

General Education Council
Minutes
3.4.02

Council Present:

B. Stone-Applied Arts
J. Fischer-Student Rep
T. Hindson-Liberal Arts
J. Crawford-Chair Rep
J. Ross-Business Admin
C. McCall-Education
L. Thomas-Health Professions
V. Luizzi-Chair Rep
B. Brown-Liberal Arts
V. Sriraman-Science
D. Showalter-Business Admin
M. Hennessy-English
M. Johnson-Education
R. Northcutt-Science
T. Mottet-Fine Arts and Comm
B. Melzer-Health Professions

Council Absent:

D. Perkins-Applied Arts
F. Blevens-Fine Arts and Comm

Meeting convened at 3:33 p.m.

Motion:

R. Brown asked for a motion to approve the minutes from February 11th. M. Hennessy so moved. J. Crawford seconds the motion. The February 11th minutes were approved as prepared.

R. Brown told the Council we would be reviewing the Geography 2410 proposal again this spring to see if it meets the natural science requirements for approval to the General Education Core Curriculum. B. Stone requested that the subcommittee review the new materials and then bring a recommendation back to the Council at the last meeting in March. (The subcommittee members: chair- V. Luizzi; C. McCall; V. Sriraman; B. Melzer; J. Fischer; B. Stone) The Geography 2410 materials are located in ASB 108 and David Butler said he would be available to answer any questions you might have.

R. Brown asked the Council if they had any general or specific concerns about the syllabi they reviewed before making a recommendation to the departments.

General Concerns:

- Lacking course descriptions or objectives

- No standardization among course syllabi in the same course
- Syllabus range from 6 lines to 7 pages
- Lacking the academic honesty and special needs statements

Specific Concerns:

- Math—hard to interpret from the syllabus the skills (writing and speaking) identified on the grid—it would help to have some guidelines or explanation on the syllabus about how these skills are being met
- Next time please divide up the components and not have everybody review everything
- Work on a better model for data collection when reviewing the syllabi

Recommendations to Departments:

- R. Brown will meet with the Department Chairs about specific and general concerns
- To make a policy that says we want the chair to review all the general education syllabi to make sure they comply with the minimal expectations before signing a statement (saying all the syllabi comply) and returning it to the Council.

Motion:

B. Stone: The General Education Council holds each Chair, each semester responsible for reviewing and approving the general education syllabi and then signing a statement saying the syllabi meets the general education guidelines for the general education courses.

Discussion:

- Wide variation is okay as long as there is compliance with standards
- Encourage faculty of general education courses to use the template we could create and post to the SWT General Education Council webpage
- Just talk with the chairs
- It is not a question of academic freedom, but our students should be getting a minimum content of information
- Do we really expect a chair to check all the syllabi to make sure they all have all the elements and then check off on them?
- It is the Chair's job to check all the syllabi and make sure all the elements are represented
- It might be a TA or course coordinator reviewing the syllabi
- It is a standard about what should be in a course, and it is the Chair's job to lean on faculty to meet requirements
- Change chair in the motion to chair or designee
- It is a funding issue by the Coordinating Board that the syllabi has to be turned into the chair
- We want compliance with guidelines—maybe continuous reminders

- We are taking after the fact issues when we really want compliance before the fact
- There are many faculty who won't comply
- Have a template they can use and then have a checklist
- All faculty teach differently
- Most course requirements should be similar or standard
- Math 1315 and Comm 1310 have been standardized for requirements and this doesn't affect different teaching styles
- Remember we are not dealing with content—we need to focus on the elements and if they are not met it needs to be pushed back to the faculty
- Do they comply or not comply with the basic elements
- It is the Chair's responsibility to check the syllabi
- If the syllabi is defective then it needs to be redone—this would mean planning in advance
- The motion says nothing about a timeline
- We need to focus on compliance—actions taken before the fact and more responsibility after the fact
- Have them update changes on their webpage and have the faculty make an announcement in class
- Have the faculty tell the class the syllabus might change and those changes would be updated on their webpage
- To have the Chair sign something that says certified—certified is the wrong word—maybe assess and identify the problem and what will be done about it and have them sign that

Amended Motion:

Department Chairs or their designees are responsible for reviewing and approving General Education course syllabi each semester. The Chair will review the syllabi for compliance with the General Education Councils' minimum expectations and evaluate it as compliant or non-compliant. Once the syllabi has been reviewed the Chair will sign a statement indicating the syllabus is compliant if it is compliant or non-compliant and recommend a remediation plan if it is non-compliant.

Motion passed unanimously.

The team of R. Brown, D. Showalter and T. Mottet will work on a model syllabus to post on the General Education Webpage. Please send any model syllabi to R. Brown.

J. Fischer asked the Council what they thought about each professor having their books for the course on reserve in the library as a resource for the students. R. Brown told him to check out the available space in the reserve area and do some more research on the issue with ASG. J. Fischer can come back to the Council at the end of March with more information and a recommendation.

Meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.