

## Council on General Education Minutes

February 4, 2025

10:00-11:00 a.m., STV 140

**Presiding:** Gregory Ferrence

**Present:** Malinda Aiello, Brian Aitken, Allison Antink Meyer, Gregory Braswell, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Julie Murphy, Joshua Newport, Brian Rejack, Rocio Rivadeneyra, and Haiyan Xie

**Guests:** Dr. Dimitrios Nikolaou, Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

Ferrence called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

### Discussion Items:

#### 1. General Education Revision-Discussion with Academic Affairs Committee Chair

Nikolaou informed the Council that the General Education Revision proposal was discussed/reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate for much of the fall term. The Committee's goal is to review and address the feedback received in February and send to the floor of the Academic Senate in March. Nikolaou asked to speak to the Council to address three questions the Committee had regarding the proposal.

The first question was regarding the course learning objectives. Nikolaou noted most of the categories listed at least three objectives and it was not clear if objective requirements were and/or in nature. The Committee wondered if the course would need to meet objective 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 or if only one objective would be required. Nikolaou added the Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement category explicitly calls out at least two of the course objectives must be met. He asked Council members what the intent was for the other categories.

Rivadeneyra felt it had been discussed to require all the objectives for the other categories so using "and" language. Hurd could not remember for certain but knew the intent was to give faculty freedom in creating/revising courses. Nikolaou noted the Committee's impression the intent was "and." He added there was a range of three to six outcomes among the various categories with the most being in the Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement category. Rivadeneyra believed that category had such a broad number of possible outcomes which is why a specific number was required.

Nikolaou agreed that this rationale made sense given the nature of the Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement category. The Committee will adjust the proposal language to include all objectives must be met for the other categories.

The second question the Committee had was regarding the STEM category. Nikolaou noted the description required that two or more disciplines be represented. The Committee wanted to know why the description is different from other categories as they say interdisciplinary perspectives. There was concern if there would be enough seats as many of our current courses do not seem to meet the two or more disciplines requirement.

Ferrence responded that his interpretation was that the requirement was not multi-disciplinary. Newport agreed and thought there was natural overlap between categories and courses could be taught through different lenses. Rivadeneyra added that part of the purpose of a new program was not to try and fit what the current program into it...if so, what is the point in having a revision. The goal is to provide the opportunity for department/schools to look at what they currently do and make revisions to reflect new ways of thinking to better engage students and get them excited about General Education.

Nikolaou wondered if the focus should be more on the second sentence of the description. Antink Meyer felt the purpose was to focus on more real-world problems and thought this category would need to drive the creation of new courses. Rivadeneyra thought some courses already existed that would fit in this category and gave the example of the Water course. Nikolaou wondered if Philosophy of Science course would fit in this category but based on the current definition, thought it probably would not.

Council members believed the second sentence of the description focused on the mode of inquiry from two disciplines. It was suggested to remove the first sentence. Nikolaou said the Committee will adjust language accordingly.

The final question the Committee had was regarding the intent of requiring lab/lab work. If a student completed a class with a lab, would this then be allowed to fulfill the Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement requirement. Rivadeneyra noted the course could not meet multiple categories. IAI explicitly states a lab is required where the new proposal does not explicitly state if one is required. Ferrence noted the course must be open to all on campus.

Nikolaou told Council members he had been discussing an implementation plan with Hurd and wondered what one would look like going forward. Rivadeneyra believed course approval would start with the Council. Ferrence added the Council had avoided detailed implementation discussion as it was not sure if the proposal would be changed dramatically by the Senate. Nikolaou believed there would not be drastic changes made and that it would be sent to the Academic Senate for an up/down vote.

**Action Items:**

**2. CJS 105 Violence in America (new course proposed for the ICL designation)**

The proposal was submitted by Jazmyn Thomas, Advisor, Department of Criminal Justice Sciences.

Ferrence reminded members the course had previously been tabled by the Council in the fall as it could not determine which designation the department wanted to request. The documentation provided at that time made mention of both the ICL and SS designations. The department was asked to clarify which designation it would like to pursue and update the proposal accordingly.

Aitken noted both the ICL and SS designations were listed on the proposal. Hurd thought they may have focused solely on updating the syllabus and may have forgotten to update the proposal itself. Braswell added both designations were listed on the supporting justification documents. Clemmons asked if Hurd had spoken to the department and verified if ICL was the designation they wanted to pursue. Hurd verified she had and ICL was the designation the department felt best fit the course. She added a new syllabus had been submitted.

Council members felt the course could count toward either designation based on its outcomes and focus. It was also noted the learning objectives were listed but not tied to the actual course objectives.

Aitken made a motion to table the proposal for further clarification from the department regarding the designation and alignment of learning objectives to the chosen category. Rejack seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

**3. Entrepreneurship Minor Revision**

**4. MUS 159 Survey of Rock and Popular Music (new course proposed for FA designation)**

**5. HIS 110 Race and African American Life (new course proposed for UST designation)**

**6. LGS 102 Introduction to Law and Justice (new course proposed for ICL designation)**

Action items 3-6 were tabled to the next meeting due to time constraints.

**Update Items:**

**7. Teaching Symposium Session Update**

Hurd informed Council members the General Education session held at January's Teaching Symposium went well. It led to the realization that more workshops and professional development is needed for faculty on how to teach large sections.

**8. Curriculum Software Update**

Hurd informed Council members that CourseDog was selected as the new curriculum software. Discussions regarding workflow processes are currently being had with hopes to meet with the chairs of the respective college curriculum committees in spring to assist with building these processes. Hurd will keep the Council updated.

Newport made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Hurd.

Meeting adjourned: 10:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Soemer Simmons