

**General Education Committee  
Meeting Minutes for November 22 2019**

**Committee members attending:** Lando Carter, Ryan Korstange, Kevin Krahenbuhl, Steve Lewis, Theresa McBreen, Tammy Melton, Greg Nagel, James Piekarski, Deana Raffo, Karen Reed, Connie Schmidt, Laura White, John Zamora

**Ex-officio members attending:** Chris Brewer, Leah Lyons, Susan Myers-Shirk, Steve Severn

**General Education Design Team members attending:** Michelle Boyer-Pennington

**SGA student representatives attending:** Samuel Blumer

**Guests attending:** Aleka Blackwell, Jun Da, Ann McCullough, Kari Neely, Soraya Nogueira, Jason Pettigrew, Roger Pieroni, Ping Zhang

- **Call to order.** Ryan Korstange called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.
- **Announcements and reminders.** Ryan reminded the members of the importance of checking the Gen Ed website for the complete meeting schedule and other information.
- **Approval of minutes from November 8, 2019.** Minutes were approved, conditional on the correction of a typo with the date.
- **Competency Assessment Report: Dr. Ping Zhang, Department of Mathematical Sciences.** Dr. Zhang reported the findings from MATH 1710 and 1710K. There were 1353 students enrolled in fall 2018 and 529 in spring 2019, for a total of 1882 students. The 2015-2017 assessment report did not include distance and dual enrollment students, but the 2017-2019 report did. There were five learning outcomes for math on the final exam. A correct response rate of at least 85% was deemed superior, 60-84% satisfactory, less than 60% unsatisfactory. Outcomes 1, 4, & 5 had slightly higher numbers of Unsatisfactory over the previous assessment. They have four strategies to correct any deficiencies. Fewer than one-quarter of college algebra students present ACT scores as high as 22. College algebra is taught almost entirely by full-time temporary instructors and adjuncts. The department continues to request more tenure-track faculty lines to teach the class because of the high turnover of temporary and adjunct faculty. Free tutoring is available to all students in Gen Ed math; also there is an academic intervention program called AIM for those highly at risk who are repeating the course.

Questions: Is AIM for students enrolled in 1710K? Yes. How is this data used by the faculty? It is used in faculty meetings.

Motion to accept the report was accepted. There was a unanimous vote to accept the report.

- **Competency Assessment Report: Dr. Aleka Blackwell, Department of English.** Dr. Blackwell gave some initial background on TBR's establishment of General Education, including the transfer pathways. These findings concern ENGL 1010. They sampled 4% of the population of students who took 1010, and randomly selected 100 students total. All major assignments submitted for a grade in the sample were collected and anonymized. Each student's writing samples were scored by two people on a 5-point scale. The data was collected last fall. Eight English faculty and four graduate TAs served as raters. The writing skills assessed were: (1) Substance (i.e. clear purpose and central idea; appeals to a particular audience; modes of persuasion; compose in a variety of genres; conducts primary research); (2) Form (samples reflect appropriate formatting, organization, and paragraph structure; good command of standard American English). Between three and five major assignments per student were rated. Raters used a 1-5 score, and the average was taken between the two raters. No one scored their own students.

Results: most students were competent (rating of 3) or mature (rating of 4) for both substance and form. More students got a 4 in Form, however Aleka pointed out that the students got more help and instruction on Form.

Going forward she wants to increase the number of students who receive a rating, however they only have the funding for 12 raters. In the future Aleka would like to even out the distribution between the many types of sections of this class (ex. K, dual enrollment, etc.). The English department also created a student survey and 1,091 student responded. The survey measured student views regarding what they felt they learned in class. The students felt that they made significant gains on most of the different criteria; they also had a very high overall confidence in their writing after the class.

Questions: There was a discussion regarding the dual enrollment (DE) students as typically being higher-achieving students; therefore, the interpretation of their results needs to be carefully weighed against the other students in the assessment. There was a discussion of how the DE student classes are being conducted, and how their experience compares to our regular students. A problem of limited library access for the DE students was discussed. Susan stated that we should bring these concerns to those on campus who administer the DE program.

Motion to accept the report was seconded. There was a unanimous vote to accept the report.

- **Discussion and vote on FL 1000 course proposal.** It was explained that with 19 total voting members serving on the committee, a minimum of 13 people must vote in favor of approving a course proposal in order for it to pass. There were 14 voting members present today. Dr. Neely from the Foreign Language department requested that the committee table the discussion because of the limited number of voting members (a near unanimous vote would have to be secured from the present voting members). In response to a question, Susan verified that no proxy voting is allowed. A vote was taken as to table the vote on the proposal: 13 voted to table, 1 voted no; therefore the proposal vote was tabled until the next meeting.

A discussion began regarding the need for the committee to make a procedural change. Policy 32 for the General Education Committee stipulates under Special Information as to how program changes should be made; a previous committee applied this policy to the course approval policy. What is at the heart of this discussion is whether we need a double vote: to first send course proposals out to the university community to review, and then a second vote to approve the proposal. The old version said a simple majority vote would suffice; the new version now says that the committee must have a two-thirds majority to approve a new course proposal.

Ryan said that it seems like we need to have a conversation regarding a definitive course of action regarding how to go forward with the course approval process. We have the authority to change our procedures.

- **Discussion of course approval process.** Ryan distributed a handout on Course Approval Procedures (see Appendix A). In option one, proposing faculty would come to the committee and present their proposal and then discussion would happen. In option two, at the first and only meeting the committee would hear the presentation, listen to comments from the public, and then make a vote that day. Option One gives face time twice and a designated period of comment. Option Two gets rid of the two-thirds membership requirement and goes for a simple majority; also the public comment would have happened before the meeting. Susan stated that the two-thirds majority requirement is university policy for program changes. Ryan stated that we need a subcommittee to write out this committee's policies and procedures, with special focus on what voting in this committee looks like. Steve offered to draft a document based on this department's policy. Kevin made a motion (which was seconded) that we look at Steve's document at the next meeting and see what works for our committee. Ryan said we should consult with Robert Blair, due to his policy expertise, and look at initial draft language. A motion was made to functionally draft voting language for our committee and consult with Robert Blair; a unanimous vote accepted this motion. We will talk about voting language next time.

Ryan asked if this means we should wait on course adoptions. Kevin asked: if FL withdraws the proposal, how far back does it go in Curriculog? Leah verified that since

the FL proposal has already been approved by UCC, it will only go back to the Gen Ed committee (and not to the very beginning of the new course approval process).

- **Gen Ed Redesign Update.** Susan said that at the next meeting in January, she would report some of the components discussed at the Town Halls. She stated that she and Katie had held 185 meetings with departments in the last year to talk about Gen Ed redesign.

Susan said that the next step was to think about outcomes. In the spring they were planning to schedule workshops similar to the focus groups (across college and discipline) on the outcomes we can assess. Susan encouraged the committee members to be a part of these outcomes discussions. There are a number of meetings already scheduled for spring, and these are posted on the website. By March they hope to have three or four models approved by the Gen Ed committee that can be send out to the university community for their feedback. Susan also wants to schedule some public forums. She hopes by April to have some models approved by this committee. Once approved by this committee, it goes on to Admissions and Standards because they consider anything that affects graduation requirements. They'll be interested to learn whether it accommodates transfer students. From that point it does not have to go to the Board – just the President and Provost – because it doesn't have to go to THEC; however we'll share it.

- **New Business.** None.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:54 PM.

## Appendix A: Handout on Course Approval Procedures

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Friday, November 22, 2019  
University General Education Committee  
Course Approval Procedures

There is a question about whether using the program change process for course approval is an accurate interpretation of the policy. A program change requires two votes, with a university comment period in between, and then, if approved, the change goes on to Admissions and Standards. By creating a course proposal process that mirrors the program change process, the committee created a situation in which course proposals must also go to Admissions and Standards, because they are considered program changes rather than additions.

To avoid sending the course proposals/curriculum to Admissions and Standards, the curriculum change procedure cannot be the same as the program change procedure.

### Two potential strategies for revising the procedure:

**Option 1:** Once the course is approved at the department and college level and approved by the college dean, it is advanced to the General Education Committee in Curriculog (unless it is also submitted to the UCC for consideration as a university-wide course, in which case it first goes to the UCC). At the next meeting of the General Education Committee, the course proposal is presented for consideration, with the proposal's initiators invited to attend and present formally if they wish. After discussion (no initial vote required), the director of general education sends out an announcement to the university community that the proposal is available in Curriculog for review and comment before the next meeting. The course proposal is then added to the agenda for a second meeting of the committee. The committee discusses any new information and allows the initiators of the course proposal to respond to the comments. The committee then votes on the proposal. Since it would be a curriculum change, rather than a program change, the vote required would be a simple majority of members present, not 2/3 of membership, as is required for program change, and would not need to go to Admissions and Standards.

**Option 2:** Vice Provost of Academic Programs, Dr. Peter Cunningham, recommends a process that more closely mirrors the process in the curriculum committee. In this case, when the course is launched in Curriculog, the director of general education sends out an announcement to the university community that the proposal is available in Curriculog for review and comment. The course proposal is then added to the agenda of the next general education committee meeting (assuming at least a two-week period for review and comment.) On the date the committee considers the proposal, the faculty initiating the proposal are invited to attend the meeting to present their proposal and respond to comment. The committee then votes on the proposal. As with option 1, since it would be a curriculum change, rather than a program change, the vote required would be a simple majority of members present, not 2/3 of membership, as is required for program change, and would not need to go to Admissions and Standards.

The general education director will be responsible for changing the website and informing the university community about the change in the process via email and the website.