**MINUTES – GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**ROOM 110 NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – February 3, 2011; 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 9:03 a.m.

2. The minutes from the January 27, 2011 meeting were approved with minor clarifications added; the January 11, 2011 minutes will be reviewed for approval at the next meeting.

3. Announcements.

* G. Olsen and J. Houghton announced that they had urged colleagues in their respective colleges to attend the Step 5c open forums. They encouraged other GEPRC members to do similar. Open forums are scheduled from 3-5 p.m., February 23 in the Alumni Room/DUC, and February 24 in the Theatre/DUC.
* J. Schneider informed the GEPRC that a work group would be addressing feedback received on the revised degree requirements proposal. The work group would be making recommendation to the larger Academic Affairs Committee (AAC).
* G. Summers reported that the Constitution and Handbook Review Subcommittee had forwarded the General Education Committee (GEC) proposal to AAC. A brief discussion followed on substantive changes made to the updated proposal and potential consequences related to the changes.

 4. Old Business:

Update Step 5 Draft

* The committee discussed and accepted revisions to the formatting of the proposal.
* Written and Oral Communication

Committee members discussed in what context authorization would be needed for faculty outside of the English and Communication areas to teach communication, and what process would need to be followed for authorization. The committee deemed that in the context of a department’s major, faculty would not be required to obtain any special authorization. If a faculty member wished to teach communication at the foundation level, the faculty member would need to go through the appropriate department for authorization. The rationale for authorization being required for communication courses in the foundation level related to the expertise, training, and experience that faculty in the English and Communication departments have in teaching the fundamentals of oral and written communication. Additionally, specific course numbers had been designated to satisfy the learning outcomes of oral and written communication at the foundation level.

Discussion followed on the three-credit communication requirement in the new general education program (GEP). The committee noted that although the requirement was approved in Step 4 of the GEP process, for the benefit of greater understanding, the GEPRC would reiterate in the Step 5c proposal the reasons that favored the change. The reasons for the three-credit communication requirement related to learning outcomes, the present structure and workload, and transfer implications.

There was a brief discussion of the recommendation for Communication 101 meeting the three-credit oral communication requirement. The committee noted that the Communication Department would need to bring forth a three-credit communication course proposal through the Curriculum Committee (CC) that would meet the learning outcomes approved in Step 4. Pending CC approval, the course proposal would also need to be brought through the GEC for general education designation.

A variety of revision suggestions to the Written and Oral Communication were discussed; final revision to the area was accepted by the committee.

* Quantitative Literacy

The committee discussed the proposed requirement of Math 90 or higher as a prerequisite for Quantitative Literacy courses (QL). The possibility to test out of QL was also discussed. It was shared that the question had been raised at AAC as to whether UW System required that there be test-out policy in place for all general education courses. G. Summers was researching whether there was a UW System policy stipulating test-out policies; he will report back.

* Communication in the Major

The committee reviewed revisions that had been made to the Communication in the Major section. Additional minor revisions were discussed; the final revision of the area was accepted by the committee.

* Interdisciplinary Studies

The committee discussed interdisciplinary studies (IS). The question was raised whether it might be beneficial to offer general guidelines for satisfying the IS requirement for a major or minor. Clarification was made that the same IS definition for a course would be used for majors and minors. An IS course is defined as an integration of two disciplines generally defined in the investigation level; for a course to be legitimately interdisciplinary it would need to demonstrate the integration of the two disciplines. Related to assessment, there would need to be a learning outcome that was legitimately interdisciplinary. R. Sirabian asked if there were a minimum or standard number of credits required for designation as a major. G. Summers clarified that there wasn’t a uniform number of credits required; proposed majors would require faculty governance approval. Interdisciplinary majors, minors, and courses would process through governance with initial approval needed by the CC. Pending approval by the CC, approval of the interdisciplinary designation would be needed from the GEC.

Committee members confirmed that workshops would be required for instructors teaching a First Year Seminar or Communication in the major; workshops would not be required for instructors teaching IS. G. Summers noted the intention to offer development IS workshops on a voluntary attendee basis.

* Appendix

Revisions to the appendix were reviewed and accepted by the committee.

Step 5c proposal - Campus Release and Open Forums

The committee discussed the release of the Step 5c proposal to campus. Feedback from the Step 5b proposal will be compiled and made available. The committee will do a final review of the Step 5c proposal over the next few days. The Step 5c proposal will be released to the campus via a stand-alone message of the day on Monday, February 7. Provost Nook will provide a follow-up email approximately a week later. Discussion followed on the need to encourage participation in open forums.

The next GEPRC meeting is scheduled for February 17; the committee will not meet February 10.

 6. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 10:50 a.m.

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