

## General Education Committee

September 27, 2010 – HUB 123

### MINUTES

Present: Samuel D. Brickley II (2:50 pm), Mary E. Campbell (consultant, non-voting), Christopher C. Chabot, Peter G. Drexel, Jeremiah S. Duncan (new faculty, non-voting), Wilson A. Garcia, Elliott G. Gruner, Jillian A. Spring (student, voting), Jason A. Swift, David Zehr [eight voting members]

Excused: Audra Wheeler (student, voting)

Presenter of Proposal: James Whiting

Vacant: Dean of the Academic Experience

*Recorded in the order in which the agenda item was discussed.* Elliott Gruner called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm.

- **Approval of 9-13-2010 minutes.** Approved by unanimous consent.
- **Course Proposal - Standard Review**  
LL 2450 Creating Language to be Creative Thought Direction (CTDI). How the General Education skills will be addressed were shown on the syllabus as annotated comments; James will add them into the body of the syllabus. *Approved 7-0-0-2. Sunset is 5/2015.*
- **Gen Ed Waiver renewal—Can we waive one course as opposed to two?—Peter Drexel.** A waiver of the Scientific Inquiry Direction (SIDI) for the BS Computer Science was approved 9/13/04 and renewed 10/27/08. The required courses which address the key components of the SIDI that were cited in the Petition to Waive SIDI were PH 2410, PH 2420, PH 2430, PH 2440 and CS 4520. All of these courses are still required in the BS Computer Science. The major also requires a “Science course with laboratory [not BIDI/CHDI/ESDI/MTDI/PHDI]” for four credits. The Computer Science and Technology Department voted to change the “Science course with laboratory” requirement to also allow science courses that are Directions to satisfy the requirement of the major. This would result in waiving one of two SIDI versus the current waiver of a Direction (two courses).

Is there a precedent? Waiving one course versus two courses.

Is there a clear assumption that there are not enough courses that are not SIDI? There is a short list. If it is not in the Catalog, we have one in the Department. Who made the list?

Are you asking to require a Direction? ABET accreditation requires a year of physics and one science with a lab. Although we are no longer have ABET accreditation, we want to hold to that standard. We are backing away from the original requirement and giving students more choice by allowing them to take any SIDI for the third required science course. We are trying to give students more flexibility. “Any science course” could be a SIDI or not.

Splitting the waiver in half is the issue—philosophically and logistically. Right now it is not doable. The idea of the waiver was that the major had so much of what is contained in one Direction that the Direction was not needed. We cannot specify any Directions course; they are not major specific and should not become so. The waiver was also created because some majors could not fit the 2005 Gen Ed requirements and still be within the total credits of 120 or 122.

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What has the Computer Science and Technology Department done about curriculum reform? The Provost has asked departments to simplify their programs. Did the Department engage in a review of its curriculum? We have started reviewing the curriculum this fall. We are looking first at the BS Computer Science. We only have four full-time faculty so we did not seek renewal of ABET accreditation. We want to keep the curriculum close enough to accreditation standards so when we have more faculty, we can get reaccredited.

This topic may appear on a future agenda.

- **Links to course evaluation forms: Are they working?** Elliot reported that the links are back up; we still need to work on them. We need better links. The form is correct but the link is in an older format.
- **Missing student evals: what if a course is not offered often and student evals have gone missing?** Ray Perkins contacted Elliott about PY 3110 History of Philosophy I: Ancient, which has a 5/2011 sunset date; the student evaluations cannot be found. It will happen; it has happened. David noted that in such cases faculty need to contact him for an extension of the sunset date.
- **Do Connections courses require skills to be listed and addressed?** INCO does require Skills but does not specify which ones. The Skills are clearer with QRCO, TECO and WRCO. Our revised form states on the bottom of page one, “For Initial Approval Proposals: Please attach the course syllabus that must include the following:
  - The written description of the Gen Ed component (from the Gen Ed Handbook or Academic Catalog) including a list of skills to be developed;
  - Statements of course objectives and skills to be developed in Directions courses or to be addressed at a more advanced level in Connections courses;”

The evaluation form has several questions on the skills for that course.

Note that applications for TH 4610, MUDI 1310 and MUDI 1350 have been withdrawn.

It would be helpful to use “respond all” when commenting on Early Review proposals via e-mail.

- **Review process and form: what is required and what is not? New process and form attached for reference.** If two Committee members have objections, then the course is considered under Standard Review (previously if one person objected, it was considered under Standard Review). Elliot did write to Jonathan and mentioned the comments that had been made by Committee members in the e-mails; he invited Jonathan to attend the meeting. Jonathan responded to Elliot and withdrew the proposals.

Stated on page 2 of the revised General Education Proposal Form, the instructor’s reflection is not required for sunset approval (item 3). What is considered “too low” in item 2? We have no guidelines as to those numbers. We may revisit that evaluation process.

What is enough? We have enough to go to Regular Review. Is it one or two with concerns or the Committee who has concerns? Two automatically sends the proposal to Regular Review. The expectation in Early Review was that Jonathan would be present to explain. The syllabus was not clear and Jonathan could have explained. Jonathan has the choice of presenting as it was or of withdrawing it to revised. Could he have revised and brought the revisions today? Yes.

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What is our role? To make sure the course satisfies the criteria. Are we approving the course or the syllabus? Interpretation. It could be part of the reflection if the instructor did that or it was not included on item 2. We have to judge what they give us.

- **Gen Ed and the new college system.** Whether colleges will have their own gen ed. Elliot has been asked and asked the Committee to think about the issue for possible discussion at a future meeting. It is important to attend the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting to Discuss College Reorganization.
- **Review of draft “Plan for General Education Assessment” (to be sent later).** Never know enough from the syllabus. Look at the April 2005 Assessment Plan Guidelines (previously distributed by Elliott). Tell Elliott if there is anything you want to add or change. Elliott will then make an assessment plan. See item 6 of the September 13<sup>th</sup> General Education minutes. Elliott has visited his own department and conducted a pilot focus group. He’ll share the results at a later meeting (item 6.f).

Elliot distributed copies of pages 32-34 of the 2008 NEASC report, which discussed General Education assessment. Please review for our next 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 **October 25<sup>th</sup>**.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Campbell, Scribe  
Director of Curriculum Support

Sam teaches 1:25-2:40 pm on Mondays so he will be arriving to Committee meetings at 2:50 pm.

*These minutes were approved October 25, 2010.*

## General Education Committee

Sunset date that has been extended one year by the Associate Vice President for Undergraduates Studies:

HE 3700 Drug Behavior (WECO); new sunset date is 5/2012

PY 3110 History of Philosophy I: Ancient (INCO); new sunset date is 5/2013 because next offering is Fall 2011

Courses with 5/2011 sunset dates that must be submitted **no later than December 6, 2010:**

- 5 Art Department courses
- 3 Atmospheric Science and Chemistry Department courses
- 2 Biological Sciences Department courses
- 4 Business Department courses
- 6 Communication and Media Studies Department courses
- 7 Computer Science and Technology Department courses
- 1 Education Department course
- 2 English Department courses
- 1 Environmental Science and Policy Department course
- 6 Health and Human Performance Department courses
- 14 History and Philosophy Department courses
- 7 Interdisciplinary Studies courses
- 10 Languages and Linguistics Department courses
- 4 Mathematics Department courses
- 3 Music, Theatre, and Dance Department courses
- 1 Psychology Department course
- 19 Social Science Department courses