MINUTES
General Education Committee
October 11, 2012
1:15-2:45pm
Alumni Gallery

Members present: Gregg Afman, Michelle Hardley, Wayne Iba, Tatiana Nazarenko (chair) & Debra Quast

Absent: John Blondell

Others present: Mark Sargent (second half)

I. Open with Prayer

II. The minutes of the September 27, 2012 meeting were approved.

III. 2012 Annual General Education Assessment Report; Faculty Assignments; Rubric; Assessment Data; Prompt for Students; CSWS Survey Results; Writers Corner Data; SAT and ACT Percentages; WSI Courses: read the new sections of the draft (in red) and provide feedback: the entire committee

The committee discussed various parts of the Annual General Education Assessment Report and provided feedback as necessary to Tatiana.

Regarding the oral communication component: No additions or deletions were suggested – the paragraph reflected the committees thinking on the data.

Regarding restructuring the GE curriculum: This paragraph is intended to point the way to a possible solution to the problems highlighted by the collected data. It is not intended to be a solution, or the only solution to the situation.

There was a concern about adding too many goals for the First Year Seminar course. Would this cause a decreased performance across all goals if we are too ambitious in what the course can do? Perhaps we need courses at each of the levels (first year, sophomore, junior, senior capstone course) or to integrate some of the critical thinking and writing components into the Common Context courses versus having a separate course. Ideally, at minimum, a First Year Seminar course would be centered on a topic and taught sometime in the first or second semester.

Recommended changes to the assessment report were to soften the language where we present our suggestions and highlight the “next step idea” of researching what other colleges are doing to meet these same goals.
IV. Off campus program courses certification: Presentation/Discussion with Mark Sargent

Mark presented some complications in Off Campus Programs, the main one being the timeline of events prior to the program beginning. It is a challenge to recruit faculty (especially with their family obligations) then ask them to quickly commit to the places they are going and the courses they are going to teach early enough to get approval for those courses and market their program in a traditional timeframe. Mark wants a GE approval process for Off Campus Programs that has some agility and practicality. He envisions a process that allows the program to be advertised and developed over time while also balancing the GE committee’s need to review the proposed courses. We don’t want to put too much pressure on the faculty to begin planning for the logistics of the trip and to be working through the nuts and bolts of their syllabi.

Mark would like a two stage process for course approval

1. When the leader has been identified, they can bring a tentative list/ideas for courses to the committee and receive tentative approval (1 year in advance of the program the process would begin with tentative approval by midpoint in the semester). This would be an approval in concept, the tentative courses could be presented in paper or in person.

2. Then going forward they can fine tune the courses to the approval of the GE committee, receiving final approval by the midpoint of the semester prior to the program beginning. This presentation of the courses would be on paper but there could also be a personal presentation.

First Year Seminar – any ideas we have in this area (raising the SAT/ACT bar, adding in a First Year Seminar course) will all take significant resources. Mark thinks the best thing we can take away from the Writing Across the Curriculum report is that using professional development resources might be good to help faculty use their existing courses to help cultivate the writing skills and the critical thinking skills needed. It may not require a completely separate course, but a re-envisioning of the courses and projects we are giving. How can we examine the things we are doing and look to do them better.

The committee responded with feedback

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hardley
Registrar