

Council on General Education Agenda
February 14, 2017
10-11:00 a.m., Stevenson Hall 140

Presiding: Rocio Rivadeneyra

Present: Brian Aitken, Katherine Ellison, Sally Parry, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Jonathan Rosenthal and Vanessa Schulman

Guests: Derek Herrmann Meyers, Assistant Director Academic Services, University Assessment Office
George Rutherford, Associate Professor, Physics

Rivadeneyra called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Management and Quantitative Methods 128, Entrepreneurial Business Fundamentals (proposed for QR)

This proposal was tabled from the previous meeting so that Council members could review syllabi from other courses with the QR designation. Rutherford presented revised course topics and student learning outcomes for consideration. Parry expressed concern that while the course was a wonderful addition to the entrepreneurship minor, it did not meet the spirit of General Education. The question was raised regarding who would teach the course. Rutherford assured the Council that the course would always be taught by faculty that have experience in both teaching General Education courses and come from an entrepreneurial background. Rosenthal noted that he, along with Bates, were concerned that the small business focus would overshadow the math focus. Rivadeneyra agreed that after reviewing the syllabi from other QR courses, she felt that the level of quantitative reasoning in the course was not as high as those courses although there was some variability present. Rutherford pointed out that the topics for MQM 128 were similar to those taught in courses that already had the QR designation, specifically BE 141. Ellison questioned if the course was not accepted for QR, if there was another way to allow student access to it. Parry also wondered if the course would have a pre-requisite or be designated for majors/minors. According to Rutherford, the course is the second course within the Entrepreneurial minor and was open to all majors. As far as he knew, the course did not have a pre-requisite. Allowing the course to satisfy the General Education requirement would make it more attractive to students overall. The question was also raised if students could take the course, without having previous business coursework, and succeed. Rutherford confirmed that while students would need to pick up on specific vocabulary the course could be taken without having to take the first course in the minor. As a procedural question, Ellison asked if the course could first be taught and then re-considered for the General Education designation. Rosenthal clarified that the Council had not done so in the past. However, the department has the ability to send the course again for review. Aitken raised the question if the Council ever voted to remove courses from General Education. Parry believed Aitken raised a good point and that the Council should probably look into it.

The question was called.

None in favor and six opposed. The motion did not carry.

Rosenthal will contact Rutherford with the Council's decision.

2. Anthropology 297, Lost Continents and Sunken Cities (proposed for Humanities)

The proposal was tabled from the previous meeting due to lack of quorum. Parry expressed concern with the precedent that could be established with considering an Anthropology course as a Humanities rather than a Social Science course. She felt the course would be better suited as an IDS course. Schulman felt the course fit the goals of a humanities course but was concerned that the course title was so specific. She wondered if there was a precedent for approving a course with such a narrow focus and speculated that with such a narrow focus, only one instructor would be qualified to teach it. Rosenthal clarified that IDS 121 courses were similar in regards to the title and instructor specificity. Aitken questioned if it was a new course and if there would be any funding issues if the course would be considered as an IDS course rather than an ANT course. He also believed that if the course was to be used as a recruiting vehicle, then making it a 200-level course was not the best course of action. Schulman thought the course may be best as an IDS course. Rivadeneyra liked the focus of the course while Aitken questioned if the course might be an iteration of a broader course. Ellison thought possibly if the objectives utilized other methods to pull from other than the scientific method to debunk theories than the course would have more of a humanities focus. Schulman pointed out that the fourth course objective stated using narrative structures which would go beyond the scientific method. Rosenthal was asked to contact the department to see if they would be receptive to having the course proposed as a 100-level IDS course. The vote was tabled until Rosenthal has input from the department.

3. Minor in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies (revised to add course)

The proposal was tabled from the previous meeting due to lack of quorum. Rosenthal reported that the additional course revision was approved by the University Curriculum Committee and no further action was necessary.

4. Sociology 240, People in Places (proposed for ICL)

The proposal was submitted by James Skibo, Sociology and Anthropology Chair. This course is currently a Social Science course. However, the department believes it is a better fit for the ICL requirement. Rosenthal noted that there are relatively few courses in the ICL category and those courses tend to be large lectures. However, if the course were to be moved to ICL, the course number would need to be changed to a 100-level. The question was raised on how the course was taught. Aitken responded that the course is currently being taught as a major course and suggested that this would be a good opportunity to re-focus the course. Schulman asked if the course is actually a major course to which Aitken confirmed the course could be used as a major course. He also recommended that the course would need to be made into a 100-level course. Rosenthal was asked to contact the department to see if they would be receptive to re-numbering the course. The vote was tabled until Rosenthal has input from the department.

Information and Discussion Items:

5. General Education Assessment-Derek Herrmann Meyers

During the previous spring semester, courses in the UST category were reviewed by a faculty panel. One of the changes University Assessment (UA) implemented during this review was to have faculty who teach courses in this category serve on the panel. This helped with the overall process in terms of time and allowed for a faster response rate to sample assignments. During the review, faculty were able to access assessment information on ReggieNet. Those participating on the panel were asked to de-brief over the summer. Herrmann Meyers commented that UA received feedback from the faculty members regarding the process which included combining rubric categories. Now that UA has the data, it can now be put together to make a more meaningful and consistent feedback loop. This semester, syllabi are being collected for courses within the Fine Arts, Humanities, Language in the Humanities, and Social Science categories. In addition, student assignments

are being collected for courses in the Mathematics, Individuals and Civic Life, Quantitative Reasoning and Social Science categories. Courses in the Mathematics, Individuals and Civic Life and Quantitative Reasoning designations had previously been targeted but are being asked to respond again due to extremely low initial response rates. Parry asked what the faculty participation rate was for the assessment. Herrmann Meyers reported that rate as 0%-20% for assignments with the average participation rate as 7%-9%. The suggestion was made on whether participation should be made mandatory which UA is hesitant to do at this point in time. Parry wondered if the Council needed to create a broader review process to review odd courses out in a way to tie them to an assessment mechanism. Rosenthal recognized that there is currently drift regarding learning outcomes. CTLT holds sessions in the summer for faculty development but those sessions can only go so far. Ellison informed the Council that English is currently developing a database so faculty can analyze syllabi within the department. It is possible that the data they generate could be made available to the Council.

Due to time constraints, the following agenda items will be discussed at a future meeting:

1. Proposal to recommend a course on world religions (courses and capacity)
2. Management and Quantitative Methods 121 (future discussion on placement)
3. Art 100

Meeting adjourned: 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons