

Council on General Education Minutes
March 23, 2021
10-11:00 a.m., Zoom Meeting

Presiding: Chris Worland

Present: Brian Aitken, Mary Elaine Califf, Stella Liao, Tony Marinello, Sally Parry, Carla Pohl, Lillian Ridinger, Xing Wang, Gary Weilbacher, Amy Wood, and Chris Worland

Guests:
Malinda Aiello, Program Director, Illinois Articulation Initiative

Worland called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Approval of February 23, 2021 Minutes

Worland asked if there were any corrections to the February 23, 2021 minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

2. IDS 231 Civic Engagement in Global Community (new course proposed for ICL designation)

The course was proposed by Katy Strzepek, Director, Center for Civic Engagement.

Califf felt it was odd that the course was proposed with having variable credit hours. She noted most General Education courses were three credit hours and didn't see how adjusting the hours would work. Parry let the Council know there were several one-hour course options offered in General Education. These courses are primarily band courses offered for FA credit. Parry expressed concern over the variable hours as well and felt the course was light intellectually for three hours. However, she could see the course being offered for one hour.

Weilbacher felt given the length of the syllabus, it read as an example of what a three-hour course experience would look like. One credit hour would be granted for one week of work. However, Weilbacher could see how a longer experience would make the difference in determining the number of credit hours a student could get course credit for. Aitken thought that as well and wondered if the course was being proposed for variable credit to allow those students who could not travel to Kenya to still participate and receive one credit hour while those who travel to Kenya receive three hours.

Califf responded that the syllabus seemed to indicate participation in the trip was required. Worland noted the course seemed to be part of intensive/immersive abroad experience. In order to complete the trip journal and digital storytelling assignments listed on the syllabus, Worland felt students would have to participate in the trip. While he agreed the variable hour request may be to accommodate students who could not travel, he wondered if there were enough substantial assignments to constitute one hour of credit.

Aitken asked if the Council first needed to approve the course first as an IDS course, and then approve it for the ICL designation. Worland confirmed that was the case and that the Council would first need to determine if the course fit within the curriculum goals of the IDS program. He recalled the Council had previously approved similar immersive study abroad courses that were for three credit hours. Aitken

reminded Council members of the IDS 133 study abroad courses. These decimalized courses focus on specific cities or parts of the world.

Worland noted per the syllabus, students were expected to complete eight weeks of work and wondered if study abroad experiences were typically eight weeks long. He also added per the proposal, students would complete two contact hours of lecture and eight contact hours of lab work each week. Califf looked at the course proposal of IDS 133A28 which was approved by the Council earlier in the year. That course was an all overseas experience and was four weeks in length. Students complete five contact hours of lecture and ten contact hours of lab work each week.

Worland responded that was almost double from what the proposed course would require. Upon reviewing the individual assignments, he felt that the reflection papers were not as intensive as the other requirements and may not warrant three credit hours' worth of work. Califf responded that for an eight-week course, two contact hours of lecture and eight contact hours of lab work would equate to three credit hours. Pohl noted the course proposal indicated students could have multiple enrollments in the course and wondered if that was possible. Parry confirmed it was but not sure how it would work as students would not travel to Kenya three times. She felt if it was preferred to offer the course for three hours, it needed to have the requirements beefed up and made clearer or offer the course for one credit hour instead. She added the course proposer needed to make a conscious choice of what they want and wanted students to get from the experience. Pohl agreed the course was light.

Parry suggested the Council should invite Strzpek or Annie Weaver to the next meeting to discuss the Council's concerns.

A motion was made by Pohl to table the proposal until Strzpek or Weaver could speak with the Council. Wood seconded.

A formal vote was not taken.

Worland will invite Strzpek and Weaver to attend the next meeting.

Discussion Items:

3. General Education Task Force-Structure Update

Aitken and Parry gave Council members an update on the proposed structure being discussed by their work group as part of the General Education Task Force. The Council will most likely have more of a roll in the process next fall.

Wood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marinello seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons