

**MINUTES – GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE
ROOM 110 NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – February 24, 2011; 9 a.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: M. Bixby, D. Guay, J. Houghton, R. Olson, J. Sage, J. Schneider, R. Sirabian, G. Summers

MEMBERS ABSENT: N. Fernando, G. Olsen

1. D. Guay called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
2. The minutes from the January 11, 2011 and February 17, 2011 meetings were approved.
3. Announcements.
 - J. Schneider announced that the Degree Requirements revision work group had not met last Monday as was planned.
 - D. Guay informed the committee that discussion of GEPRC recommendations regarding the General Education Committee (GEC) had not been included in the agenda but would be discussed as an additional item under new business.
4. There was no old business.
5. New Business.

Open Forum review

Committee members reported on the Wednesday open forum. R. Sirabian noted that Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) had been a topic of discussion. He suggested a reorganization of points six and seven under IS in the Step 5c proposal for more consistent flow of information and hopefully greater understanding. It was noted that Deans would have the authority to approve needed exceptions. J. Houghton advised that exception authority, at least in the College of Natural Resources (CNR), was used judiciously so as not to defeat the purpose of "exceptions." He stated that with creativity the IS was workable. G. Summers added that with the decreased general education program (GEP) students would have greater opportunity to engage in minors; proper advising would help in guiding students to take advantage of opportunities such as this.

D. Guay questioned if there was any disincentive to teaching IS courses. G. Summers noted that student credit hours (SCH) could be a factor of disincentive. R. Olson advised that Provost Nook had remarked that while decreased SCH over a long term would be problematic, during the period when courses were being established it would be manageable. Discussion followed on how decreased SCH could be offset by other activities such as service, creation of courses, or research. It was also discussed how three hours SCH for both faculty members might be justified when faculty members team teaching were both highly involved.

There was a question whether the Math department understood how Mathematical Sciences might fit into the IS, and whether revisions might be needed to specify examples. It was noted the Math Department would need to make the

determination. Mathematical Sciences had many possibilities depending upon whether a natural science or social science approach was desired.

Committee members inquired if a member of the Communications area would be present at today's forum. R. Sirabian informed the GEPRC that Chris Sadler was planning to attend the forum and possibly Rhonda Sprague as well.

Revisions made to the IS area were accepted by the committee. J. Sage will provide an explanation regarding a department's responsibility in determining how it fits into the IS.

GEPRC recommendations regarding the GEC

The committee reviewed the draft statement of GEPRC recommendations for the GEC prepared by G. Summers. G. Summers noted that he had been conscious of the length of the document, and made efforts to include only what was necessary. It was suggested that a reminder be added to the document for departments to begin thinking about course development. The committee opted to not include a reminder statement. It was determined that when the GEC began its work, it would put out notifications to departments to encourage them to begin thinking about development of courses.

J. Sage questioned whether the General Degree Requirements Subcommittee (GDRS) and GEC would work concurrently for a period of time. G. Summers explained that the GEPRC consensus at last week's meeting was to have only one functioning general education committee. The GEPRC recommended that the GEC be the functioning general education committee next fall. Additionally it was agreed that only GEP proposals would be accepted; GEP proposals would be mapped to general degree requirements (GDR) allowing for the GDR system to continue for whatever period it was deemed that it would still be needed. The GEPRC discussed the difficulty in populating two general education committees. Committee members anticipated that some of the GDRS members might be willing to be members of the GEC to help with transitioning. It was noted that GEC members would need some GDR training. Discussion followed on how long the GDR might need to be in place for transfer students and returning adults.

The committee discussed a comment made at the open forum regarding "grandfathering" courses rather than assessing how courses meet learning outcomes. G. Summers informed the GEPRC that the Academy team had a graphic showing the first year alignment exercise as part of the GEP assessment process. He suggested including the graphic with a short explanation.

D. Guay questioned when the GEPRC recommendations should be forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC). G. Summers stated that he would like to forward them to Mick Veum, AAC chair, the following day; he noted the benefit of M. Veum having them for the GEC proposal action at Faculty Senate. It was discussed whether the GEC proposal would eliminate the GDRS; it was determined that the elimination of the GDRS would require a separate constitutional amendment. G. Summers stated that if the AAC approved of the GEPRC recommendations for the GEC, the recommendations could be forwarded to the Constitutional and Handbook Review Subcommittee for a formal proposal.

Questions related to general education revision in the *University Handbook* were raised. G. Summers noted that although the preference would be for all revisions of the *University Handbook* to take place at one time, he didn't foresee that would be possible. He anticipated that assessment and program review areas would undergo revision yet this semester, but the balance of revisions to Chapter 7 would take place the following academic year.

J. Schneider asked about the GEP assessment plan. G. Summers advised that the Assessment Academy team had finished a second draft of the assessment plan and would be soliciting feedback. He advised that the GEC would be forwarded a general education assessment plan once a plan was approved.

Suggested minor revisions were made to the GEPRC recommendations, one being use of alternate terms for "grandfather." Revisions were accepted by the GEPRC. The statement was forwarded to M. Veum for AAC action.

Step 6 Discussion

D. Guay informed the committee that he had created a rough outline of Step 6 issues. A discussion followed on a Director of General Education and an Assessment Coordinator, and budget issues that might jeopardize the creation of the new positions. GEPRC members agreed that recommendation for creation of the two new positions should still be made. G. Summers advised that it would be a benefit to the GEC to start with a draft of GDR mapping to GEC.

A brief discussion followed regarding the Center for Academic Excellence and Student Engagement (CAESE) teaching conference. G. Summers shared that initially advising was a topic under consideration by the advisory board but an alternate topic had been suggested and had gained momentum. J. Schneider asked when the new GEP would begin. G. Summers responded that the GEP would begin fall 2012. J. Schneider noted the importance of an advising workshop. G. Summers recommended that J. Schneider and Angie Kellogg contact Patricia Ploetz and other advisory board members to discuss what might be needed for an advising workshop and how CAESE could help in facilitating the process. A sub-item under advising was added, collaboration with CAESE for workshops.

D. Guay questioned how the GEPRC should start on Step 6. He suggested that issues from the outline be distributed among GEPRC members. Committee members were instructed to gather background information and post the information to the Step 6 worksite. G. Summers stated that related to Transition to the new GEP (#3), he would post the course listing from Dan Kellogg that speculated what associated GEP levels might coordinate with current GDR courses. J. Schneider volunteered to gather information on Test-out and credit-by-exam (#5), Placement (#6), and Advising (#8). A brief discussion followed on test-out and whether test-out would be recommended as an option in the new GEP. J. Sage will work on a revised form draft (#7).

J. Houghton noted that the issue of Transfer Students (#4) couldn't effectively be addressed until decisions were made regarding Transition to the new GEP. He advised that the CNR had transfer agreements with a number of programs that would be impacted by the new GEP. G. Summers informed the GEPRC that

typically years notice should be given when changes are being made to general education allowing transfer students to adequately plan for the future. J. Sage noted that there were three different populations under the Transfer area, students who had completed an Associate's Degree, students who hadn't completed an Associate's Degree, and students involved in transfer agreements; three sub-items were added under Transfer Students. A brief discussion followed on returning adult students.

J. Schneider asked that an additional sub-item be added under advising, an advising manual/reference guide. She noted that in addition to training and workshops, an advising reference guide would be critical. G. Summers suggested that the advising reference guide have online access.

The committee questioned whether summer monies for committee work had been secured. G. Summers responded that he would be talking with Provost Nook in that regard.

D. Guay requested that information related to Step 6 issues be put into the work area prior to the next meeting.

6. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 10:42 a.m.

Minutes Recorded by: Nanci Simon, Secretary to the Faculty Senate

As the Faculty Senate considers the creation of a General Education Committee to manage the new General Education Program, members of the General Education Policy Review Committee have begun to discuss the implications of this change. Although the recommendations below are administrative in nature, and therefore would be more appropriately considered as part of Step 6 in the reform process, the pending approval of a General Education Committee raises questions that must be addressed immediately.

As a result, the General Education Policy Review Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. If the Faculty Senate approves the creation of a new General Education Committee, this committee should replace the current GDR Subcommittee effective at the beginning of the fall 2011 semester. (A separate proposal will need to be passed that dissolves the GDR Subcommittee, along with corresponding changes to both the University Handbook and Constitution.)
2. Among the first tasks that the new General Education Committee is to populate the new General Education Program. Assuming that Step 5 is approved in spring 2011, this task should begin in the fall 2011 semester.
 - a. The new GEC might decide to identify existing GDR courses that align with the new GEP. Although not every category in the GEP corresponds directly with a category in the existing GDRs, this method of populating the new curriculum could be utilized to ensure a smooth transition.
3. Beginning in the fall 2011 semester, course proposals submitted to the new General Education Committee should meet the criteria for the new General Education Program (GEP) approved in Step 5 of the reform process.
4. During the transition period—from fall 2011 until whenever the new General Education Program is implemented—new courses approved under the Step 5 criteria should also be mapped back into the current GDR program wherever appropriate and necessary.