

General Education Council

September 27, 2017

MINUTES

PRESENT: Joan Brewer, David McKenzie, Chris Stone, Rich Sleezer, Carol Lucy, Maddison Thompson, Andy Houchin, Jo Kord, Amy Oelschlager, Damara Paris, and Shawna Shane

ABSENT: Qiang Shi, Sheila Markowitz, Steven Lovett, Kathy Landwehr, and Klassee Crawford

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 13th meeting minutes were approved unanimously with two minor changes. Stone suggested that in order to minimize the amount of time spent on reviewing minutes that we work to develop a process to review them outside of the meeting time. Sleezer agreed to contact IT to set up a Canvas course for the General Education Council so that documents like minutes could be shared, viewed, and edited more efficiently.

PROCESSES and PROCEDURES DOCUMENT and Review of Existing General Education Courses:

Sleezer discussed the document that was produced over the summer by the Processes and Procedures sub-committee (Sleezer, Shane, Lovett, & Markowitz). It includes a general definition of what a general education course is, the currently approved general education goals, specific processes and criteria for evaluating general education courses for retention and for adoption of new courses, and the procedure adopted last year for petitioning to add a new course to the general education program. Council members raised several questions about Criteria 1-6.

1. An undergraduate course numbered 100-400
2. Must not have required pre-requisites
3. Offer at least once a year
4. Must be available for all students and majors
5. Must address at least one general education goal or associated learning outcomes.
6. At least one section of the course must contribute/report assessment data at least once a year.

After discussion there was general agreement that criteria 1, 2, 4, & 5 were acceptable as written. "Criterion 3 Offered at least once per year", was discussed at some length due to questions about courses taught on rotations. Sleezer asked the student representatives for their opinions about how often general education courses should be offered. They both agreed that they should be offered at least once per year if not every semester. Sleezer provided an example of foreign language courses which are taught in alternate semesters. After some additional discussion Criterion 3 was deemed adequate for now. Criterion 6 was discussed at some length. Concerns were raised that only requiring a single section of a course to submit assessment data once per year would affect the validity of assessment analysis for the course. There was no consensus reached as to exactly what frequency of reporting requirement would be acceptable but a suggestion was made that all professors should report assessment data at least once per year for each general education course they teach. Sleezer stated that the university policy is that every professor should be involved in assessment. Sleezer agreed to rewrite Criterion 6 to reflect the concerns of the Council. The revision will be reviewed and discussed at the next Council meeting. Sleezer shared with the Council a second document with specific courses to review for continuance in the general education program but it was generally agreed that a consensus on the criteria must be reached before we can use them to evaluate and make decisions about individual courses and their retention or removal.

SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW OF GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE PETITIONS:

There was a general discussion about appropriate scheduling of council meetings that would be devoted to the review of petitions to add courses to the general education program. There was general agreement that these reviews should be scheduled for particular days to be more efficient with Council time. A consensus was not reached as to how often or when petitions would be reviewed but Sleezer agreed to work with Kim Massoth to determine a suggested meeting or set of meetings for petition review during the late Fall 2017 semester. There was discussion about if such petitions should be sent out for review through the current curricular review process. Sleezer pointed out that this has not been done in the past two years and such a review is not explicitly required by our constitution and bylaws. Timing for a spring submission deadline for petitions was discussed but no decisions were reached. One consideration discussed was the time required and how that might interfere with getting other important Council business completed in a timely fashion.

LOOKING AHEAD: Council will continue the discussion on determining dates to accept petitions to add courses to the general education program at a later date. McKenzie asked about discussing the edited goals produced this summer by that subcommittee. Discussion of the goals will be scheduled for a meeting later in the semester.

Meeting adjourned: 4:06