

Council on General Education Minutes
November 5, 2019
10-11:00 a.m., Stevenson Hall 140

Presiding: Rebekka Darner

Present: Brian Aitken, Yun-Ching Chung, Rebekka Darner, Katie Fisher, Rachel Gramer, Amy Hurd, Amanda Klingler, Lance Lippert, Sally Parry, Georgia Tsouvala, and Chris Worland

Darner called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Approval of October 22, 2019 Minutes

The question was called. Aitken made a motion to accept the October 22, 2019 minutes. Tsouvala seconded. Ten in favor, none opposed, one abstained. The minutes were accepted.

2. IDS 121A22 French Cinema: Art, History, Culture (new course proposed for LH)

The course was proposed by Dr. Erin Ponnou-Delaffon, Associate Professor, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. The Council reviewed the proposal at an earlier meeting and had asked Ponnou-Delaffon to provide additional information as to the number and types of writing assignments students were expected to complete in the course. Ponnou-Delaffon provided the requested information to the Council for review.

Tsouvala noted the course was to be offered online. Parry confirmed the course was expected to be offered in the summer as a four-week online course. Darner thought it would be difficult to provide constructive feedback to students in that short of time. Garner reminded Council members the definition of the writing intensive component was the same type of concern/question that the Council had during the previous meeting when discussing the City as Text proposal. She noted this course seemed to contain less writing than that course.

Darner pointed out that the Council was getting to the point of micromanaging faculty pedagogy which was not its intent. Gramer agreed but added there needed to be some form of direction or definition as to what constitutes a writing intensive course. Aitken agreed there seemed to be no basis available to judge. After reviewing category definitions, Gramer found mention of a minimum of five writing assignments was needed to be considered writing intensive, and therefore, qualify for the LH designation. However, the nature or type of writing assignments was not specified. Aitken questioned that as IDS 128 has 10 writing assignments, would it then be considered writing intensive as well.

Chung noted that in the supporting documents provided by Ponnou-Delaffon, within the learning goals, there was no mention that the course was writing intensive and thought this needed to be explicitly stated to students within those goals. Darner felt this did not need to be explicitly in writing in this instance as students could look at the grading rubric provided and infer the amount of writing required for the course. She added that 100% of the course assignments were made up of writing assignments.

Worland asked if courses are required to be re-submitted after a period of time to ensure they still meet category requirements. Parry responded that courses are not asked to be re-submitted. She felt a

periodic review, similar to what is conducted by IAI review panels, would be beneficial. Darner agreed that a systematic evaluation of courses within the categories would be a good way to approach assessment. Aitken noted language referencing Middle Core and Humanities needed to be removed from the syllabus. However, he noted this correction was not a reason to hold or reject the proposal.

Klingler mentioned that while journal entries may not sound as rigorous, there are quite a few of them and to receive full points, students will need to write analytical essays. She noted that calling the assignments journal entries may be friendlier than what the assignments actually entail. Fisher added with nine entries, students would be completing two a week, in addition to having to watch the corresponding film.

Worland felt the rubric provided a clear understanding of the level of expectation for students. Darner agreed the rubric was detailed and answered the questions the Council previously had regarding the course expectations.

The question was called. Parry made a motion to approve IDS 121A22 for the LH designation pending receipt of a corrected syllabus. Gramer seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Hurd will contact Ponnou-Delaffon for a revised syllabus.

3-5. POL 103/GEO 103/SOC 103 Thirsty Society: An Interdisciplinary Examination of Water (new course proposed for NS)

POL 103 was proposed by Erik Rankin, Academic Advisor, Department of Politics and Government. GEO 103 was proposed by Dr. Eric Peterson, Professor, Department of Geography, Geology and the Environment.

SOC 103 was proposed by Dr. Joan Brehm, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

The Council reviewed and discussed all three courses together.

Parry informed Council members a new minor in water studies would be coming soon. The courses would be cross-listed as opposed to being IDS courses. The departments of Politics and Government, Sociology and Anthropology, and Geography, Geology, and the Environment each created a similar course which was approved by the College of Arts and Sciences College Curriculum Committee.

Council members discussed the different requirements for the NS and SMT designations. Darner reminded everyone to qualify for the NS designation, a course must have a lab component. SMT does not require a lab component. Darner asked Parry if there was any reason the courses were not proposed for SMT rather than NS. Parry responded the question had not come up in the Curriculum Committee's discussion. Hurd had spoken with Brehm prior to the course submission and noted Brehm wanted to provide students with a different type of NS opportunity.

Council members noted that while the course proposals all contained mention of a one-hour lab component, information regarding the lab such as dates, times, expectations, etc. were not explicitly mentioned in any of the course syllabi or other supporting documentation. As the lab component is required to qualify for the NS designation, Council members felt more information regarding the lab was needed in order to make a decision.

The question was called. Aitken made a motion to table the POL/GEO/SOC 103 proposals pending receipt of additional information regarding the lab component. Worland seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Hurd will contact each department for the additional information.

6. International Studies Minor (program revision)

The revision was proposed by Dr. Michaelene Cox, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and Government.

The International Studies minor has been around for a while. Dr. Shari Zeck oversaw the minor for the last several years. As geographic-specific minors became more prevalent, the International Studies minor saw a decline in students. Zeck consulted with the advisory council and voted to delete the minor. This decision was approved by both the Council and the University Curriculum Committee (UCC). The Academic Senate Executive Committee decided not to move on the request.

A committee was formed by the Senate to discuss the minor and a survey was sent out to faculty who taught courses within the minor to determine if anyone would be interested in taking the minor over. Dr. David Cleeton and Cox expressed interest in taking it over and met with Hurd to discuss deleting the current minor and creating a new one. Since that discussion, Cleeton no longer has interest and Cox was advised by the Senate to revise the minor as opposed to creating a new one.

Hurd told Council members overall, she liked what Cox proposed for the minor. Darner asked what the difference was between swapping out courses vs. creating a new minor. Hurd responded a new minor would have a new title, different courses and different requirements than the original. The revised version of the minor appears to be keeping some of the same course requirements as the original. Tsouvala asked Hurd how she had envisioned a new minor would look like. Hurd responded she thought the new minor should be more issue and topics related as opposed to geography based which is one of the reason she liked Cox's concept. Darner pointed out there were three proposed categories within the minor that are topic based.

Parry noted that there are several departments that responded unfavorably and did not want the minor revisions to be approved. The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (LAN) opposes the removal of the language requirement from an international minor. The Department of Politics and Government has expressed concerns to Parry as well. Tsouvala agreed with LAN but noted the other geographic based programs did not have the language requirement either.

Lippert asked how many students were currently in the minor. Hurd responded there were between two and five students in the minor.

Two Council members had to leave during discussion. Due to lack of quorum, this item was tabled to the next meeting for further discussion.

7. Review Gen Ed Descriptions

Due to time constraints, this item was tabled to the next meeting for further discussion.

Information/Discussion Items:

8. MQM 120 Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in the Workplace Discussion

Due to time constraints, this item was tabled to the next meeting.

Gramer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darner seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons