a snapshot. Some assignments were factored out (designated with an asterisk) since they did not ask students to give a point of view or address each of the four categories. For the Cycle II assessments, narratives of standard deviations could be compiled.

As a next step, several recommendations were made. Desosky recommended starting with setting goals so that the numbers have meaning, as reflected in the analysis. For example, within the 0-4 scoring range for the four variables, determine the goal. Also, establish an average range between the minimum and maximum range in order to draw a conclusion

*ACTION: Decide on the goals at the January meeting and establish assessment goals before sending out the narrative and revised table.

In response to Pack's inquiry, a method for assessing student competencies after the completion of 12 hours has not been developed. Dietrich commented on the inability to get the Registrar's Office to run a query to pull the names of students in general education classes who had completed a certain number of general education hours. Therefore, it would be difficult to evaluate the program if students are mixed in from the beginning of the program with students who have nearly completed it, not knowing where they are in the process.

*ACTION: Ask Billingsley to request specific data, as needed.

Spring 2013 Assessment Dates

Karega announced the assessment training and Saturday reading dates for assigned readers:

February 15, 2013 – Training

February 23, 2013 – Assessment readings

(for Art History, Women's & Gender Studies, Theatre Arts, Political Science, and Economics)

May 14, 2013 – Training

May 18, 2013 – Assessment readings

(for Mathematics)

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, January 11, in the Jouett Hall Conference Room. Agenda items regarding the Statewide SLO Framework and Quality Collaborative Project were tabled until Billingsley could report. The GECC was reminded to be prepared to establish assessment goals.

Prepared by Kathy Carden