Minutes of the General Education Subcommittee  
May 16, 2016  
SF 329  
4:00 pm –5:50 pm  

Present: Lawrence Bliss, Luz Calvo, Eric Fricke, Julie Glass (arrived later), Zach Hallab, Yi Karnes, Sarah Nielsen, Maureen Scharberg, Aline Soules, Nancy Thompson, Mitchell Watnik  

Absent: Rita Liberti,  

Guests: Sarah Aubert, Glen Perry  

In the Chair’s (Glass) absence, Watnik called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.  

1. Approval of the agenda. (M Calvo/S Neilsen/P).  

2. Approval of the minutes  

3. Reports  
   a. Chair: Watnik reported that the Senate will take on overlays at 2:30 on Tuesday,  
2/17. At the last Senate meeting, a motion that would have allowed departments to apply for two overlays for a course was defeated. A second motion was made to allow departments to be certified for two overlays, but prohibit students from counting them in two areas. There was no vote on the second motion before the meeting was adjourned.  
Fricke asked about the forms 2a and 2b in Curriculog. His questions were postponed until later in the meeting, as Sarah Aubert was present to discuss Curriculog procedure with a time certain of 4:15.  
   b. GE Director: Thompson reported that GE approval requests are coming through Curriculog and that she and Scharberg are working through them. They should be reaching the Subcommittee members soon. Watnik noted that the committee could start its review process now or wait until Fall. Bliss asked about the approval process: Scharberg and Thompson are on the same step; when both have signed off, proposals move to the GE Subcommittee.  
Calvo asked how we would work through the proposals. Discussion centered on two possibilities: we could organize them by GE area, so that we are dealing with one set of learning outcomes, or we could do it by departments. Departments may find it easier to attend meetings if their courses are handled at the same time, regardless of GE area; moreover, Curriculog courses are arranged alphabetically by department. Watnik suggested we handle this question in the fall. Calvo also asked about the kinds of problems that are occurring in the proposals submitted so far. Scharberg mentioned the failure of many departments to note the prerequisites for upper-division GE (e.g., A1, A2, A3). It might be possible to pre-populate the forms with those prerequisites. Thompson added that many proposals had vague descriptions of course activities and assignments or listed multiple prerequisites that would be difficult for GE students to meet. Scharberg also asked that departments always include equivalent quarter courses on the forms, as that would help her figure out curricular needs. Fricke asked about deadlines. Both Scharberg and Thompson will continue to review courses over the summer.
Time certain: Aubert showed the Committee how to review proposals in Curriculog. The agenda function will be launched by the GE Subcommittee chair to indicate the curriculum that is coming up for review. There is a place for members to comment on a proposal, but the chair will enter the Subcommittee’s approval for all courses. Soules expressed concern that anyone on one of the approval steps can edit proposals, but Aubert explained that any changes made would show on the proposal as alterations, so that edits would be obvious to everyone involved. Watnik noted that anyone commenting on a proposal should be aware that comments stay with the proposal and can be read by all.

The Subcommittee discussed methods of evaluating the overlays along with the GE requirements so that there is no need to look at the same course multiple times. Aubert said that she can check incoming proposals for an overlay request and route them to the right step. Forms already submitted will not be updated. Watnik proposed that form 2b be adapted to include overlays and Code. Soules suggested adding Writing II, and Calvo and Nielsen suggested adding GWAR. Aubert can add them all. She asked about approval structure for writing requirements, but the Writing Skills Subcommittee will have to make that decision. Aubert will update the approval form and send to the GE Subcommittee for review before she launches it in Curriculog.

c. Semester Conversion: Glenn reported that all involved with the conversion recognize and appreciate the work the Subcommittee has been doing.

4. Business

a. Last thoughts on double counting overlays. The Subcommittee discussed the difficulties in inherent in double counting: it would be difficult to apply in Peoplesoft (Perry), students will want credit for both overlays (Watnik), and students will be confused (Calvo). Hallab asked for clarification on the number of courses departments can propose for overlays. There will be no limit. By consensus the Subcommittee agreed that there should be no double counting.

b. Approval process for GE and/or overlays in Curriculog. Completed with Sarah Aubert’s presentation.

c. Revisiting Sophomore-Year Experience. Thompson asked how difficult it would be to schedule linked sophomore classes. Perry replied that it would be easier than scheduling freshman clusters, because there would be no need to deal with remedial classes. Thompson would like to see some form of sophomore cluster. Glass proposed an optional sophomore course that might not be part of a cluster but would help integrate students into their major department. The Subcommittee addressed ways to get students into a sophomore experience course: they could be directed by AACE (Watnik), or advised by email (Glass) or major department roadmaps (Scharberg/Karnes). Glass suggested that multiple kinds of proposals could be considered that would have a cohort enrollment, with or without a linked course or courses. Scharberg recommended reserving some courses for sophomores, which need not be GE.
The Subcommittee discussed, but did not decide, when the call for new freshman clusters (the 2016-2017 academic year or in Fall 2017?) would go out and how that might affect the implementation of a Sophomore Experience. Glass observed that implementation could wait until 2018, but sophomores in the 2017-2018 academic year might need additional help because of the transition. The classes could be presented as a way for students to make the transition from their freshman cluster to their major community. Watnik asked whether small departments or majors would be shut out of sophomore experience classes. If the sophomore classes are designed for majors, they would not be under the Subcommittee’s jurisdiction, but Scharberg could propose them in her role as Dean of Undergraduate Studies. Calvo suggested that courses could be developed as pilots; participating students could then be coded and tracked to see if they had a higher retention rate than students who did not enroll in a sophomore experience course.

By consensus the GE Subcommittee agreed to propose a cohort-based sophomore retention program, which would serve either majors or General Education. Since such courses would not be strictly GE, we cannot really originate a program, but we can put a framework forward to CIC. The Subcommittee will meet next week at its usual time to put together a framework.

e. Thoughts about 3-unit Area E for transfer. Implicit in the framework is the idea that 3-unit Area E courses are intended for transfer students who did not meet their Area E requirement at their previous institutions. Natives are supposed to take 2 units of General Studies and 1 unit of Information Literacy. The question is how to ensure that students take Info Literacy, since sophomores will not be block enrolled. Soules reminded the Subcommittee that Info Literacy is one of WASC’s core competencies.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thompson, Acting Secretary