

General Education Task Force

Minutes of the March 15, 2012 meeting

Present: Etta Madden, Eric Nelson, Kathryn Hope, Danae Hudson, Tim Knapp, Eric Sheffield, Judith Martin, Cathy Pearman, Pam Sailors, Kelly Cara, John Kent, Cindy Hail, Doug Gouzie, Rachelle Darabi, Chris Herr, Emily Bernet, Kristina Moller, and David Mitchell.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. in LIBR 204.

II. MINUTES

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes. All approved, motion carried.

III. REPORTS (continued after IV below)

a. CGEIP – Eric Sheffield

- i. CGEIP reviewed the Gen Ed revision process, and Eric will soon give CGEIP the previous version of Gen Ed student learning outcomes.
- ii. CGEIP members to visit departments to consult with faculty about the Gen Ed student learning outcomes, make adjustments as needed, and then will convene again to pull together a final draft.
- iii. Regarding the Natural World category of Gen Ed student learning outcomes, Josh Smith will take the lead.
- iv. CGEIP will present their revised version of the Gen Ed student learning outcomes at the Faculty Senate meeting on April 12th.
- v. Eric is preparing to send out invitations for new members for CGEIP, and Judith Martin has suggested that faculty members who are vested in the Gen Ed revisions process be recruited for CGEIP membership. The pros and cons of this approach are being considered.

IV. GUEST – Provost Einhellig

- a. At the March 30th Board of Governors meeting, Chair will have 20-25 minutes to provide the Academic Affairs BOG Committee, chaired by Elizabeth Bradbury, with an update on the Gen Ed Task Force progress.
 - i. This shows interest by the BOG in what the Task Force is doing and indicates that the revision process is both important and steeped in responsibility.
 - ii. The BOG does not expect the revision work to be complete, but they do expect to see progress.
 - iii. The BOG presumes that CGEIP has a role in reviewing revisions to the Gen Ed program and advocating what moves on to the Faculty Senate.
- b. Regarding Gen Ed student learning outcomes, expectations from the community have not changed over time (i.e. expect students to gain skills in communication, critical thinking, etc.); however, there are great changes in how we are expected to meet those learning outcomes and how students want us to meet those learning outcomes.
- c. The Gen Ed Task Force has a responsibility to produce something that is sellable to the Faculty Senate because the Senate is made up of those individuals who will be expected to carry out the revisions.

- d. One member asked if there is money for the “changes” that Provost Einhellig mentioned. Provost Einhellig responded that there is \$40,000 for course transformation through the Curricular Innovation Grants and that funding will likely be available for some additional changes. Provost Einhellig also clarified that it is easier to find money for upfront course transformation costs than long-term funding required for course transformations that result in the delivery of more expensive courses
- e. Another member suggested that we aim to develop courses and course materials (such as e-textbooks) that can actually create revenue for the University. He also asked whether the \$300,000 of funds designated for academic proposals (mentioned in Volume 1, Number 13, of Clif’s Notes) could be used for Gen Ed course transformation projects. Provost Einhellig replied that the money is intended to fund strategies that will enhance enrollment and that some of the money will be used to fund night courses.
- f. Regarding the BOG, Elizabeth Bradbury wants to know where we are in terms of progress with the Gen Ed revision. If the Task Force can show where we are in the process and that we have a plan, we should be okay.
 - i. This revision process involves large decisions that more than a few people can make, so the revision should not be dictated by a few people with strong feelings about the results. This needs to be a group effort, and the Task Force needs to continue to move forward.
 - ii. Though Gen Ed involves many students, there are only about 2,500-2,600 new first-year students each year. There are a lot more students on our campus than that, and we do need to move on so we can address the needs of the larger population.
- g. A member asked about the expected timeline for getting the new Gen Ed program up and running. Provost Einhellig responded that fall 2013 is what we are shooting for. Chair stated that it is not possible to have all courses ready by fall 2013 but that some can be ready by then and that the entire revision process can be done best if done in phases. The entire revision process will go more quickly if we can streamline the curricular process for Gen Ed courses. CGEIP Chair stated that CGEIP works efficiently, so if the Task Force can get information to CGEIP, it will be quickly moved forward with a strong vote of confidence to the Faculty Senate.

V. REPORTS (continued from III above)

- a. Chair gave an update on subcommittee work.
 - i. A sub-committee is preparing a history of the gen ed assessment process since the last HLC review in 2005.
 - ii. Chair is working on a presentation with Mike Fisher from the FCTL for BOG & campus.
 - iii. Two open forums will be scheduled for April so the campus community can hear about the Gen Ed revision progress and give input.
- b. Chair asked that Task Force members contact her if they are willing to work on a subcommittee to draft the “Call for Course Proposals” document that will outline which type of courses will be expected and accepted in the new Gen Ed program.
- c. Chair has gathered information from Task Force members about the straw poll items.
- d. Proposed Structure – Sub-committee report
 - i. Sub-committee emphasized the need for a simple structure and for the Task Force to come to terms with what will be presented to CGEIP and the Faculty Senate.
 - ii. First-year experience course is proposed again as a 2-hour course to avoid problems with increases in cost and required teaching time commitments.
 - iii. Member asked why the Critical & Creative Thinking & Expression course was listed as a 200-level course, and response was that it could serve as a possible second writing course.

- iv. The Capstone course is intended to be a 300 or 400-level course. Certain sections can be required for majors by departments, or interdisciplinary sections can be offered by departments that don't require certain sections for majors.
 - 1. Members emphasized the need to be explicit about courses that can fall into majors versus those that will offer a truly general or broad education.
 - 2. Whether the Knowledge of Human Cultures courses could be 300-level courses so majors could use them to fulfill requirements for the major were also discussed.
- v. Member asked about the Knowledge of Human Cultures section and why the "Four courses from two categories . . . with at least three different prefixes" was included. Chair suggested a statement be included to clarify that this was required "in order [for students] to meet all learning outcomes."
- vi. The Task Force discussed the Knowledge of the Natural World section and the number of credit hours, 6-8, that were required for this section.
- vii. Task Force members decided to table the discussion about the draft structure until the next meeting. It was suggested that the draft be posted on the Task Force website so members of CGEIP and others from the campus community can see what is being discussed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There will be no meeting next Thursday due to spring break.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.