**MINUTES – GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: G. Summers

1. D. Guay called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. The February 24, 2011 minutes were approved subject to a correction on page 2.

3. Announcements.

* D. Guay announced that G. Summers was working on GEPRC summer funding so work on Step 6 could continue through the summer months.

4. Old Business.

Open Forum review

The GEPRC consensus was that the Thursday forum went well. N. Fernando forwarded GEPRC members a listing of summary notes from the forums. It was noted that a considerable amount of discussion time at the Thursday forum was related to degree requirements. J. Houghton shared his sense of differing feelings on Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) for the need of an open forum on degree requirements but anticipated that the AAC would be hosting a forum. D. Guay advised that the Thursday forum had been videotaped and the AAC would be welcome to view the videotape. A viewing of the first 15-20 minutes would give the AAC members a good idea of the various issues related to degree requirements.

5. New Business.

Online Comments review

D. Guay stated that the Step 5c comment period would end the following day; two additional comments had been received. J. Schneider noted that one comment had asked for “recurring” to be defined, and why special topics courses wouldn’t be included in Experiential Learning (EL). Discussion followed on the difference between special topic courses (directive or independent study) and subtitled courses. It was noted that special topics courses wouldn’t be excluded from EL; special topics may be covered in EL, proposals would need to be brought forward for approval.

One comment received expressed a preference for only written EL reflection. J. Sage stated that based upon his understanding of EL and reflection, oral reflection was an equally rich medium for synthesizing the learning experience. J. Houghton concurred, stating that oral reflection with groups of students could provide an enriching experience. It was noted that restricting reflection to only a written medium would not be in keeping with common practice. J. Schneider advised that determination of reflection, oral or written, was a decision for individual departments to make. J. Sage stated that rubrics for assessment were available; the rubrics could be completed by an observer of the oral reflection.

There was a brief discussion regarding the documentation required in assessment. J. Schneider noted that mentors in a student initiated EL were instructed to keep assessment documentation for future assessment purposes; she inquired if departments should as well. J. Sage responded that the assumption was that assessment would be occurring annually regardless of a department’s assessment reporting year. Assessment from years other than the reporting year could be used as supporting documentation.

A non-recurring course was defined as a course not offered on a regular basis. J. Sage will provide explanation to the faculty member requesting the definition.

The committee discussed a comment suggesting multiple GEP designations for a single course. J. Schneider stated that the commenter had asked why “double-dipping” wasn’t allowed in the sidebar. She noted that many sidebar courses would allow for dual credit with an investigation level course. It was noted that the comment alluded to allowing students to choose the designation of a course having multiple designation options. Discussion followed on the difficulty in assessing multiple designations, the potential for students to request changes in designation after completing the course, and the loss of depth for a specific designation if incorporating multiple designations into a one-semester course offering. J. Houghton clarified that presently if a course had multiple designations; only one designation was selected per semester. R. Olson confirmed that the designation was noted in the time table. The committee supported the current practice of an instructor specifying a specific designation for a semester course that had multiple designation options, but did not support allowing students to choose from multiple designations for a semester course. Suggested revisions to the “Investigation” area on page 4, and to the reflection guide’s skills and characteristics listings were discussed and accepted.

N. Fernando inquired if questions would be addressed regarding what current faculty would be qualified to teach Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) and whether there would be enough instructors to satisfy the IS need in the general education program (GEP). GEPRC members noted that it was unknown what faculty presently would be qualified to teach IS courses. If IS were only taught by faculty possessing two Master’s Degrees, potentially there wouldn’t be enough IS courses offered to satisfy the need of the student population. Authority of IS courses would be under the purview of the General Education Committee’s (GEC). The GEC would make decisions regarding how an instructors teaching experience, research, or other academic training had prepared them to teach an IS in the absence of a second Master’s Degree. The department putting forth the course proposal would have initial authority. It was noted that the campus would need to develop areas of expertise in those areas and assessment of IS courses would help in improving the quality of the courses.

J. Schneider shared that there were questions of how non-instructional academic staff adjunct status instructors would be funded. D. Guay responded that questions related to funding weren’t something the GEPRC could answer. Discussion followed on the potential for use of enrollment demand monies from tuition for compensation of adjunct status instructors. J. Sage noted that if a First Year Seminar was taught by a faculty member as part of their regular load, additional instructor resources to meet other enrollment demands might be needed. Resources to respond to varying enrollment pressures sometimes included adjunct status instructors who were compensated from excess tuition monies.

The committee discussed what disciplines might be diverse enough to be considered for IS. The GEPRC suggested that if an instructor felt strongly about two disciplines constituting an IS course, a proposal should be forwarded to the GEC to make the case.

Step 5 revision

D. Guay expected that the revised Step 5d proposal would be forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) the following week. The GEPRC will do a final review over the next few days and a final proposal would be forwarded to the AAC late Monday. The earliest that the proposal could get to Faculty Senate would be April 6.

J. Sage and J. Schneider inquired if the GEC had been approved at Faculty Senate. R. Olson responded that the GEC proposal had passed. G. Olsen added that the proposal had been amended to include University Library representation.

Step 6

D. Guay informed the GEPRC that several forms had been added to the Step 6 workspace and the outline had been updated.

Associate’s Degree (AD) Transfer Policy

D. Guay noted that the AD transfer policy had been added; for ease he used a similar format to that of the current AD policy. D. Guay advised that for a student transferring to UWSP with an AD, the student would be required to take IS and EL. J. Schneider shared that traditionally a student transferring in with an AD was considered complete in all general education requirements pending competency and proficiency standards at UW College. Discussion followed on areas that were part of the GEP that would be completed within a student’s major and the possibility of IS being incorporated into some majors. J. Schneider noted that the IS requirement is satisfied at the UW Colleges upon completion of the AD.

R. Olson forwarded GEPRC members UWS AD requirements. He advised that the GEPRC of the minimum general education breadth requirements for a UWS AD. The GEPRC agreed that if an AD was awarded that the AD would be accepted without scrutiny of individual coursework. R. Olson stated that included in the UWS AD policy was the statement that “The University of Wisconsin baccalaureate-granting institutions shall consider transfer students holding such an associate degree from a UW System Institution to have met the university-wide, college and school general education breadth requirements of that receiving institution.” A brief discussion followed on whether the EL should be removed or should remain as a requirement; R. Sirabian noted that the GEP stated that an Experiential Learning Activity should be completed while enrolled at UWSP. J. Schneider advised that if a service learning course had been completed as part of the AD that might satisfy the EL requirement. The GEPRC agreed that the AD didn’t automatically satisfy all GEP requirements such as courses that were zero credit and could be considered unique to UWSP and to the major.

J. Houghton stated that the UWSP GEP wouldn’t satisfy the general education requirements of the UWS AD, additional credits would be needed. J. Schneider will work on the AD advising form.

J. Houghton informed the GEPRC that there will be a good deal of work involved in revising transfer agreements. Transfer agreements ranged from general agreements to more specific agreements done by colleges and departments.

G. Olsen clarified that if students didn’t transfer in with an AD they would be required to fulfill all the GEP requirements.

R. Olson informed GEPRC that the UWS AD requirements dated back to 1987 and a committee had been charged with revising the AD. J. Schneider questioned how much work should go into the AD with the forthcoming UWS revision. She asked if UWSP had a representative on the committee charged with revision of the AD. R. Olson confirmed that UWSP was represented on the committee.

Advising

J. Schneider gave an update on advising. She reported that A. Kellogg had received an email from P. Ploetz regarding advising workshops; discussion was taking place. She noted the importance of a reference guide for advising; she anticipated that not all faculty advising would attend workshops for training. The advising reference guide would reach out to all faculty advising with basic information. She questioned who would be responsible for creating the advising reference guide.

Training for GEP advising at the beginning of the semester was suggested as well as creation of a basic advising reference guide. The committee questioned if the advising training could be mandated by the Deans. J. Schneider advised that January 2012 would be good timing as advisors would begin using the new GEP advising information shortly thereafter. Inclusion of GEP advising training in the new faculty orientation was discussed as well as the potential for an online tutorial. Limited time and resources for creation of materials and tutorials were discussed; it was again questioned who would be ultimately responsible for GEP advising training. The GEPRC noted that the GEC would need to discuss this need and how it might be accomplished

D. Guay asked GEPRC members to review the final version of the Step 5c proposal and make any needed edits or revisions by Monday morning. The goal was to forward the proposal to M. Veum for AAC action on Tuesday. He asked that committee members work on Step 6 sections and put additional documents in the workspace.

6. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 10:56 a.m.

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