**MINUTES – GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE** (GEPRC)

**ROOM D281, Science – December 7, 2011, 9 a.m.**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Bixby, J. Houghton

1. G. Olsen called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. The minutes from November 30, 2011 were approved by general consent subject to two edits on page 2.

Briefly discussed was specific baccalaureate degree information included in the summer orientation booklet.

3. Announcements:
D. Guay reported that the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) had passed the Step 6 proposal. The only amendment was the addition of Experiential Learning as an exception to test-out and credit-by-exam. N. Fernando inquired if there had been any questions regarding the position recommendations. G. Olsen responded that there was discussion of the position recommendations, but no amendments were put forth.
D. Guay informed GEPRC members that the Step 6 proposal would be before the Faculty Senate February 1, 2012; the proposal would be distributed to senators at today’s Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Old business: Advising Manual

J. Schneider had emailed GEPRC members prior to the meeting, an area of the catalog, “Academic Requirements” and questioned if the GEPRC will need to address item 2., special situations. G. Olsen asked for committee feedback on whether this was an issue that the GEPRC should address. D. Guay advised that clarification should be added to clarify that the General Education Program (GEP) could not be used with pre-2013 majors. His opinion was that the balance was editorial changes needed as with other areas of the catalog. J. Schneider stated that someone would need to go through the catalog and make needed edits for the GEP as well as to consolidate policies. D. Guay agreed that once all GEP proposals were approved, the catalog would need editing. A brief discussion followed regarding the variety of places pieces of similar information were throughout the catalog and the need for clean-up and consolidation.

R. Olson noted that wording in the Step 6 proposal regarding transfer and catalog year and what was in the catalog differed slightly. The committee discussed whether an amendment should be made at Faculty Senate to amend the wording. The GEPRC’s consensus was to wait to see if other items were discovered that may need amending and to put forth one resolution in spring 2012 for amending all needed items.

D. Guay inquired if catalog clean-up edits would need to move through faculty governance. J. Sage noted that there was some gray area in what catalog edits were considered editorial and substantive. He informed GEPRC members that technically the catalog is under the authority of the provost; he questioned whether needed edits for transitioning from the General Degree Requirements (GDR) to the GEP would need faculty governance approval. G. Olsen noted departments’ lack of latitude regarding editorial changes. N. Fernando shared her understanding that anything related to academic programs or academic requirements must go through faculty governance.
R. Olson advised that catalog edits/changes regarding the GEP should go to the General Education Committee (GEC) and edits/changes regarding degree requirements should go to the AAC. A brief discussion ensued regarding the Catalog Advisory Group (CAG).
J. Sage clarified that the CAG would not be responsible for editing the catalog; rather, the CAG would look at how the catalog was used and make recommendations for the future. He shared that he and catalog editor, Libby Raymond, were working on the front materials of general education, degree policy and requirements. He noted that information for both the GDR and GEP would be needed for the first several years post transition.

J. Schneider asked if 2012 freshmen would be introduced to the GEP; she noted that this was a question asked of the First Year Seminar (FYS) Advisory Group. She reported that a FYS instructor had shared the difficulty in covering multiple learning outcomes and questioned if a designation could be dropped from a FYS course. J. Schneider questioned what the incentive was in offering a dual designation FYS. Discussion followed of students entering UWSP prior to fall 2013 desiring to complete the GEP and impact of the FYS requirement. J. Sage and J. Schneider voiced that FYS courses should be exclusively for freshmen; other students would need to complete an alternative to the FYS (3 additional credits in the investigation level). J. Sage informed GEPRC members that in the pilot program it was noted that students participating in a FYS could not have completed 30 or more credits. GEPRC members discussed whether it was explicitly stated that FYS courses were for freshman and if the alternative, completion of an additional 3 credits in the Investigation level, would be a continuing option to the FYS for other classifications of students.

J. Schneider noted that Biology 100 wasn’t included in the current time table and that Chemistry 100 had not been included for the past few semesters. She inquired what other three-credit natural science courses would satisfy the GEP requirement. It was noted that at present, three-credit natural science courses are limited to Astronomy, Physics, Geography, and Geology disciplines. Discussion followed regarding enrollment management and the backlog in Chemistry due to efforts in meeting demands for majors. J. Sage questioned how much of the bottleneck might be a result of students repeating difficult courses. He shared that the Tutoring Center has help available for students in courses with a 30% D, F, and withdraw rate. He noted that the rate doesn’t negatively reflect on an instructor or course, but reflects that it is a difficult course. Discussion followed on students’ awareness of courses that have a high level of difficulty and the need for appropriate course scheduling so as not to have multiple high level difficulty courses concurrently. R. Sirabian advised that many times students select courses based upon needing a class and fit into their schedule; neither necessarily provides good rationale for selecting a course.

R. Sirabian advised the importance of students understanding the structure of Communication in the Major for their specific major. G. Olsen noted that since the Communication in the Major requirement was major specific, advising should be built into departments’ program advising. R. Sirabian suggested that the advising manual mention that every department will structure the sequence of courses satisfying the Communication in the Major requirement differently. Discussion followed; general consensus was to add a notation that Communication in the Major may differ significantly among majors and was not portable when changing majors. J. Sage anticipates the question to be raised by students double majoring. D. Guay advised that it should be fairly straight forward; Communication in the Major is embedded in majors, therefore, students with multiple majors would need to complete the requirements of all majors. A brief conversation followed of the possibility of some Communication in the Major requirements overlapping. It was noted that overlap would be fortunate for students changing or double majors but was not guaranteed. R. Sirabian inquired if information would be included in the catalog regarding how the Communication in the Major requirement would be satisfied. G. Olsen anticipates that information will be provided. He reiterated that the GEP requirements of Communication in the Major and the Capstone Experience would be integrated into majors and advising of these components should be included in major advising rather than GEP advising.

D. Guay questioned if transferring credit information should be included in the advising guide or if the degree progress report would provide adequate information. J. Sage recommended providing the information; some advisors might find it a useful tool. He noted the variety of advising that might take place at a Viewpoint Day. G. Olsen advised that Viewpoint Days were more recruitment than advising; he inquired if advisors at other campuses would be providing information pertinent to students planning to transfer.

Discussion followed on what level of advising information would be desired in an advising guide. D. Guay stated his understanding that initially a condensed version would be provided. The condensed version would have references to more detailed information. A more comprehensive, detailed advising guide would be created subsequently that would support the condensed version. R. Olson noted that if the initial version had more information it shouldn’t be problematic; departments could customize the reference to their individual needs and wants.

GEPRC members briefly discussed transfer information. D. Guay questioned if advisors needed to know information regarding math placement code related to quantitative literacy. R. Olson, G. Olsen, and N. Fernando agreed that it would be beneficial to keep the math placement code information in the guide. R. Sirabian asked who transfer students would be referred to for transfer credit information. J. Schneider advised that for questions related to GDR, the student would talk with the Admissions Office, for transfer information related to the major, the student would talk with department personnel.

Discussion followed regarding the format of advising information. J. Schneider recommended that the *UWSP Catalog* be made more user friendly and incorporate advising information rather than creating an entirely new advising guide. Discussion continued of additional edits/revisions to the GEP advising information. It was noted that the key elements of advising should be included and existing language of the GEP proposals used as much as possible.

GEPRC members discussed when the work of the committee would be completed.
G. Olsen advised that with Step 6 processing through the AAC, he thought that the GEPRC had met its charge. The committee will conclude advising recommendations at the next meeting. December 14th is anticipated to be the final meeting of the GEPRC.

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

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