

General Education Committee Meeting

February 21, 2014

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Bernard Mair, Creed Greer, Elif Akcali, Timothy Brophy, Eva Czarnecka, Sid Dobrin, David Julian, Andy Ogram, Lynn O’Sickey, John Palmer, Alison Reynolds, Vicki Sarajedini, and Bethany Taylor

Absent: Shannon Cochrane, Suzanne Colvin, Christopher Hass, Tanya Koropecyj-Cox, John Krigbaum, Brenda Smith and Joshua Williams

Executive Secretary: Ann Greene

1. Courses for Review

Course#	Title	Current GE & WR	Request	Status
FOS 2001	Man’s Food (this course was tabled at the November 15 th meeting	B	To keep its current designation	Denied

Recertification of FOS 2001 *Man’s Food*, Denied (B).

Despite revisions made since the first review, the committee had the following concerns with the course:

- There is a general lack of academic rigor in the material and a low level of effort required by the student to achieve a high grade in the course.
- The hypothesis testing assignment lacks significant critical thinking.
- The course fails to adequately assess the stated SLO’s. For example, a one page “persuasive essay” is not adequate to assess the objectives in Assignment 3.
- The grading scheme and exam format allows students to obtain high grades with little effort. Most (53%) of the grade is obtained from open book exams without any proctoring. 27% is obtained from the MyDiet Analysis assignment, which requires no college level skills.
- The communication component is not adequately assessed.

The committee recommended removing the B designation effective Spring 2015. Dr. Mair will discuss this recommendation with the department and suggest that some of the course material be included in one of the Grand Challenges courses.

2. Recertification of ECO 2013 *Principles of Macroeconomics*, Needs to be revised to meet (S) requirements by Spring 2015 to keep designation.

This is a high quality, quantitative Economics course with a devoted instructor. The course has a high level of content and involves significant critical thinking. However, the course is more focused on meeting the requirements for the Business majors than on those for the General Education (S) designation.

- The grading method, which relies exclusively on multiple choice questions, does not adequately assess critical thinking or communication. This could be addressed by including open-ended questions on the exams and requiring a short (1000-1500 words) paper. It was agreed that a paper on ethical issues, utilizing the tools of Macroeconomic analysis, would be a very suitable component of the course.

- In order to meet the GE outcomes, the course needs to have adequate resources. Although enrollments in this course are high, it is staffed by a single lecturer with some help from undergraduates who are only available to help answer questions from students. The Committee agreed that the college needs to provide additional support, such as graduate teaching assistants, to meet the requirements for the GE designation.
- Since this course is included in the statewide GE core, the committee agreed that it is highly desirable that the course meet the GE requirements, otherwise, the number should be changed.

Dr. Mair will discuss the recommendation with the department Chair in addition to providing them with written notification.

3. 2015 Gen Ed Program

Mair discussed Board of Governors Regulation 6.017 that describes statewide requirements for General Education. It removes the distinction between General Education (GE) and Gordon Rule (GR) by absorbing the GR into the GE. It requires thirty-six credits of GE courses in five areas, including six hours of “English” course work, and six additional hours of courses with significant writing. The “English” requirement is to be interpreted as “Composition” and “significant writing” aligns with our Writing Requirement. Currently, UF’s Gen Ed Program requires only three credits of Composition coursework, so we will need to increase that to six hours to meet this regulation.

The committee discussed the 2015 Gen Ed Program including the Statewide Core and the Grand Challenges Core. There is some interest in using a grand challenges course as a part of the Internationalization QEP.

The committee voted unanimously to change the UF requirement to six credits of Composition effective 2015.

It was suggested that the committee develop policies outlining expectations for the level of academic rigor in GE courses and the academic integrity of exams. This arose out of a concern that some GE courses are at a low level that do not challenge the students and in some courses too much of the grade is determined by un-proctored exams providing easy opportunities for cheating.

Meeting adjourned at 12:55p.m.