

General Education Committee Minutes

September 27, 2013

Meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m.

Present: Bernard Mair, Creed Greer, Elif Akcali, Shannon Cochrane, Suzanne Colvin, Eva Czarnecka, Sid Dobrin, David Julian, Tanya Koropecykj-Cox, Lynn O'Sickey, John Palmer, Alison Reynolds, Vicki Sarajedini, Brenda Smith, and Bethany Taylor

Absent: Timothy Brophy, Chris Haas, John Krigbaum, Andy Ogram, Michael Weigold, and Joshua Williams

Executive Secretary: Ann Greene

1. Minutes from September 6th meeting were approved

2. Gen Ed Website

Dr. Julian demonstrated the reorganized General Education website and invited comments and suggestions from the committee.

3. Statewide Gen Ed Core Project

Dr. Mair reviewed the development of this project and discussed the final recommendations of the General Education Steering and Faculty Committees for the Statewide Core Project and explained to the remaining approval process.

- The final recommendations from the Steering Committee for the project, has been distributed to all state institutions.
- Each institution must provide feedback on the final recommendations to their respecting governing authority by November 1, 2013.
- The UF feedback will come from the Provost because it is an institutional feedback.

In December 2012 the first draft of was submitted to all state institutions for feedback. This feedback was summarized by the Board of Governors and Department of Education staff and sent out to the Discipline and Steering Committees for further consideration. This recommendation is based on the feedback and other consultations.

Communication

Communication has only one course ENC 1101 because every student must either take that course or get credit for it to satisfy the Gen Ed Program. Students are still able to obtain credit-by-exam for any of these courses according to the existing standards. Creed Greer pointed out that UF students are allowed to test out of ENC 1101 without actually getting credit for the course if they earn a high enough score on the SAT. The committee unanimously approved a motion to add ENC 1102 to the list of core courses.

Humanities

UF currently offers four of the six courses in this area and is developing the Introduction to Literature course. Mair did not encourage the development of the Introduction to Humanities course since it is so similar to the “What is The Good Life” course. The committee endorsed that position.

Mathematics

The committee discussed the statement that allows Mathematics and Science courses that have immediate prerequisites in the core to count towards the core requirement. There was some concern that Pre-Calculus would not count since MAC 1105 is not listed as a prerequisite in the UF catalog. However, in many of the other universities, and in the SCNS, MAC 1105 is a prerequisite. The prerequisites used for the regulation include those in the SCNS, so MAC 1140/1147 would count towards the statewide core.

The core does create other problems for institutions that have many flavors of Calculus since only MAC 2311 is on the list. O’Sickey pointed out that Business Calculus, MAC 223, would be on the list since the SCNS lists MAC 1105 as a prerequisite. However, Honors Calculus I, MAC 3474, will not count towards the core. This problem can be avoided by creating Honors sections of MAC 2311.

Natural Sciences

This area contains eleven courses and has the same flexibility as Mathematics in the prerequisites language. BSC X085 could be changed because some institutions have a different number for Anatomy and some institutions have a different number for Physiology. Some areas were allowed more than five courses because the legislation allowed this flexibility on the recommendation of the Discipline Committees and approval of the Articulation Coordinating Committee. The CALS and CLAS deans are leading the development of the Introduction to Environmental Science course.

Social Sciences

There were some complaints about the social sciences in the initial proposal because so many of them were global in nature. These were mainly concerned with the lack of focus on US government, civics and society, and the lack of qualified instructors, especially at smaller institutions. We obtained a very strong feedback from the Graham Center about American Government and politics which carried some weight. Also, Economics was not in the first proposal.

John Palmer raised a concern about students getting credit for Gen Ed courses based on courses and scores on tests that were conducted by external agencies. This was mentioned at the Faculty Senate meeting by a member of the Engineering faculty who mentioned some initiative that was being developed at the state level. Mair stated that this is already happening with AP/IB, and other credit-by-exam methods and felt that the important issue now is to increase the level of performance required to obtain the course equivalency.

4. Recertification Process

David Julian introduced changes to the course recertification process. The main difference is that each course would be reviewed by one person instead of a team. The reviewer would

prepare a report and discuss it with the Recertification Committee and then to the GEC. After discussion, the committee recommended removing the Recertification Committee step and going directly to the GEC. The following process was agreed on.

- Contact Instructor
- Review Syllabus
- Schedule First Meeting with Instructor
- Attend a Class Meeting
- Schedule a second meeting with the instructor
- Generate a report, with recommendation if possible, and present to GEC.

Other recommendations:

- The Chair of the department should be notified in addition to the college dean regarding the course being reviewed.
- Some reviews focus on different issues and it is not clear exactly which items are relevant for the process. A rubric-type form with relevant items that need to be addressed in the review process should be developed.

Julian discussed the challenge of reviewing all 1200 GE courses in a reasonable timeframe and that it is clearly not possible with the current process. He is developing a process and a form that involves self-reported data from the colleges in order to achieve that goal.

Julian distributed a tentative list of review assignments and agreed to send a revision of the procedures incorporating these recommendations to the committee and ask for their feedback before the next meeting.

5. Assessment Sub-Committee Responsibilities

Last year, the Assessment Sub-Committee recommended the course embedded assessments for SACS Accreditation. In Julian's review of the results of the assessments for the SACS report he found that there is a lot more information that can be obtained from the results. The Assessment Sub-Committee is expected to review the results and provide the GEC with data and recommendations that will enable us to assess the quality and strength of the program. We also need to decide if we should continue using the course-embedded assessment, change it or add an external assessment method. The current members of this committee are Julian and Taylor. Julian suggested the addition of two members and a student representative to serve on the committee.

6. Gen Ed Math and Math requirement Courses

This matter was not discussed due to a lack of time.

7. Meeting Dates

Due to a lack of time, the committee was asked to send their responses to these proposed changes to Ann.

Meeting adjourned at 2:47pm.