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

**ROOM 110, NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – August 16, 2011, 1 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Houghton, G. Olsen, J. Sage, J. Schneider, R. Sirabian

MEMBERS EXCUSED: M. Bixby, N. Fernando, D. Guay, R. Olson

1. G. Olsen called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

2. The minutes of August 9, 2011, were approved by general consent subject to minor revisions on pages one and two of the draft minutes. J. Schneider asked whether the question regarding non-course Experiential Learning (EL) mentor training on assessment rubrics had been answered the previous week. Committee members concurred that the question had not been answered.

3. There were no announcements.

4. Old Business:

Information packet for upcoming college meetings

J. Sage explained updates and additions that had been made to the colleges’ information packet. He advised that the summary of approved general education changes in the packet included Steps 1-5 and a notation of Step 6 being in progress. He informed committee members that the updated transition time table would need to be presented to the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) for information early in the semester as it had been updated from the previous version presented to AAC.

J. Sage shared sample check sheets created for department chairs using the data received from the registrar. The check sheets listed courses with general degree requirement (GDR) designation and the projected general education program (GEP) designation. The check sheets would serve departments in providing them a list of their GDR designated courses and a means for communicating to the General Education Committee (GEC) if the department preference was to accept, reject, or was yet questioning the GEP designation projection. The department may also decide to discontinue general education designation for some courses. J. Sage noted that for GDR courses with multiple designations, departments would need to make decisions for each GDR designation. The GEC would review all requests for GDR courses being grandfathered into the GEP. He clarified that a GDR course would not automatically be approved for grandfathering to the GEP by the department accepting the projected designation. J. Sage anticipates that GDR courses being grandfathered into the GEP will go through Faculty Senate in one bulk action via the GEC. Committee members discussed the timeframe of when departments should forward check sheets to the GEC. In order for Faculty Senate action prior to the end of the first semester, the check sheets would need to be to the GEC by mid-October. Discussion followed on how categories with multiple GDR designations might be grandfathered into the GEP. GEP designation for GDR categories with multiple designations would be a discussion for the applicable departments and the GEC. J. Sage advised that a cover page would explain the purpose of the process. He suggested that notes be included on the cover page that state that the GEC would be evaluating department preferences for grandfathering of GDR courses to the GEP and that the check sheets were the beginning step of the transition process for departments. J. Schneider confirmed that once a GDR course was grandfathered into the GEP, additional GEC action would not be needed until the time of assessment.

Clarity of the graphic curriculum sheet proposed for inclusion in the colleges’ information packet was discussed briefly. The committee determined that the graphic approved in Step 4 would be a better representation of the GEP and that graphic should be the one included in the information packet. J. Schneider questioned when the information packets would be distributed; she suggested that a week prior to college meetings should allow adequate time for review of the information; J. Sage agreed.

Discussion followed on the status of the First Year Experience (FYE) Coordinator position. The committee concurred that the FYE Coordinator position remained a recommended GEP position by the GEPRC.

J. Schneider suggested that the four new aspects of the GEP (Experiential Learning (EL), Interdisciplinary Studies (IS), Communication in the Major, and the Capstone Experience) be highlighted to prompt departments to investigate courses for those areas. Highlighting the new GEP aspects should prompt departments to look at what new or existing courses might satisfy those requirements. Departments’ offering of First Year Seminar courses was also discussed.

Suggestion was made to reformat the academic department worksheet to incorporate two separate columns in the four semester timeframes noted. One column would be for changes regarding degree types and the other for changes related to the GEP.

J. Schneider voiced the benefit of the EL requirement being embedded in major requirements. She suggested that EL be included in the bullet point of other requirements (Communication in the Major and Capstone Experience) that would be included in the major.

The organization and flow of the college meetings was briefly discussed. G. Olsen suggested the use of sample department check lists. Check list examples could range from those requiring a fair amount of discussion to those requiring little discussion. J. Houghton volunteered the College of Natural Resources (CNR) as a department that would likely require little discussion; CNR had few existing GDR designated courses. G. Olsen anticipated that Theatre and Dance would also require little discussion and offered its participation as well. J. Sage suggested the Philosophy department as an example of a department requiring more discussion; the Philosophy department had three disciplines to discuss. J. Sage will investigate what departments to use as samples. The committee again expressed the importance of getting the information packets to departments for distribution prior to the college meetings. J. Sage shared his intention to deliver copies of information packets the following week to all departments for distribution to faculty and staff prior to pre-class college meetings.

J. Schneider inquired if the GEP forms would be mentioned in the information packet. It was noted that with the forms not presently being completed, the mention may be found confusing. J. Sage suggested the addition of a notation that GEP forms were in development. G. Olsen offered that if a department was interested in putting forth a proposal for GEP course designation, the department could provide the necessary information to the GEC in an alternative manner until which time the form was finalized. J. Sage informed the committee that he had met with Matt Gile, I.T. All form changes requested by the GEPRC had been relayed.

J. Schneider asked if advising workshops should be added on the academic department worksheet in the spring 2013 list. J. Sage suggested that departments could be encouraged more generally to participle in the January teaching conference for various training sessions of which advising would be one. J. Schneider suggested that clarification be added in the fall 2012 area that departments prepare for GEP changes by attending workshops. R. Sirabian inquired about workshops being offered. J. Schneider stated that she and J. Sage would be working on advising workshops.

J. Schneider suggested that EL, IS, and First Year Seminar be noted on the worksheet under fall 2011 GEP changes in addition to the bullet point, “GEP courses (in general).” Discussion followed of bullet points related to the addition of courses not grandfathered in and new courses proposed for GEP designation.

J. Schneider shared her concern of needed clarification in the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree type. Clarification was needed of what fulfilled the foreign language requirement for UWSP students whose native language was not English. The last sentence in the asterisk paragraph under the B.A. degree type stated, “Fully enrolled UWSP students whose native language is not English and who can document formal study of their native language may use English as a means of fulfilling this requirement.” She advised that what was meant by “English” needed to be clarified. She noted that this should be an item that the AAC addresses; she will talk with AAC chair, Todd Huspeni, about adding the item to the AAC agenda. A brief discussion followed on the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree requirements. It was noted that majors desiring a B.S. track would need to demonstrate what requirements of its major satisfy the B.S. degree requirements of developing “an understanding of empirical analysis, scientific methodology and protocols, and mathematics and quantitative techniques.” The committee discussed the potential for some lower credit majors requiring a minor in addition to the major.

Catalog Year Requirements

The committee discussed e-mail correspondence between Registrar, Dan Kellogg, J. Schneider, and D. Guay regarding catalog year requirements policy, and discussion notes from J. Sage related to an August 11, 2011, conversation with D. Kellogg. Clarification was made that students were and would be entitled to complete the general education requirements in place at the student’s initial enrollment at a UW institution; this was based on UW System policy. Students in pursuit of an old (pre-fall 2013) or new (fall 2013 or after) major could complete the current GDR program, but the GEP could not be completed in pursuit of an old major. It was noted that the earliest time a transfer student declared a major was when transferring to UWSP; requirements for a major applicable to the transfer student could not pre-date the student’s transfer date to UWSP. J. Sage advised that exceptions in assigning a student an earlier catalog year may be a possibility in some circumstances. R. Sirabian voiced his understanding of the intent of exceptions, but noted that it was possible that some exceptions might not be feasible course-wise and wouldn’t ultimately be beneficial to the student.

Notification of the general education change to the two-year colleges was discussed. J. Schneider questioned who was responsible for notifying the two-year colleges and how notification would be made with courses not yet populating the GEP. J. Sage shared that Registration and Records was responsible for notifying the two-year colleges; generally Admissions and Registration and Records work together in the notification effort. The question was raised of how long it might take for the Transfer Information System to be programed for changes. Committee members agreed that the two-year colleges should be notified as soon as possible of the forthcoming changes.

Step 6 proposal draft

Committee members reviewed the current Step 6 proposed draft. J. Schneider noted that the catalog year requirements information seemed to be in an odd place in the proposal; she suggested an alternate placement earlier in the proposal. Discussion followed on what committee (Academic Affairs Committee, Curriculum Committee, or GEC) would be responsible for needed action related to catalog year requirements. Executive Committee will be asked what standing committee would be most appropriate to address the action.

Committee members will continue review and revision of the Step 6 proposal draft in preparation for next week’s meeting. N. Fernando is working on the administration area; questions and revisions to the administration area will be discussed at the next GEPRC meeting. J. Schneider will work on placement and transfer areas. She will work with J. Sage on the catalog year requirement area. J. Schneider questioned if the FYE Coordinator position should be mentioned with the Director of General Education and Assessment Coordinator positions throughout the proposal, noting that the position was mentioned in conjunction with the other two in some areas of the proposal. J. Sage agreed that the proposal should be consistent with all three positions being noted throughout. He suggested adding the notation that filling the FYE Coordinator position would be ideal, and filling the Director of General Education and Assessment Coordinator positions were essential for success.

The agenda item for the August 23 GEPRC meeting will be editing the Step 6 proposal.

5. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 3 p.m.

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