**MINUTES – GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**ROOM 110 NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – January 27, 2010; 9 a.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: N. Fernando, D. Guay, J. Houghton, G. Olsen, R. Olson, J. Sage, J. Schneider, R. Sirabian, G. Summers

MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Bixby

1. D. Guay called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

2. The minutes from the January 18, 2010 meeting were approved; the January 11, 2010 minutes will be reviewed for approval at the next meeting.

3. Announcements.

J. Sage informed the committee that Dean Cirmo was hoping the open forum coordinated with the College of Letters and Science department chairs meeting could take place February 24th. G. Olsen advised the committee that R. Olson had cancelled the February 23rd Executive Committee to accommodate the February 23rd forum. D. Guay suggested that discussion of forum scheduling be delayed until later in the meeting.

4. Old Business: Update Step 5 Draft

The committee continued review and discussion of the Step 5c draft. D. Guay noted that there had been a few minor changes in the criteria in the proposal section. The committee revised the first bullet point under “Communication in the Major” to read “The Communication in the major requirement addresses discipline-specific communication … .” Under “Explanation of Proposal” the committee agreed to remove the initial paragraph and begin that section with the second paragraph, “The General Education Policy Review Committee is extremely thankful … .”

Under “Instructor Qualifications,” G. Summers informed the committee that he had rearranged some of the paragraphs for better clarity. J. Schneider asked whether the section should be re-titled. G. Summers advised the committee that he had written his paragraphs on the premise that there would be more detailed information in a general criteria section and questioned whether a general criteria section might be necessary. D. Guay responded that much of the general criteria information was included in the explanation area. J. Sage noted that there was a “general criteria” subcategory under the summary of changes. G. Olsen stated that in the paragraph prior to the summary of changes, it noted that “All of the proposed revisions to the criteria are discussed in detail in the explanation section of this document.” J. Schneider suggested renaming the instructor qualifications section to “general criteria.” The committee agreed to the renaming of the category.

G. Summers inquired if there were any changes in committee thoughts regarding enrollment caps in light of the writing emphasis enrollment caps approved by Faculty Senate and administration. A discussion followed on the precedence created by the Faculty Senate resolution and whether enrollment caps were under the purview of the GEPRC. The GEPRC agreed that since the GEPRC was setting up the general education program (GEP) that the enrollment caps could potentially fall under the purview of the GEPRC. The committee agreed that since resources were not under the purview of the GEPRC, leaving the enrollment cap conversations and decisions to colleagues to set appropriate caps seemed best. The desire was to maintain flexibility, keeping in mind that “one size doesn’t fit all.” D. Guay suggested due to the large number of responses related to resources, that the resources paragraphs be left where they were located following the summary of changes. J. Schneider noted that in Dean Cirmo’s comments related to the Department of Foreign Languages program review, he referred to a specific enrollment number as an ideal.

G. Olsen noted that there was reference to “outside of GEPRC purview” in the third paragraph under “Resources” related to resources and enrollment caps. He questioned if this should be reworded. R. Sirabian noted the importance of faculty understanding that enrollment caps was not an issue the committee ignored. It was important for faculty to realize that the committee was trying to craft a proposal based on the conceptual and pedagogical issues, and the budget was an administration issue. J. Houghton concluded that since resources were out of the GEPRC purview, the GEPRC viewed enrollment caps as outside of its purview, therefore the statement seemed appropriate. D. Guay stated that there were no enrollment caps included in the Step 4 proposal which had been approved by the administration. R. Sirabian noted that although resources were outside of the GEPRC purview, the GEPRC did keep staffing in mind so as to not create a system that was over tasking or burdensome to faculty or the system. The third paragraph under “Resources” was left unchanged.

The committee discussed the reordering of sections. G. Summers inquired where the Center for Academic Excellence and Student Engagement (CAESE) information should be placed. G. Olsen noted that CAESE was related to the First Year Seminar and Communication in the Major as an implementation and organizing mechanism. The committee reordered the sections to the following order: Explanation of Proposal, Summary of Changes, Resource Statement, General Criteria. Instructor Qualifications was ordered as the first sub-category under General Criteria.

G. Summers advised the committee that he had added a few words under the Instructors for First Year Seminar (FYS) area. R. Sirabian distributed a handout related to the FYS. The handout included information he compiled from a letter from J. Droske and information regarding UW-Parkside’s FYS experience. He noted that there had been discussion in the College of Letters and Science related to instructor qualifications and staffing issues related to the FYS. R. Sirabian inquired what would happen if a student failed a FYS course. G. Summers responded that there were different options that could be considered; a remedial FYS was a common solution. J. Houghton suggested, in the event of failing a FYS, the student be required to take the study skills course. G. Olsen noted that a student failing a FYS wouldn’t get credit, and G. Summers added that in the new GEP a FYS or equivalent course would be needed to graduate. The committee concluded that mechanics could be set up such that successful completion of a subsequent requirement for a student failing a FYS could satisfy the FYS requirement. J. Schneider asked how FYS registration would be enforced. G. Summers responded that until the FYS was a requirement it would be hard to say; he noted the benefit of block scheduling where a menu of courses would be offered and students would pick their top three FYS choices. He suggested it might be a system to explore for the future. Revisions to the FYS area under Foundation were accepted by the committee.

The committee continued discussion with the “written and oral communication” area. R. Sirabian distributed a handout of revisions to the written and oral communication area. He informed the GEPRC that he had met with Chris Sadler and Jim Haney. He explained that the revision started with explanation of the use of department names as a common starting point. In the second point he explained the systematic and programmatic approach, and in the third point he explained the expertise of teaching fundamentals. The information regarding graduate assistants was added based on conversation with C. Sadler and J. Haney. He advised the GEPRC that the current structure of the 2-credit communication course was similar to a 3-credit course. The final sentence noted that generally a 3-credit course was the standard requirement; this could be problematic for transfer students transferring with only 2 credits. He advised that as part of the new GEP the Division of Communication was contemplating an increase in content, including more technology, and covering additional areas such as interviewing. The Division of Communication was also interested in looking into possibly gearing sections towards specific majors. He noted that the revision regarding enrollment caps appeared to be a nice compromise. He advised the committee that J. Haney had shared that there is a general consensus in Communication circles that course enrollments of 25 or more students compromise the integrity of the course. R. Sirabian noted that the idea of moving the current English 101/102 sequence to a new 101/202 format was addressed in the last paragraph. J. Houghton questioned if the restatement of resources in the first two sentences in the second paragraph was necessary. A brief discussion followed on whether the restatement was necessary. The committee agreed to leave the paragraph as written.

J. Schneider inquired if the Division of Communication was interested in collaborating. R. Sirabian responded that they were. J. Schneider suggested that a statement be included stating that the Division of Communication was open to collaboration with other departments to offer a greater number of class offerings for Communication 101. R. Sirabian will revise the area to include the additional statement regarding collaboration. R. Sirabian shared that he had requested of J. Haney to have Division of Communication representatives be present at the open forums to speak to the issues related to written and oral communication.

The “Quantitative Literacy” area had been accepted at the last meeting. R. Sirabian asked whether the reference to the degree types proposal would need to be revised. D. Guay responded that it should be fine; it was based on the latest draft of degree requirements which was the present proposal.

R. Sirabian questioned if the parenthesis was necessary in the “Wellness” section. G. Olsen responded that comments received for Wellness were related to Step 4 but not Step 5.

The committee reviewed the “Investigation” section. A few minor word changes were suggested and accepted by the committee.

GEPRC discussed and agreed to reformat the proposal into an outline format. The committee agreed that this would be helpful in discussing the proposal.

The “Integration” area was the next section reviewed and revised. R. Olson shared proposed revisions to the Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) for greater conciseness. G. Summer suggested that much of the text be retained; he voiced the benefit of continuing to include a substantive explanation. A brief discussion followed. G. Summers stated that a key point was that the IS were internally consistent with the general education curriculum. The “IS” area was revised to state that “There have only been two changes from Step 5b to Step 5c.” Brief explanations of the two changes were revised to read: “First, the definition of disciplines was clarified to reflect course content, methods and learning outcomes of the GEP at the Investigation Level, rather than disciplinary labels.” and “Second, the prerequisite for all IS courses was revised to be sophomore standing for all students.” The committee discussed how best to clarify what satisfied a course as being IS. The committee revised the example of Biochemistry major to read, “For example, a Biochemistry major may well integrate methodologies employed in Biology and Chemistry. However, both Biology and Chemistry are categorized as Natural Sciences within the GEP.” The committee noted the distinction of an IS course incorporating two separate categories. Revisions were made to the Forestry/History 392 IS example. All revisions to the IS area made thus far were accepted by the committee.

Discussion followed on the foundation level and sidebar categories potential for IS. R. Sirabian noted that there wasn’t mention of the foundation level; he questioned how math and wellness would know that participation in IS was possible. Committee discussed the need for an additional sentence for clarification.

The Step 5c proposal campus release and open forums was the next topic for discussion.

Step 5c proposal - campus release and open forums

D. Guay stated that the draft Step 5c proposal was scheduled to be released to the campus for feedback on Friday, February 4th. Open forums would be scheduled for February 23rd and February 24th, both 3-5 p.m. G. Olsen shared that Dean Cirmo had offered use of Room 321 CCC for the meeting on February 24th. The committee agreed that a neutral meeting site might be a better idea to encourage campus-wide participation. Possible meeting locations were discussed; D. Guay will work on reserving DUC meeting locations for the forums.

Continue Update Step 5 Draft

R. Sirabian stated that he had made a few minor changes to the “Communication in the Major” section and that it was pretty well set. J. Schneider stated that the Appendix was an area that needed attention yet.

The committee continued discussion on revision of the IS area. D. Guay responded that IS could be included in either the foundation or investigation levels. J. Sage asked if courses needed to have affiliation in a category, or if a course could fit but not necessarily be designated in a category. J. Houghton stated that it could be argued that math and wellness could have learning outcomes closely related to categories that fall into the investigation level. G. Olsen suggested adding text that noted that math and wellness outcomes could mesh with other disciplines. The following sentence was added following the Forestry/History 392 example for further clarification: “The same may well be true for other courses that align with the Foundation and Cultural and Environmental Awareness learning outcomes.” The revision will be revisited at the next meeting for committee review.

6. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 10:58 a.m.

Minutes Recorded by:

Nanci Simon, Secretary to the Faculty Senate