

General Education Committee

October 27, 2008 – HUB 123

DRAFT

MINUTES

Present: Lourdes Aviles, Samuel D. Brickley II, Mary E. Campbell (consultant, non-voting), Ezra X. Dalton (student, voting), D. Benjamin Dearth (student, voting), Wilson A. Garcia, Deborah H. John, Robert S. Miller (left at 3:10 pm), Evelyn M. Stiller (Chair), Eun-ho Yeo (new faculty, non-voting), David Zehr [nine voting members]

Absent: Daniel P. Moore

Excused: Robert E. Fitzpatrick (sabbatical), John C. Krueckeberg (sabbatical)

Presenters of Proposals: Linda Levy, Jonathan Santore

Guest: Julie N. Bernier

Recorded in the order in which the agenda item was discussed. Evelyn Stiller called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

II. The Chair welcomed the new student members, Ezra Dalton and Ben Dearth.

I. The minutes of the September 22nd meeting were approved by acclamation.

IV. Proposals *preapproved* by electronic distribution [sunset date becomes 5/2013]:

- a. BS Chemistry (all options): Scientific Inquiry Direction waiver renewed
BS Meteorology: Scientific Inquiry Direction waiver renewed
BS Physical Science Education: Scientific Inquiry Direction waiver renewed
- b. HIDI 1450 Roots of Current Global Conflicts: renewed as PPDI
- c. SO 3380 Drugs and Society: renewed as INCO
- d. SO 3180 Sociology of Deviance: renewed as DICO
- e. AN 3500 and SO 3350 Illness, Wellness and Healing: renewed as WECO
- f. BS Computer Science: Scientific Inquiry Direction waiver renewed
- g. BS Health Education (all options): Scientific Inquiry Direction waiver renewed
- h. CHDI 1760 Chemistry in Society: renewed as SIDI
- i. CHDI 1770 Chemistry in Society Laboratory: renewed as SIDI
- j. CMDI 2010 Outlaws, Delinquents and Other “Deviants” in Film and society: renewed as SSDI

V. Proposals for renewals [sunset date becomes 5/2013]:

- h. ER 4200 Senior Seminar: Perspectives on Early Childhood: renewal as INCO; *approved 7-0-2-1*
- i. ER 4300 Leadership, Advocacy and Policy in Early Childhood: renewal as TECO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- j. CD 2002 Human Development II: Middle Childhood to Late Adulthood: renewal as WRCO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- k. ED 3350 Classroom Planning, Management and Organization for Secondary Educators: renewal as TECO; *approved 8-0-1-1*

III. Guest, Provost Bernier. The Provost attended the meeting to discuss her October 22nd memo to the Committee regarding “the important task of reviewing our general education program”, some of the struggles we have had, and the data she provided comparing Fall 2003 to Fall 2007 General

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Education seats, average class size, average class size of Gen Ed courses, etc. The data was presented to the Council of Chairs last spring. Our ability to implement the new program: to be able to offer enough seats, the size of majors. In comparing the 2003 figures to the 2007 figures, the Art Department, for example, is offering more lower level Gen Ed; they are very good at managing their resources, meeting Gen Ed requirements at a great level. Psychology offered Gen Ed Perspectives in double sections versus offering Directions which must be capped at 40 or less. Room capacity: we have lost capacity in every room due to the Fire Marshall's code. Double Counting: this has the greatest impact. Think about the size of the program: needs to be one-third per NEASC so 40 credits is the minimum.

Rules versus philosophy. If we drop the QRCO, TECO and WRCO, there wouldn't be the confusion. Discuss why we need those requirements. The Task Force never intended QRCO, TECO and WRCO to be General Education courses.

Strong opposition to reducing the Directions. General Education does not get the respect it deserves. Prefer to talk about QRCO, TECO and WRCO rather than Directions.

Have us assess something. How did we come up with splitting Directions? Because it's easy. Understand the motivation. Not using solid data in terms of student learning.

Difficulty in implementing and offering enough sections: it's not going away. If keep Directions, then talk about double counting. The Social Science Department has a motion to reduce the Directions.

Do we have similar adjunct ratio as other institutions?

More flexibility of General Education offerings would be helpful, e.g., the one credit courses Music, Theatre and Dance offers which were Fine and Performing Arts Perspectives. Being able to waive a Direction works well. We have courses that we think are Gen Ed but they are not

The Provost has charged department to simplify their curriculum. Is there worry that if we change General Education, then the complexity would go away? That it would be more of a catalyst? Each individual who is working on this is doing it for a different reason, e.g., workload issues.

Student enrollments have increased since 2003. Has there been an adequate increase in faculty? That may be the issue. There is no magic to get enough money to add faculty. We have to work with the resources we have. New positions on campus that are not faculty. In 10 years we have increases full-time faculty by 36.

Proposals for renewals [sunset date becomes 5/2013] (continued):

- a. MU 3200 Technology in Music Performance: renewal as TECO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- b. MU 3250 Global Jazz: renewal as DICO and GACO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- c. AP 3100 Wilderness Expedition and AP 3101 Immersion Wilderness Expedition: renewal as TECO; *approved 7-0-2-1*
- d. AT 3300 Illness and Disease: renewal as WRCO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- e. HE 3200 Stress Management: renewal as WECO; *approved 8-0-1-1*
- f. PE 2840 Health and Fitness for Educators: renewal as WECO; *approved 8-0-1-1*

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- g. PE 3560 Measurement and Assessment in Physical Education: renewal as QRCO; *approved 8-0-1-1*

VI. Faculty Forum on General Education. Copies of the Notes from the Faculty Forum on General Education Reform – September 24, 2008 had been distributed by the Chair. The Forum was called by the Social Science Department. Mentioned once was cutting the Directions in half. Return to double counting. Need to look at program: if it needs to be changed, let's discuss it. We implement/oversee General Education; the whole Faculty would vote to change. Not much time before Faculty meeting.

Double counting versus waivers. The waiver is for the major; have to finish the major to get the waiver. The waiver was a political compromise in some ways. The waiver does not work for students who change their major (from a major with a waiver to a major without a waiver). Time-to-degree issues. Why can't it be as cut and dry as to process a Student Request? Faculty own the program; Faculty approved the program. Why can't the waiver follow the student? Look at the skills. How many students are affected? Without an assessment of General Education, one would be shooting in the dark. We need assessment of General Education in order to make changes. The current program tried to get away from the idea that departments own gen ed. The challenge is to be fair and equitable to students.

Ezra asked is there information we are seeking from students before the next meeting. How do you add agenda items? What is the deadline for that? Where is the philosophy of General Education? Composition (EN 1200) and The First Year Seminar (IS 1111) are hard classes, common to all. How does one propose one class that all should have to take?

Prior to the meeting, the Chair forwarded an e-mail she received from the Faculty Speaker regarding a motion that the Social Science Department will be making at the November 5th Faculty meeting: that the Directions portion of the General Education program be reduced to require one 3-4 credits course per Direction (Creative Thought, Self and Society, Past and Present, and Scientific Inquiry) instead of the two courses per Direction currently required. The 12 credits saved will be used for free electives (which includes minors).

Dean Zehr distributed a report of each major and option in the 2008-09 Academic Catalog and how many credits each requires for the major, for General Education, for free electives, for the foreign language requirement, for the degree and if the program has a General Education waiver. This document has been distributed to the Council of Chairs. It is premature to cut Directions in half before going through Faculty governance. Look at the number of credits in BA Majors. Are they excessive? Some majors are bloated. Can fix majors first before going after General Education. Some BS programs could be trimmed. Look at how many options we have. Do we need all of these options? NEASC has said we are adding and not deleting programs.

There will be a Faculty Forum on curricular review.

VII. Assessment: First round of CLA is finished.

VIII. Committee Reports (changes due to new governance structure?)

- a. Curriculum Committee. The Art Department submitted a proposal to reduce the total number of credits required in their BA, BFA and BS majors from 122 to 120. The BS Art Education program currently has only 7-3 credits of free electives. The Curriculum Committee

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amended the Department's proposal to exclude any program that has fewer than 15 credits of free electives; the amended was approved 9-0-0-3. The Provost had distributed a document at the Chairs retreat in August regarding "A need for curricular revision", which some Chairs distributed to their department. The Curriculum Committee approved (8-0-0-4) a motion that this committee ask the Provost about the procedure for curricular change, particularly the document that was distributed to Chairs, and why it didn't come to the Curriculum Committee. Dean Zehr asked for the Committee's guidance on the policy of double majors, that they must be from different disciplines.

- b. Steering Committee. Meeting today following our meeting.

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 10th**.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Campbell, Scribe
Director of Curriculum Support

Sunset dates that have been extended by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies:

ENDI 1350 Twice Told Tales, due to three faculty members away on sabbatical, including two who are the main full-time faculty point people on this particular course – new sunset is 5/2010

The deadline for renewal of General Education status for courses with a 5/2009 sunset date is December 8th.