

General Education Council

October 25, 2017
MU, PKP Room

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rich Sleezer, Carol Lucy, Maddison Thompson, Andy Houchins, Jo Kord, Amy Oelschlaeger, Damara Paris, Qiang Shi, Shawna Shane, Sheila Markowitz, Steve Lovett, Kim Massoth

ABSENT: Kathy Landwehr, Joan Brewer, Chris Stone, and Klasee Crawford and David McKenzie

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** September 27th and October 11 minutes were approved. Council discussed putting minutes under the discussion board in Canvas for review. After approval the final version of the minutes would be placed in the Files folder in Canvas.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. **Criteria 1-5- for review of existing general education courses**
Sleezer briefly outlined Criteria 1-5 and the previous discussion with the Council. Lovett made a motion that Criteria 1-5 be adopted and Houchins seconded his motion. Vote to approve was unanimous.
3. **Criterion 6-** Sleezer briefly outlined the three options below for Criterion 6. (Option 1 being the originally proposed version is in bold)
 - 1) **At least one section of the course must contribute/report assessment data at least once per year.**
 - 2) Each Faculty Member/Instructors must contribute/report assessment data for every section of a general education course that they teach in all semesters including summer session.
 - 3) Faculty/instructors must contribute/report assessment data for each general education course that they teach at least once per year.

A general discussion about the appropriate reporting frequency for assessment data for general education courses for criterion 6 ensued. Lovett suggested that option 1 would be appropriate. He stated it would be less controversial with faculty and non-threatening to them. The discussion included questions about how the quality of data is negatively affected if faculty are forced to assess every course they teach. They might do it but the data would be of dubious quality and not provide the information we need to determine if the courses are actually achieving general education goals.

Kord was concerned that reporting from just a single section taught by one individual per year would not be sufficient to assess quality or satisfy a reviewer from an accrediting body that we were being sufficiently thorough. It would also not accomplish the intent of our general education assessment process which is to determine if the courses are accomplishing our goals. She did concede that consolidation of assessment reporting was alright in situations where multiple sections were taught by different instructors but supervised by an individual faculty member (e.g. Composition I, Introduction to Psychology, Active Living, etc.). She also indicated it would be appropriate for an individual instructor to consolidate reporting for their own multiple sections in an individual course or even the same courses taught in different semesters but the same academic year.

Subsequent discussion addressed a variety of topics/questions. Is it realistic to achieve continuous improvement with assessment? If your courses went really well is it alright to say, no improvement necessary (Houchins). Do all faculty in the Teacher's College assess all of their courses each time they are taught (Markowitz)? Shane indicated that if they are general education or teacher preparation related courses the answer was probably yes. Lovett indicated that most courses in the School of Business are assessed as a part of the ACSB accreditation. Houchins indicated that assessment data is collected mainly by particular individuals in the Department of Music for NASM or teacher preparation purposes.

Assessment efforts are directed for different purposes at different levels. Sleezer indicated that one of the major reasons the General Education Council needs assessment data is to determine if the classes in our program are achieving our General Education goals. If we do not have data from a course how can we determine if the course is accomplishing its designed purpose. The purpose is not and should not be to tell people how to teach their courses. Course improvement efforts using assessment data to improve the courses should be taking place involving individuals at the department level.

Shi raised the question that if a poor instructor avoids reporting assessment data because they fear it might be used against them, then the data that is reported by other instructors might not be representative of what is being accomplished by all sections of the course.

Kord indicated that she did not have a problem with option 3. It would reflect the expectation that all faculty assess their courses. Levitt concurred and suggested that Kord's concerns were sufficient reason to choose option 3 rather than option 1.

After some additional discussion which included: 1) Houchins indicating that most faculty assess their courses but do not report the assessment or their plans for improvement; 2) Kord asking Council members to read the 3 year report that she compiled that reviews reporting of course embedded assessment efforts and faculty plans for improvement based on their assessment data; 3) Lucy's wisdom regarding the potential pitfall of setting the bar too low and then having to return to faculty requiring a more stringent requirement after a failed review by HLC causing an escalation of conflict; 4) Lovett's statement that having six reasonable criteria for review of courses providing a framework for the process. Shane asked if anyone wished to make a motion.

Lovett made a motion that the Council adopt as policy 3A3 (the third option listed above) for purposes of criterion 6 as it pertains to assessment of general education courses. Houchins seconded the motion. Shane called for a vote and council members voted unanimously to approve the motion to adopt option three above as criterion 6.

4. Schedule for review of petitions to add courses to general education program:
 - a. Sleezer discussed with LAS Chairs-due to LAS Office is November 28th
5. Schedule for other general education business (example)
 - a. Sleezer and Massoth working on due and review dates for Curricular Changes in Spring 2018

NEW BUSINESS:

6. **Summer progress on editing of goals-Handout (McKenzie)**

Next meeting: November 8, 2017

Adjourned: 4:pm
Recorder: KM

