

Council on General Education Minutes

November 11, 2025

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

Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Mouna Bounouader, Elaine Chatman-Borowiec, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Katie Krcmarik, Deborah MacPhee, Julie Murphy, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Robbie Shorter, Jing Wang, and Christian Wesselink

Guests: Dr. Katy Strzepek, Director, Civic Engagement

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

Discussion/Update Items:

1. Expedited Course Approval Process

Hurd informed Council members of the expedited course approval process for GE27 proposals. Expedited courses follow a different workflow process in Coursedog and do not require review by the full Council. Courses that currently have a GE14 designation can submit for expedited review if the course is being proposed for a comparable GE27 designation, is maintaining at least 75% of the course content, and has no pre-requisites. Once received, two Council members will review to determine if the course can be approved or if the course needs to be reviewed by the full Council.

There have been a few course proposals submitted for expedited review so far. Hurd explained there is no way in Coursedog to assign the proposals for review so review requests will be sent via email to Council members asking them to review specific proposals.

Rivadeneyra asked about the workflow process. Hurd explained that the expedited workflow is intended to be faster as the request bypasses the college review. Rivadeneyra asked how many courses Hurd thought would be proposed for expedited review. Hurd did not know but assumed about half.

Ferrence suggested the possibility of using a consent agenda to approve expedited courses and suggested proactively looking at current GE14 courses to see if they could automatically be mapped to the new GE27 to avoid an influx of several hundred proposals. Aitken asked for clarification that no action was needed unless an email is received from Hurd or Simmons requesting a course be reviewed. Hurd confirmed that was the case.

2. Experiential Learning

Hurd sent Council members a handbook earlier in the day to assist members when evaluating courses for the Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement (ELCE) designation. Hurd added this new designation was her personal favorite part of the new General Education program and thanked Strzepek for her work on the handbook. Once the Council reviews the document, it will be posted to the General Education website and forwarded to chairs/directors for distribution.

Hurd sees the handbook as a working document. She noted that the question has been raised how much of a course's focus needs to be on experiential learning and civic engagement to qualify for the designation. A set percentage has not been set for this designation as it has for AMALI and IDEAS. Hurd

walked Council members through the document. The first page of the document contains the description for the category and examples of courses that could count toward the designation. Hurd added that student teaching would not count in the category designation, courses could not be major blocked and at least two of the designation's learning objectives must be met to qualify. The rest of the document goes over the designation's learning objectives with a potential scoring rubric provided at the end of the document.

Strzepek thanked Dr. Jennifer Friberg for assisting with the document as well as other office colleagues. She encouraged the Council not to create a certain percentage "threshold" for the designation. Rather, if faculty can show a reasonable amount of content focus that should be enough to include the course in the ELCE designation. The hallmark of the designation should be the reflective piece of what students learned and how the course connects to at least two of the required learning objectives. Strzepek stressed in terms of modality, courses in this designation could still be done online or have an asynchronous component as well.

Hurd added a session to those interested in pursuing this designation would be held during the Teaching Institute in spring. Strzepek said sessions in Artificial Technology and Technology would be held as well. She added that courses did not have to be limited to experiences working directly with community partners. For example, students who are unable to travel could assist a community partner and/or project by doing data entry or other forms of research. Strzepek would be happy to meet with anyone interested in exploring these options.

Action Items:

3. Approval of October 28, 2025 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were any corrections to the minutes as presented. There were no corrections. The minutes were approved as presented.

4. IDS 125 Foundations of Citizenship: Introduction to Civic Responsibility (existing IDS course)

- **Proposed GE14 – ICL designation**
- **Proposed GE27 – ELCE designation**

The proposal was submitted by Dr. Katy Strzepek, Director, Center for Civic Engagement.

Ferrence asked members if they approved of discussing both proposals together and then take separate votes on each proposal. The Council agreed. Ferrence reminded Council members the proposals had been discussed at the prior meeting and were tabled due to missing the anchor syllabi. The proposals were sent back to the proposer and were re-submitted for review with the syllabi.

Hurd asked Strzepek to go through the thought process of requesting the ELCE designation for the GE27 proposal. Strzepek explained the course provided an introduction to students to assist with the building of knowledge/skills and how to take action in a real social change model. Students participate in direct service or volunteer opportunities and gain experience in how government works. As part of the course, students interact with community partners, participate in short field trips, engage in deliberate dialogues, and receive feedback from experts in the field. Each week, there is a focus on a different part of the wheel of social change with students required to complete a reflection on the experience. According to Strzepek, several students are working on articles based on their course experience and are hoping to be published.

Ferrence thanked Strzepek for the information. After reviewing the anchor syllabus, he felt it was extremely helpful in demonstrating how the course objectives map to the requested designations for both General Education programs and thought the course topical outline provided were appropriate for each.

Clemmons made a motion to approve IDS 125 for the GE14 ICL designation. Seconded by MacPhee.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

Clemmons made a motion to approve IDS 125 for the GE27 ELCE designation. Seconded by Aitken.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motions carried.

5. WGS 320 Feminist Theories (new WGS course)

The course was proposed by Dr. Jacklyn Weier, Assistant Director, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Ferrence reminded Council members that CGE was now responsible for reviewing WGSS courses as those fall under the Provost. The Council will serve as the College-level reviewer. He noted that the course had a prerequisite of WGS 120. He added an anchor syllabus was provided in a word file format which is permissible. Ferrence noted the syllabus provided deviated slightly from the standard template but thought the deviation was trivial. The syllabus provided did not include one question that was provided on the Coursedog template. However, the question that was missing was determined to be unnecessary. Hurd will ask the Registrar to remove it from the Coursedog anchor syllabi template.

Aitken made a motion to approve WGS 320 as a new course. Seconded by Clemmons.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

MacPhee made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned: 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons