

Council on General Education Minutes
September 11, 2018
10-11:00 a.m., Stevenson Hall 140

Presiding: Rocio Rivadeneyra

Present: Brian Aitken, Rebekka Darner-Gougis, Min-Yu (Stella) Liao, William Nestel, Sally Parry, Carla Pohl, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Jon Rosenthal, Jean Standard, Benjamin Stiers, Gary Weilbacher, and Chris Worland

Guests:

Dr. Gina Hunter, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Derek Meyers, Assistant Director, University Assessment

Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Election of Chair

Rosenthal opened the floor for nominations. Standard nominated Rivadeneyra to serve as chair. Parry seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

Motion carried.

Rivadeneyra took over the meeting as Chair.

2. Approval of Minutes

The question was called. Aitken made a motion to accept the April 10, 2018 minutes. Parry seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The minutes were accepted.

3. CSD 115, Human Communication: Speech, Language, and Hearing (proposed for Social Science)

The course was proposed by Dr. Ann Beck, Chair, Department of Communication Science & Disorders.

Rivadeneyra asked if the course was currently being offered to which Parry informed the Council it was a current course and, at one time, used to count toward General Education in the previous University Studies. Rosenthal thought the beginning of the course syllabi leaned toward fulfilling the Social Science aspect before then becoming more specific toward the CSD as the semester goes on.

Rivadeneyra asked if the course was a major course for CSD. Aitken responded it was no longer a major course and that CSD 155 was the introductory course for majors. Aitken added however, that CSD 115 was recommended for CSD majors and most students within the major will take the course. He has observed that students seem to enjoy the course and believed it would be a popular addition to an already large category. Rosenthal agreed there was a large amount of capacity available in the Social Science category.

Parry noted CSD seemed to be leaning more in a direction toward discussing gender, diversity and ethnicity. Pohl felt the course was more focused on Speech Pathology and less toward Social Science.

Rosenthal agreed that Pohl's belief was not incorrect in that the proposal narrative provided leaned itself more toward General Education than the provided daily assignments seemed to.

Darner-Gougis questioned why the department would want to make the course a General Education course as it would most likely make it more difficult to teach given its focus. Parry responded that many departments/schools are using the introductory classes as a way to encourage students into the major. CSD has a backlog of students who are interested in the major already, which leads to question why they would want to pack enrollment in this course. Aitken mentioned students currently do not have to be in the major to take CSD 155 and a few of their other courses and students are able to get into these courses without difficulty.

Standard did not have an issue accepting the course for the Social Science designation. She pointed out this was another example of a course that counted under the old University Studies program and wondered if the University was reverting back to that program. She raised the broader question of if courses should be reviewed and removed from the current General Education program as courses always seem to be added but none removed. Darner-Gougis questioned if that was an issue as having more classes gave students more options to choose from. Rosenthal responded that in 1998, General Education was highly structured but also, very complicated and distributional in nature. As we have moved along, we are once again becoming more like the University Studies and IAI Common Core. Rosenthal agreed that if students are interested in the courses, why not give them greater variety.

The question was called. Rosenthal made a motion to approve the course for the Social Science designation. Parry seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Simmons will notify Beck of the Council's decision.

4. Native American Studies Minor Revision

Revisions to the minor were proposed by Dr. Susan Kalter, Director of Native American Studies.

Rivadeneira informed the Council the revision to the minor consisted of adding ANT 351 as an elective course option. She felt the addition fit well within the minor.

Parry asked if a letter of acceptance from Anthropology had been submitted as part of the proposal. Aitken questioned if the letter was needed and Parry confirmed approval from the department chair was still required. Standard noted Dr. James Skibo, Department of Sociology and Anthropology Chair, had already approved the proposed revisions on the electronic proposal form. Parry agreed the approval could be used in lieu of a letter.

The question was called. Rosenthal moved to approve the proposed revisions to the minor. Pohl seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

5. International Studies Minor Revision

Revisions to the minor were proposed by Rosenthal on behalf of Dr. Sheri Zeck, Director.

Rosenthal informed Council members the revision to the minor was part of housekeeping efforts as the five courses proposed for deletion, HIS 270, ART 372, ART 379, POL 242 and POL 341 are no longer offered by their respective departments/schools. Courses are removed from the Catalog after four years if they have not been offered. Zeck worked with Rosenthal to identify the courses and submit the revision proposal.

The question was called. Parry moved to approve the proposed revisions to the minor. Aitken seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

6. Food Studies Minor

The proposal is for a new minor submitted by Dr. Gina Hunter, Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Rosenthal informed members that as part of the curricular process, in 2004 the Academic Senate mandated any new program proposal must include an outline of expenses and proposed funding for the program. Hunter, along with Drs. Kathryn Sampeck and Noha Shawki are working on the curriculum proposal for the minor. The trio received an Interdisciplinary grant from the College of Arts and Sciences to assist with bringing speakers to campus. The minor would consist of mostly pre-existing courses. In addition, students would choose from a large group of electives courses and also complete a capstone course as part of the minor. A new course, ANT 105, People and Food, is currently in the curriculum review process.

Parry noted the CAS College Curriculum Committee was currently reviewing the proposed course and was debating if it should count toward the SMT or SS designation of General Education. Hunter was advised by Jeri Ryburn to hold on submitting the curriculum proposal until the new course have been approved.

Hunter is currently serving as an Administrator in Residence (AIR) within the Provost Office and is working with Rosenthal to assess what the General Education program might look like in the future. Rosenthal reminded members the current General Education program is 20 years old and it needs a fresh look. Hunter will research best practices and benchmarking as part of the process.

7. General Education Assessment-Derek Meyers

Meyers distributed a handout to Council members outlining the fall 2018 update in the assessment of the General Education Program. He informed the Council members the first assessment process was conducted during the 2007-2008 academic year. Broad rubrics were used by an interdisciplinary group of faculty for assessment. During the 2011-2012 academic year, the General Education Task Force recommended more specific rubrics be utilized to tap into specific learning outcomes. In addition, faculty who taught in the specific assessment area were asked to conduct the review as they had the foundation knowledge base to make a more informed assessment.

In the 2014-2015 academic year, a new process was implemented with course assignments requested every six years and course syllabi every three years. Faculty teaching courses in the current review cycle are asked to voluntarily submit course syllabi and student assignments to University Assessment. Meyers informed Council members that it has been difficult to obtain enough artifacts from enough courses to create a sufficient and representative sample size.

Within the next week or so, University Assessment will request course syllabi from department/school archives for courses within the Mathematics, Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Natural Sciences (NS), Natural Science Alternative (NSA), and Science, Mathematics, and Technology (SMT) categories. Faculty teaching courses within NS, NSA and SMT, as well as, Humanities and Language in the Humanities will be asked to submit student assignments.

According to Meyers, the response rate for obtaining syllabi is generally better, although the sample size is slightly biased. University Assessment has begun contacting schools and departments directly now for the syllabi to increase the participation rate and representativeness of this review. In addition, the course diversity and sample size rate for student assignments was decent.

Meyers reported the assessment report is ready for the United States Traditions (UST) category. In the past, there was an issue with the feedback loop in regards to reporting results as reviewer responses were often difficult to understand. Meyers believed that by utilizing faculty who already have knowledge of the specific areas being reviewed, the reports will provide better feedback. Meyers added faculty who reviewed course assignments were able to utilize more information sharing through a rubric calibration session, and an online rubric through a ReggieNet Committee site was used by these faculty to review the UST course assignments.

Rosenthal informed Council members the rubrics used were nationally vetted and modified to meet Illinois State's specific circumstances. As one of the biggest challenges is getting enough artifacts to create an acceptable sample size, Rosenthal urged members to please encourage their colleagues to submit materials when/if asked. University Assessment tries to make the process as minimally intrusive as possible to faculty. Assignments are picked up and returned to faculty within 24 hours. Rosenthal added the Higher Learning Commission will be conducting an interim review of the University for accreditation and they will be interested in Illinois State's progress regarding General Education assessment.

Darner-Gougis asked what types of items could help with the sample size and pointed out that many of her colleagues only have exams as opposed to course assignments. Rosenthal confirmed it was the nature of the discipline which sometimes leads to assessment challenges. It is also difficult to collect meaningful assessment information in the Individuals and Civic Life (ICL) category as most of the classes in this category are large lecture sections that utilize opscan.

Meyers added that University Assessment has received discussion board posts for ICL courses as one type of student artifact. In science categories, lab reports/assignments can be used. For QR courses, daily homework items have been collected and for SS and UST courses, in-class response or other shorter papers have been submitted. Meyers emphasized that it is not expected that an individual assignment will meet every outcome for the course category.

Parry made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darner-Gougis seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons

General Education Program Assessment

Council on General Education – Fall 2018

Activities to be completed during the 2018-2019 academic year

To be requested

- Assignments from faculty members (that will be collected and sampled) in:
 - Natural Sciences course category (fall only; repeat from last year)
 - Natural Science Alternatives course category (fall only; repeat from last year)
 - Science, Mathematics, and Technology course category (fall only; repeat from last year)
 - Humanities course category
 - Language in the Humanities course category

- Syllabi requested from department/school archives:
 - Mathematics course category
 - Quantitative Reasoning course category
 - Natural Sciences course category
 - Natural Science alternatives course category
 - Science, Mathematics, and Technology course category

To be reviewed

- Assignments from faculty members (that were collected/sampled):
 - Individuals and Civic Life course category
 - Mathematics course category
 - Quantitative Reasoning course category
 - Social Sciences course category

- Syllabi requested from department/school archives:
 - Social Sciences course category
 - Humanities course category
 - Fine Arts course category
 - United States Traditions course category
 - Individuals and Civic Life course category

To be reported

- Assignments from faculty members (that were collected/sampled) in United States Traditions course category

- Syllabi collected from faculty members (prior to requesting from department/school archives) in:
 - United States Traditions course category
 - Individuals and Civic Life course category
 - Mathematics course category
 - Quantitative Reasoning course category
 - Sciences