

**Council on General Education Minutes**  
**April 23, 2019**  
**10-11:00 a.m., Stevenson Hall 140**

**Presiding:** Rocio Rivadeneyra

**Present:** Brian Aitken, Rebekka Darner, Sally Parry, Carla Pohl, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Kimberly Schneider, Jean Standard, Gary Weilbacher, and Chris Worland

**Guests:**

Derek Meyers, Assistant Director, University Assessment Services

Rivadeneyra called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

**Action Items:**

**1. Approval of April 9, 2019 Minutes**

Due to lack of quorum, this item was tabled until the fall.

**2. General Education Category Discussion**

Rivadeneyra reminded Council members of the previous discussion held on April 9, 2019 in regards to the two proposals that were tabled and how difficult it was for the Council to have a clear understanding of the General Education category requirements. It was determined the Council needs to better define expectations for each category, not only to assist itself when considering proposals, but to assist faculty in submitting proposals as well.

Rivadeneyra expressed concern over the two proposals having to be tabled until fall for consideration. Standard noted the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) was done meeting for the year so both proposals would have to wait until fall regardless to be approved. She did add that if both departments wanted to have the courses approved for fall and were willing to remove the request for General Education and AMALI designations, Hurd, as Executive Secretary, could approve both courses without them having to go before UCC.

Aitken pointed out one of the reasons the proposals had not been approved at the previous meeting was that the Council was not positive on how to handle the ambiguous nature of both courses. Standard agreed and felt if they were ambiguous than it would be best to wait until fall so they could be discussed by UCC. Parry felt the Global Health course was a fine course but was typically not considered a social science course as applied.

Council members reviewed several category definitions that Simmons and Hurd had found in the archives. Aitken pointed out a more detailed definition for the social science category was not included in the information provided and questioned where the other information had come from. Standard responded she believed the definitions were pulled from the successor of the Task Force/GECC and was from the 1990's. Parry asked if information from the latest General Education review was available. Simmons reported she was not able to find any recent descriptions in the information available to her.

Parry pointed out the Council would not be helpful if it was unavailable to provide guidance to faculty who wished to course proposals. Darner agreed the Council needs to establish guidelines. Rivadeneyra added that learning objectives needed to be part of these guidelines but noted that the Council did not have the authority to make changes to those objectives. However, she felt the Council could help to more clearly define those objectives. Standard felt the learning objectives were so broad that they were not helpful. She thought the paragraph descriptions used prior to the last General Education overhaul were more helpful to use. Parry wondered if these descriptions would be general enough or would be more geared toward proposing major courses. However, she felt the definitions could form the base of a good working document. Rivadeneyra responded she thought if the Council posted a version of these descriptors on its website, it would help with faculty questions.

After looking at the descriptions, Rivadeneyra felt the MQM proposal did not fit with the ICL designation. Parry added the course would be ideal for the proposed IDEAS course requirement. However, Standard argued based on the broader definition that was provided, the course could possibly fit in either the ICL or UST categories. Parry responded that based on the shorter category description found for ICL, the course did not focus on political aspects. Upon review of the UST short description, Standard felt the course would not qualify for that designation either as it did not focus on US History. Standard pointed out the shorter category descriptions were much more narrowly focused.

Rivadeneyra questioned if the Council had the authority to select which descriptions to use. Standard believed the Council did have the authority to choose. Aitken thought it may be helpful to model the descriptions and phrases similar to IAI. Parry agreed with Aitken that it could make transferring easier and that it would be nice to have something in place that was more specific.

Aitken added that he did not recall the Council having this level of difficulty when discussing other course proposals and wondered if the Council was opening up with new standards with current classes. Parry responded many of the current General Education courses were grandfathered in and may very well not meet updated standard requirements. Darner asked if the Council should require course proposers to provide specific information as to how the course would be taught to help determine the appropriate designation or if that would be too "nitty, gritty." Standard felt it would depend and could vary by course. Parry and Pohl felt it may be a good practice to conduct syllabi surveys for courses with General Education designations. Similar to University Assessment's process, the Council could review one category each year.

Rivadeneyra and Aitken noted the social science and humanities categories were missing more detailed descriptions. Rivadeneyra felt the Council would need a mixture from both information sources provided and suggested a rubric be created for each category. Aitken suggested the detailed description and rubric would be helpful to use for the current English 101 course. Parry agreed that it would be beneficial for that course as well.

Rivadeneyra thought the Council should make the proposal process more manageable. Standard suggested the information be provided on the Council's website with individual links. Parry suggested the entire document be on the website but with links to allow the user to more easily drill down into the specific information.

Rivadeneyra asked Council members if this should be a summer project or if the Council should focus on it in the fall. As several members' terms would expire in May, Council members decided to wait until new members were seated to begin the project. Pohl suggested two members be assigned to a

category they are familiar with for review. Rivadeneyra asked what the overall outcome was that the Council wanted to achieve. Standard felt the outcome was to have short descriptions available that would link to a larger document.

Item was tabled until fall for further discussion/action.

### **3. MQM 120 Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in the Workplace (new course proposed for ICL)**

The proposal was tabled until fall so that the Council could determine a better ICL category definition.

### **4. HSC 206 Global Health (new course proposed for SS and AMALI)**

The proposal was tabled until fall so that the Council could determine a better SS category definition.

#### **Information Items:**

### **5. General Education Assessment Update – Derek Meyers**

Meyers shared preliminary results from the *General Education Student Survey* with the Council. He will be putting together a fuller report of the information over the summer. Meyers noted the wording of questions can be tweaked for the next time the survey is distributed. He added that while there were quite a few responses disagreeing that General Education courses were beneficial to students, these students could also have been in major courses at the time they responded to the survey. Meyers will be conducting further analysis of survey respondents to find out.

Parry questioned that if students were never enrolled, how it was possible to have statistics for them. Meyers responded these were transfer students and explained transfer students received a different email that contained separate questions pertaining to IAI. Parry asked if this group did not affect the aggregated answers provided. Meyers confirmed the 17 respondents did not impact the 426 other respondents who all were indicated by the University as completing, or having completed, at least one General Education course at Illinois State.

Rivadeneyra noted many students reported they would rather take major courses and, if given the option, would not take General Education courses. Parry added many students do not realize how important those courses were to them until years later. She asked Meyers if it would be possible to get a breakdown of responses by academic level (i.e., sophomore, junior, etc.) Meyers confirmed he could get a breakdown by academic level for the Council.

Pohl asked if the survey was still open. Meyers confirmed it was and that students would be receiving a reminder email the following day. Rivadeneyra asked if it would be possible to break down respondents by their major. Meyers thought that it would be possible to get the information broken out by major as well.

### **6. IDEAS Update**

Rivadeneyra informed Council members the IDEAS proposal had been passed by UCC at its last meeting. Standard added that the proposal would go to the Academic Senate in the fall for consideration.

Pohl made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rivadeneyra seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Soemer Simmons