

**General Education Council Meeting Minutes**  
**November 27, 2017**  
**3:30pm, JCK 880**

**Attendees:** Brown (Chair), Allsup, Booth, Chen, Eichler, Erhart, Farris, Haider, Hamilton, Hanks, Hindson, Passty, Peeler, Russian, Shah, Supancic, Vacaflorés Rivero, Walston-Sanchez, and Wilson

**Absent:** Lane

**Guests:** Micky Autrey, Gene Bourgeois, Mary Brennan, Eleanor Close, Heather Galloway, Ken Grasso, Christine Hailey, Dan Lochman, Stan McClellan, Amanda North, Vedaraman Sriraman, Erik Timmermann

The guests and members introduced themselves. As this was the last General Education Council (GEC) meeting for Dr. Brown, the Council acknowledged his leadership and service to the GEC.

Provost Bourgeois addressed the Council with comments about the faculty driven general education core curriculum process, and that the President and Provost “do not meddle” in faculty curriculum decisions. The Provost talked about the external review report of the Civil Engineering (CE) degree proposal and that the external review visitors had expressed concern about the “restrictive core” and the large number of hours in the CE degree program as compared to other Texas CE programs. Dr. Wilson asked the Provost if he could provide any guidance to the GEC about if or should the core curriculum be modified. He responded that all opinions need to be heard and deliberated. He also stated that there may be unintended consequences of a modification to the core such that all core courses may not be required for all students. He stated: “Don’t think about SCH turf or enrollments, focus on what should be in the core.” Accreditation bodies such as the ABET organization for engineering should not be pressure points to the faculty-driven core curriculum decision process. The timeline for the CE proposal includes a review by the University Curriculum Committee in early spring, the Board of Regents in May 2018, Coordinating Board and SACSCOC in June 2018. This timeline will allow the GEC to continue their discussions of the current core.

Dean Christine Hailey, an ABET commissioner with many years serving as an ABET reviewer, addressed the GEC with gratitude for their tireless work on the core curriculum, and she also thanked Dr. Sriraman for his work. She reiterated the importance of the faculty-driven curriculum process and offered to develop 2 versions of the CE proposal if that would help the GEC discussions. One version would continue to show 135 total degree hours with the current core curriculum and the second would be modified for 129 total degree hours with the potential changes to the core which would include adding CHEM 1335 to the 030 component, adding MATH 2473 to the 092 component, and adding PHYS 2425 to the 093 component. She stated that the CE proposal and its requirements are dictated by ABET and ASCE, the American Society of Civil Engineers which forces the CE programs to have similar degree hours and requirements.

Dr. Stan McClellan responded to the GEC’s question about the possibility of any CE degree courses being eliminated as electives or combined with other courses. Dr. McClellan stated that he believes there are no courses in the CE degree plan that can be eliminated or combined. Dr. McClellan suggested that the CE proposal might provide an opportunity for collaboration in the development of modules from science

and engineering that might include aspects of some core curriculum courses. For example he reported that in collaboration with Philosophy, the ethics course in the engineering domain has been very successful for engineering students who can study ethics in the context of their discipline.

Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman thanked the GEC for their assistance in the review of the CE proposal, and indicated that their efforts are much appreciated. He also responded to the GEC question about extra courses by saying that the CE proposal already has cut engineering hours by using a current Geography course in Transportation Systems and by replacing a 4-hour Computer Science course with a new 3-credit hour course.

Brown thanked the visitors for their contributions and advised the GEC that these issues would await their deliberations in spring 2018.

The GEC discussed the proposed Physics courses, PHYS 1360 and 1370. Dr. Eleanor Close explained the courses were approved last year as new courses for teacher certification students, and she has developed the core curriculum elements of the courses to broaden the courses beyond teacher certification. Several GEC members noted edits that are needed, and Dr. Close agreed to revise the courses and resubmit.

The GEC next discussed the three course proposals from the Honors College: HON 2309P, HON 2309Q, and HON 2306F. Dr. Heather Galloway discussed the edits that she had made to the courses using the comments from the GEC at their last meeting. Several GEC members noted further edits that are needed, and Dr. Galloway agreed to revise the courses and resubmit.

The GEC also discussed the new Biology course (BIO 1321) that has been submitted as an addition to the General Education Core Curriculum in category 030 the Life and Physical Sciences Foundational Component. No one was in attendance from the Department of Biology. Several GEC members noted that the questions for the core curriculum section weren't completed with enough details and asked that the course be returned to the Department for revision.

All new course proposals will return to the GEC agenda in spring 2018. Ms. Autry indicated that the BIO 1321 proposal will need council action in January.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

### **Addendum**

November 29: Chair Brown sent to the General Education Council a recommendation of the Assessment Subcommittee that Brown be instructed to approve on the council's behalf the assessment audits of the General Education Core Curriculum courses for fall 2018.

December 1: Chair Brown advised the GEC that the request had been unanimously approved and that he would approve the fall 2018 assessment plans.