

General Education Committee

November 8, 2010 – HUB 123

MINUTES

Present: Samuel D. Brickley II (2:51 pm), Mary E. Campbell (consultant, non-voting), Christopher C. Chabot (left at 3:40 pm), Peter G. Drexel, Jeremiah S. Duncan (new faculty, non-voting), Elliott G. Gruner (Chair), Jillian A. Spring (student, voting; left at 3:43 pm), Jason A. Swift, Audra Wheeler (student, voting), David Zehr [eight voting members]

Excused: Wilson A. Garcia

Vacant: Dean of the Academic Experience

Exhibits distributed by the Chair:

- General Education Assessment Plan Guidelines prepared by the General Education Implementation Sub-Committee on Assessment, April 2005
- Notes from the Faculty Forum on General Education Reform – September 24, 2008
- General Education Assessment Plan 2020, Plans for General Education Assessment 2010-2020, written by the Chair

Recorded in the order in which the agenda item was discussed. Elliott Gruner called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm.

- **Review of draft 10-25-2010 minutes.** The distributed copy included the Chair's edits and was passed by general consent.
- **Brief report on Philosophy courses.** David Haight told Elliott that the three courses which were withdrawn at the last meeting would be put on the new form. David Zehr reported that Marcia Blaine, Chair of the History and Philosophy Department, has requested extensions of the sunset date for those three courses. The Department plans to have PYDI 1200 expire and to create a new course. The three courses that were withdrawn are possibly good Gen Ed offerings; why not just revise the syllabus? Elliot has spoken to David Haight and to Marcia Blaine; he will talk to them again.
- **Course Approved under Early Review:** Proposals *preapproved* by electronic distribution [sunset date is 5/2015]:
 - CMDI 1100 Creating Games as CTDI (sunset renewal)
 - CMDI 1200 Web Expressions as CTDI (sunset renewal)
 - CMDI 2100 The Digital Imagination as CTDI (sunset renewal)
 - CMDI 2200 The Science of Animation Programming as SIDI (sunset renewal)
 - CM 3510 Communication, Media, and Wellness as WECO (sunset renewal)
 - PE 4800 Senior Research I as WRCO (initial approval) [need new course number]
 - AP 3100 Wilderness Expedition (TECO) (changing course description, adding corequisites; continuing General Education status)
 - AP 3101 Immersion Wilderness Expedition (TECO) (changing course description; continuing General Education status)
 - AP 3320 Adventure Education Philosophy and Theory (WRCO) (changing course description; removing prerequisites; continuing General Education status)
 - AP 3321 Immersion Adventure Education Philosophy and Theory (WRCO) (changing course description; removing prerequisites; continuing General Education status)

General Education Committee

- **Course to be considered under Standard Review**
None
- **Brief Report on CMDI courses and responses.** Elliott talked to the co-chairs about skills in syllabi per the comments made by the Committee during the Early Review process. The co-chairs will put the skills in the syllabi. Low score on question #7. Do people understand that question?
- **Colleges and Gen Ed.** Would we consider abiding different Gen Ed for different colleges? UNH and KSC do not change Gen Ed based on colleges. Elliott doesn't see a precedent with other institutions. Different Gen Ed programs for different colleges would be difficult for the students to navigate; difficult for advisors; difficult to administer. The Provost has said at two public meetings that she would not support different Gen Ed for different colleges. Gen Ed allows students to cross between colleges. Elliott will tell the Steering Committee about the Gen Ed Committee's consensus on this topic.
- **Budget requests for Gen Ed?** Do we have any budget requests? We may be too late for the next budget. We may have some specific requirements in the future.

Elliott reported that a faculty member has submitted a formal motion to the Faculty Speaker to be on the December Faculty meeting agenda regarding (a) eliminating sunset and (b) double counting. Elliot will talk to the Faculty member.

- **Plan for Assessment.** We need to develop the plan that the April 2005 document said would be done. 6a and 6b asked the Gen Ed Committee to do assessment. Where are we? Where do we want to go? What are our challenges? What limitations do we have?

Elliott wants to present something like the General Education Plan 2011-2016, which he wrote, and to survey Department Chairs. We should put the plan on a schedule. Elliot does not plan to do a Connection focus group this fall. Michelle Fistek would like to do a WRCO focus group. We could ask our questions in Michelle's focus group that Elliot and Michelle will do; the Gen Ed Committee is welcome to attend.

Student evaluations. Elliot mentioned that students had sometimes expressed confusion and poor understanding of the Gen Ed Program. Sometimes students feel badly about the faculty member and answer more positively. We have not had a focus group on this. Elliot asked if Jill and Audra could run a focus group on student evaluations and responses to the Program as a whole. What have we gotten out of these questions? Are they valid? Would you consider doing student evaluations half way through the course? Piloting online course evaluations. Perhaps midterm evaluations would be done online only. COBA is doing a pilot this semester (17/18 courses) for normal course evaluations, not Gen Ed evaluations. If all of it moved online, the Gen Ed evaluation could be done that way. Sam met with Ellen Murphy and Dan Moore last year regarding this topic. Perhaps reduce the number of questions on the Gen Ed student evaluation instrument. Would it be required or optional? For some time online courses were not getting evaluated. Some institutions withhold grades until the online evaluation is done. Last year the Student Senate discussed doing student evaluations online because we are a green campus. Elliott will explore these possibilities and bring possible improvements and helpful suggestions for change back to the Committee.

Near term specific measures. The Committee needs to share the work or it will not get done, e.g., department focus groups and assessment subcommittee. Not much about students in Near Term specific measures. Are these the kinds of measures that NEASC is looking for? There are some

General Education Committee

opportunities in Foundations courses to do direct assessment. Could easily survey IS 1111 next semester. Elliott is willing to do it in EN 1200 next semester. Assessment to make the program better versus making people like it? Do we need all of these things? It looks like we are asking the same group (e.g., Chairs) for several forms of feedback—they could resist this added work. Look at NCATE accreditation for how they assess; assess students towards the end, are they below the target, meeting the target, or exceeding the target? Praxis gives numbers. What are the specific things we are trying to measure/assess? We are a liberal arts institution. How do Gen Ed courses meet the topic? Breadth of understanding. Then figure out the tools to find out.

General Education List of goals (page 5 of the April 2005 report). Are these our goals? #12 states Faculty feel that participation in the general education program is a point of pride. Does the Committee agree with these goals? Should we rewrite some goals and take them to the Faculty? How did the original goals come to be? Do we understand why we did what we did? Philosophical versus practical. Different departments have different needs (e.g., credits). Can we deliver the assessment that was promised in response to the last proposal for double counting at the full faculty meeting? General Education is to reach all students regardless of major; student centeredness. What do we actually want to assess? Is this Program doing what it is suppose to? Is this really benefiting the students? We need to develop measurement tools. Flexibility or lack thereof? If there is no flexibility, you are going to have resistance to the program. Until the assessment happens, we won't have evidence for change. Committee asked Elliot to focus/reduce the list that Elliot wrote. What is the most important data we need right now? One member suggested and volunteered for an assessment subcommittee. Elliott asked the Committee if they thought this was a good idea and said he would explore it further.

- **Visit to Council of Chairs.** Elliott is speaking to the Chairs November 10th. He asked the Committee what they want him to tell the Chairs. That we have a plan? We are going to develop a plan? Deadlines and milestones? We should ask chairs what they like and don't like. What would you like to change? What is working or not? Develop categories we want to assess. Show benefits. What are departments assessing?

The General Education Committee meets on the second and fourth Mondays of the month from 2:30 to 3:30 pm in HUB 123. The next meeting of the Committee will be **November 22nd**. The Committee will talk about challenges and limitations; things we cannot solve with Gen Ed.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Campbell, Scribe
Director of Curriculum Support

Sam teaches 1:25-2:40 pm on Mondays so he will be arriving to Committee meetings at 2:50 pm.

These minutes were edited by the Chair and approved November 22, 2010 by the Committee.

General Education Committee

Sunset date that has been extended by the Associate Vice President for Undergraduates Studies:

PY 2200 Ideas of the Old Testament (GACO) to Spring 2012

PY 2210 New Testament Thought (GACO) to 5/2012

PY 2650 Mind and machine (TECO) to 5/2012

Courses with 5/2011 sunset dates that must be submitted **no later than December 6, 2010**:

5 Art Department courses

3 Atmospheric Science and Chemistry Department courses

1 Biological Sciences Department course

4 College of Business Administration courses

1 Communication and Media Studies Department course

6 Computer Science and Technology Department courses

1 Education Department course

1 English Department course

1 Environmental Science and Policy Department course

6 Health and Human Performance Department courses

3 Interdisciplinary Studies courses

10 Languages and Linguistics Department courses

4 Mathematics Department courses

1 Psychology Department course

18 Social Science Department courses

ENDI 1510 Living with the Humanities (SSDI): the English Department is not seeking renewal