

GE Council Meeting 6/23/09

In attendance: Lorra Brown, Miryan Wakeman, Eileen Gardner, John Peterman, Peter Griswold, Imafidon Olaye, Bettina Mason, Esther Martinez, Rey Martinez, Mahmoud Watau, Sandra DeYoung, Jean Levitan, Kathy Malanga, Tom Gundling, Christine Kelly, Alejandro Anreus, George Robb, Nancy Weiner, Lynne Orr, Ron Verdicchio, Guiliana Andreopolous

Meeting convened at 1:35pm.

5/28 GE Council meeting minutes approved unanimously.

6/10 retreat meeting minutes approved unanimously.

Weiner/Orr provided USP subcommittee report. Visual revised to show progression of courses throughout college experience. FYI/Seminar included. Historical foundations course added and may be at 100, 200 or 300 level. One Global Connections course must be non-western. Fourth course in Self, Society & Values area may be taken in major/minor. USP credits range from 34 to 43 depending on how many of the area requirements are met / taken in the major. The model encourages a continuation through four years to graduation.

Peterman noted that none of the numbers of courses in the areas has changed from previous models. The writing / communication intensive may be included in major and double counted as another discipline area. Global issues / applications courses may be in major if they are upper level (at least junior level).

Watad suggested credit distribution be more balanced across areas.

Technical proficiency skills area not yet determined by USP committee.

Kelly led discussion for the Alternate model subcommittee. Adjustments included language requirement of zero to six credits. FYI/Seminar added to model. Committee continues to work to shrink overall required credits to 31.

DeYoung provided overview regarding Personal Well-Being area. This area expanded to now include financial well-being or health. Levitan suggested group also add "fitness" into the language of the category. Suggestion made regarding making the course in this area an interdisciplinary offering.

Orr commented that financial literacy is now offered in K-12 as an economics / finance as required by the state of NJ.

Anreus stated that the Expression area is now 9 credits and includes literature, arts and communication.

Brown suggested that one foundation course is not enough for the writing area and that oral communication and interpersonal communication should be further addressed. Orr concurred as employers list these three areas as top needs across all professions. Group agreed that the administration must make a commitment to training and adding resources in these areas if they are to be addressed across disciplines.

Kelly advised that the criteria for writing intensive must be clarified. WAC should not be abandoned but it needs teeth to be effective. Students must take at least three writing intensive courses.

Griswold reiterated that professional development is critical, but then caps are needed for these writing intensive classes. The group asked to review the Rutgers model for expository writing / reading which are capped at 20 students.

Ways of Knowing area is now 19 credits and includes philosophical perspectives, historical perspectives, science courses. Themes will be addressed in 100-level courses to ensure literature, history, philosophy, etc. are addressed so when students progress the upper level courses in various areas will have more

meaning.

Malanga suggested the group review the Appalachian College model which provided themes.

Kelly suggested we figure out how to ensure students take social sciences in different areas. Gardener didn't think this was necessary and suggested depth of an area is just as meaningful. Peterman agreed that connectivity is critical with all of the experiences.

Kelly explained that logic requires exposing students to a variety of areas and forcing students to take diverse courses. She discussed the No Child Left Behind policy and shared data regarding students taking significantly fewer social studies hours in high school and middle school. Verdicchio disagreed with this data and informed the group that in high school students take three years, while middle school suffers. Both parties respectfully disagreed with the other's explanation.

DeYoung explained how scientific perspectives can be fulfilled by existing or new courses.

Griswold mentioned how GE biology is a different course than biology for majors. Non-majors rarely take major courses in the sciences.

Gundling provided an overview of Diversity & Justice (including the name change of the category). The aim of the area is for students to take courses at a higher level than current GE model. Questions asked regarding prerequisite issue. Griswold suggested we select several courses that could be prereqs.

Levitan explained that the Race & Gender concepts are really more appropriate for junior/senior level. GE Council should meet with the R&G project to discuss clusters or other changes to the flow of course offerings.

Kelly provided an overview of missing areas including definitions, course descriptions, etc. Area five overview of Civic & Community Knowledge. A balance between community skills in an area, along with civic knowledge as this produces more effective participation in society. Idea is to offer traditional or experiential courses at the 200 or above level, in major, or wherever possible.

Andreopolous explained how the Global Awareness no longer includes non-western, but the area must be defined clearly in the learning outcomes.

Middle States asked for GE to be threaded through all four years of college and also brought into the major/major.

Verdicchio provided Reoccurring Issues subcommittee update. He explained how the committee suggests the concern of small departments be addressed (i.e. GE used as an introduction to smaller academic areas/majors). Recommendations made that academic areas may be addressed in the FYI/Seminar or as part of a course in that area as freshmen. Also discussed linking FYI/Seminar to an actual discipline or area.

Peterman asked if small depts will then have priority for FYI/Seminar. Staffing issues? Resources are imperative re. the FYI.

Kelly suggested the committee continue to work on solutions to address concerns of small enrollment academic depts.

Malanga provided description of recommendation regarding the Non-western issue and referred group to draft document revised from previous recommendations. Group advised that we still must define that students may not solely take courses relating to U.S. or European perspectives/content. Discussion re. challenge of policing perspective versus content taught. Language of learning outcomes must be precise.

Chairs determined there was not remaining time to address all agenda items. Group discussed plan to

complete learning outcomes for both models this summer.

Kelly suggested both groups agree on syntax. She reminded the group that measurability and assessment are critical elements for all learning outcomes.

Alternate model sub-committee plans to hold summer focus groups to gauge opinions re. the model.

Group agreed to have draft learning outcomes for both models at the August 4 GE meeting.

Motion to approve summer dates approved. Attendance open to all members, schedules permitting.

July 2nd 2-4 p.m. UC 171 AB

July 21 10-12 UC 216

August 4 2-4 UC 171AB

Meeting adjourned 3:30pm.