

# General Education Committee

September 14, 2009 – HUB 123

## MINUTES

Present: Lourdes Aviles, Samuel D. Brickley II (Chair), Mary E. Campbell (consultant, non-voting), Christopher C. Chabot, Corey J. DeGroot (student, voting), Wilson A. Garcia, Elliott G. Gruner, Jong-Yoon Kim, David Zehr [eight voting members]

Excused: D. Benjamin Dearth (student, voting)

Vacant: Dean of the Academic Experience

*Recorded in the order in which the agenda item was discussed.* Sam Brickley called the meeting to order at 2:29 pm.

1. **Introductions.** Everyone introduced themselves. Sam reported that Ben has a class this semester at the time of our meetings. Jong-Yoon Kim is replacing Evelyn Stiller while she is on sabbatical for the year. All were welcomed.
2. **Approval of April 27<sup>th</sup> minutes.** *Approved by general consent.* Elliot expressed concern with how the election of the Committee Chair was done at the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Should we indicate that we were told by the Faculty Speaker to do an election in the spring in order to be ready for the fall? Should both the old members and the new members vote? The Faculty by-laws are generic, not specific. Can't have both old and new members vote. Look at the by-laws for future reference. Maybe we can define it for ourselves? We can put this topic on a future agenda. We can make a recommendation about the by-laws. Need to decide one or the other, either old or new members nominating and voting. Prefer to know in the spring who will be Chair so we are prepared for August responsibilities. We can put this topic on our agenda mid-semester next spring.
3. **Reports**
  - a. CLA update (Zehr). David distributed the 2008-09 CLA Institutional Report. He has additional information from CLA. Elliott asked for an electronic copy of the graphs. This topic should be on the next agenda for discussion. CLA is a test of critical thinking; it was a pilot test done online with 100 first year students in the fall and 100 seniors in the spring. CLA is meant to be one piece of assessing the General Education program. What did the students receive? They received their results; David will provide a sample. Who evaluates the company that did this; who oversees them? We're not obligated to continue if we're not satisfied. The institution is charge with doing assessment. The General Education Committee is responsible for assessing General Education. What we choose as assessment tools is up to us. This report is for information purposes; the item will appear on the September 28<sup>th</sup> agenda.
  - b. Faculty focus groups—update on spring CTDI focus group and plan for this year (Brickley). April 30<sup>th</sup> was the first focus group for the Creative Thought Direction. Sam will distribute the report, which was written by Robert Miller, for discussion at our next meeting. We could plan to have one focus group each semester for each Direction and each Connection. Sam quoted the General Education Handbook about assessment. A focus group is a form of assessment. Are we going to continue with these focus groups for the other three Directions and the Connections? Sam has invited Dan Moore to come to the next meeting to review focus groups. Dan has agreed

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to participate in future focus groups. The Committee agreed with the plan. It is the entire Committee's responsibility to participate in assessing General Education. The last NEASC report criticized us for not doing enough assessment. Corey will try to do student focus groups this year (two/semester).

We will talk about other assessments at our next meeting. The original proposal (posted online) had a table of assessment.

- c. English Department issues regarding GACO status of Currents in Global Literature (Brickley on behalf of Liz Ahl). Sam reported that he received an e-mail from Liz. EN 3510 Currents in Modern Global Literature and EN 3520 Currents in Contemporary Global Literature were approved as GACO. Beginning Fall 2005 they were part of a list of six courses from which the student took four [Teacher Certification students took four and had a choice between EN 3510 and EN 3520]. EN 3520 was obsolete 2/17/06. Beginning Fall 2006, students took four courses out of a list of five, including EN 3510. Beginning Fall 2008, EN 3510 became EN 3500 because the Department decided not to renew GACO for EN 3510. One reason for not renewing EN 3510 was apparently because students automatically got their GACO from satisfying the foreign language requirement. Beginning Fall 2009 American Sign Language I and II can satisfy the foreign language requirement for the BA degree but those courses are not GACO.

Liz was looking for guidance: (1) if a student took EN 3510 (not GACO), can they count it as GACO? (2) Is there any plan for American Sign Language to become GACO? (3) If we apply for GACO status for EN 3510, can it be retroactive? (4) If EN 3510 gets Gen Ed status, can we have the same course number? No status is applied retroactively. Don't they have electives? Are they trying to graduate in December? If the course has not changed, show the syllabus of when it was not GACO. Student requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. There is no plan to submit American Sign Language as GACO; perhaps in the future as DICO. If the course is proposed for GACO, would it be a new or renewal? New.

Sam reminded the Committee of the motion approved March 9<sup>th</sup> by the Committee regarding the deadline for courses seeking renewal:

*The deadline for submission of Sunset Renewal Proposals will be the first Monday of December each academic year. When extenuating circumstances prevent a department from meeting this deadline, it may appeal to the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies for a one year extension of the sunset date, provided this appeal is made prior to the deadline.*

- d. Possible revision of course proposal forms (Brickley). Sam is interested in deleting duplication between the form and the required accompanying syllabus. Is the Committee interested in having Sam look at this issue? What problems have people had? If one has to attach the syllabus, why does some of the same information have to be on the form? It is important to look at the syllabus. The form helps to guide us. Sam wants to tighten it up to be more user friendly. We look at the syllabus to see if it has the required elements. If we focus on the syllabus, perhaps we could have a checklist on the form. Need a rationale for students to see that this is a General Education course. David uses syllabi to determine if transfer courses should satisfy General Education. Mary noted that the Committee had previously requested that the Curriculum Committee vote/action section at the end of the form be deleted. She has asked the Registrar for assistance in doing so because the former Registrar made the forms downloadable from the web and Mary

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does not have access or know how to correct them. The Committee agreed that Sam could proceed.

- e. myPlymouth v. Faculty Governance Blog—do we have a preference where to post minutes, forms, etc.? (Brickley). Sam took this question to the Steering Committee in August; their next meeting is September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please look at where we put our documents, myPlymouth versus the Faculty Governance Blog. Is it confusing? Is it difficult to find items? The Steering Committee asked if the General Education Committee had a preference. The Committee should look at both and give their input at our next meeting. We need a link on the site index. Who controls the Faculty Governance Blog?
  - f. Logistics of reviewing course proposals (Brickley). Sam distributed the General Education Schedule Fall 2009 he prepared which indicates how Sam plans to accept and distribute proposals and agendas. He will collect proposals from departments and send them as one e-mail to the Committee. The deadline for agenda items is the Thursday before our Monday meeting. The agenda will be distributed the Friday before our Monday meeting. “Early review” is a proposal that has been submitted electronically, reviewed by the Committee electronically; no concerns means no one needs to attend the Committee’s meeting. “Regular review” is a proposal that does not meet the deadline.
4. **Announcements.** Mary reported that she finished updating the General Education Handbook this summer; David reviewed it and it has been posted to the Faculty Governance Blog.

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 **September 28<sup>th</sup>**.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Campbell, Scribe  
Director of Curriculum Support

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

PO 2020 Public Administration; new sunset date is 5/2011

PO 3580 Politics of the Pacific Rim - ASEAN; new sunset date is 5/2011

PO 3680 Public Policy Analysis; new sunset date is 5/2011

Courses with 5/2010 sunset dates that must be submitted no later than December 7, 2009:

21 Diversity Connections	2 Creative Thought Directions
31 Global Awareness Connections	7 Past and Present Directions
16 Integration Connections	5 Scientific Inquiry Directions
9 Quantitative Reasoning Connections	10 Self and Society Directions
13 Technology Connections	
7 Wellness Connections	
22 Writing Connections	

*These minutes were approved September 28, 2009.*

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