

Council on General Education Minutes
October 17, 2023
10:00-11:00 a.m., STV 140

Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Allison Antink Meyer, Gregory Braswell, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Jack White, Chris Worland, and Haiyan Xie

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

Action Items:

1. Introductions

Introductions were made. The Council welcomed new member, Jack White, as a student representative.

2. Approval of September 19, 2023 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were any corrections to the minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

3. Approval of October 3, 2023 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were any corrections to the minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

4. THE 105 Diversity in the Theatre (new course proposed for FA designation)

The course was proposed by Dr. James Chrismon, Associate Professor, School of Theatre and Dance.

Ferrence told Council members the proposal was for the FA designation as well as for the IDEAS designation. The IDEAS Panel will consider the request for the IDEAS designation. Worland noted the syllabus outlined examples showing requirements/expectations during an eight-week course and a four-week course. He questioned if the expectations for students would be clearly posted on Course Finder as students would be expected to complete a full semester's worth of work in a compressed time frame. Aitken showed Worland what students would see on Course Finder.

Ferrence liked seeing the table breaking down the amount of workload expectations by the different time frames. Rivadeneyra noted the contact hour and expectations were also broken out nicely on page seven of the syllabus. Clemmons was impressed by the level of detail provided on the syllabus and White thought the proposal itself was very straight-forward.

Aitken made a motion to approve THE 105 as a new course with the FA designation. Antink Meyer seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

5. HIS 136 History of the United States since 1865 (existing course revision of UST course)

The course was proposed by Dr. Ross Kennedy, Chair, Department of History.

Ferrence noted the course already had the UST designation but had made several revisions and was asking for the IDEAS designation as well. Rivadeneyra responded there was a big revision to the existing course description and was concerned that by trying to fix one area if another one would be affected in terms of still meeting General Education and/or IAI designation requirements. Ferrence expressed concern that students taking the equivalent course in high school or at a community college could transfer the course in to meet other Illinois State requirements, such as IDEAS, thereby end running the requirement. Aitken responded a lot of students either bring in Advanced Placement (AP) or dual enrolled credit for the course. He wondered that if the Council approved of the new course description if it would be silently signaling approval of the course for IDEAS as well.

Ferrence asked if there was a precedent set that if a course counted for IDEAS, it could no longer articulate as a General Education course. Aitken responded there was already a precedent as SOC 106 is approved for both General Education and IDEAS and is a common dual enrollment course. Hurd added that the proposed change in the course description was a result of previous feedback between the department and the IDEAS review panel. Rivadeneyra reminded Council members that its purview in this case was to determine if the course still fulfilled UST General Education requirements as the IDEAS request would be considered by another body.

Aitken suggested the reference to IDEAS in the course description should be removed if the course is not approved for the IDEAS designation. Hurd agreed and will ask the department to update. He also suggested using semicolons in the description instead of periods as it makes the copy choppy to read.

Antink Meyer made a motion to approve the course revisions for HIS 136. Braswell seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

Information Items:

6. Curriculum Software RFP Update

Hurd told Council members the RFP was in the process of being re-bid by the Purchasing Office. Purchasing is hoping to complete the process, including demonstrations, by the end of the year.

7. General Education Revision Update

Hurd informed Council members of the Town Hall results. Approximately 80 people attended the town halls and 60 individuals filled out the online feedback form. The Executive Committee is in the process of reviewing the feedback. Committee members are exploring the creation of a framework and a less discipline-specific focus. When there is a more definitive idea of when the revision will be approved, Hurd noted the Council will need to map out a timeline of how to proceed as it will take a large amount of time to review potential courses. She added there are currently around 256 General Education courses, and they would all need to be re-evaluated.

Ferrence made a motion to adjourn. Hurd seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons