**General Education Policy Review Committee**

**Minutes of the December 7, 2010 Meeting.**

Present: Don Guay, Gary Olsen, John Houghton, Randy Olson, James Sage, Julie Schneider, Robert Sirabian, Greg Summers, Mary Holland.

Called to order at 3:03pm.

Minutes of November 16 and November 23 were amended.

Announcements:

1. There was a question at the recent Academic Affairs meeting regarding the Minutes of November 2 and the use of peer mentors for the Capstone Experience. GEPRC members present at the AAC meeting clarified that we were referring to the Experiential Learning requirement, not the Capstone Experience. GEPRC members agreed.
2. Greg Summers announced that the FYS Planning committee has identified 12 faculty applications for fall 2011. Almost all 12 spring 2011 semester FYS courses are filled.
3. Greg Summers announced there is a service opportunity for 2-3 faculty from each UW Campus from Feb – May 2011 to work with the Associates Degree Standards group. Previous Associates Degree standards were determined in 1980 and they need to be updated.
4. The committee discussed whether there should be a GEPRC response to the AAC working group’s Degree Types proposal. It was agreed that it would be better to comment individually. Comments are due by Dec 17.

New Business

Schedule for winterim break and spring semester: It was decided that the GEPRC will meet on Jan. 4, 11 and 18 from 1-3pm in 110 NFAC. Don Guay asked that GEPRC members fill in the Doodle calendar so we can decide on a meeting date for spring.

Old Business

Continue work on Step 5c draft

Experiential Learning Requirement:

James Sage revised the Experiential Learning (EL) requirement description in the Course Criteria section of Step 5c. The prior versions of Step 5c separated the options for EL into 1.) courses/experiences typically required for a major, proposed by an academic dept. and approved by the GEC, 2.) other courses/experiences not necessarily required for a major, such as service-learning courses, independent studies, internships, and 3.) non-course-based experiences, such as student leadership experiences in student organizations, SGA and the Residence Halls. Options 2 and 3 were required to use the EL Guidelines. J. Sage thought it would be clearer to divide the EL requirement into 2 options, a.) a credit-bearing course or experience, and b.) a non-credit-bearing experience. Both options have to meet the Step 4 learning outcome, which means they must include a reflection piece.

Discussion ensued regarding which types of experiences fit into which option and which experiences would have to be approved by the GEC and which would just be approved by the ELA Mentor. J Sage clarified that the EL criteria outlined in the prior version now only applies to option b.). J. Schneider expressed concern that the only criteria for option a.) is that it meets the Step 4 learning outcome and therefore appears to be less rigorous than option b.) Other GEPRC members stated it should be left to the dept. judgment as to what is appropriate for an EL course/experience. For example, J. Sage said that he had spoken with instructors who teach service-learning courses. The service hours/course started at 8-12 hours and then were bumped up to 15 hours for a 3-credit course. It was determined this number of hours could be sustained without overwhelming community agencies and the instructors. However, departments will be expected to provide enough detail in their proposals to the GEC to ensure the course or experience will meet the learning outcomes.

To clarify who has the authority to approve the EL experience/course, the following was added to option a): “as proposed by an academic department and approved by the General Education Committee” and to option b): “as approved by the mentor.”

The committee discussed whether 24 hours may be too high in general for EL experiences. They decided to lower it to 16 credits, which is the equivalency of a 1credit course that meets 1x/week.

The committee discussed the concern some had that requiring students to have their EL approved before they complete 90 credits will create an undue procedural burden and might create delays for students. It was agreed that academic advisors and students should be responsible for discussing the EL requirement and options early and often during advising meetings throughout a student’s academic career. The committee discussed whether the Registrar could do a search every year to automatically check for students who haven’t completed this requirement and then send them and/or their advisor an e-mail alert.

Homework:

James Sage and Julie Schneider will further revise Experiential Learning.

Greg Summers is looking at First Year Seminar.

Robert Sirabian is working on Written and Oral Communication.

Everyone will review the clean copy of the Step 5c criteria section and start working on revising the Explanation section.

Adjourned at 4:58pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Holland, revised by Julie Schneider