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

**ROOM D281, SCIENCE – September 7, 2011, 9 a.m.**

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: N. Fernando, D. Guay

1. G. Olsen called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

2. The minutes of August 23, 2011, were approved by general consent.

3. Announcements.

* J. Schneider announced that email responses from Mathematical Sciences regarding the quantitative literacy (QL) information and updated grid had been received. The responses had been forwarded to GEPRC members prior to the meeting for review. The responses would be discussed later in the meeting with the editing of the Step 6 proposal.
* R. Olson announced that the General Education Committee faculty membership was nearly complete.
* J. Schneider informed GEPRC members that the proposed revision to degree requirements would be included on the first Academic Affairs Committee agenda.

4. New Business:

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) self-study draft comments

J. Schneider praised the author(s) of the HLC self-study draft noting the vast amount of detail that had been incorporated. J. Sage informed GEPRC members that the document was drafted predominantly by Greg Summers.

J. Schneider noted that in addition to a representative of the provost’s office, a representative from academic advising had also been included in the GEPRC membership. The paragraph regarding membership was revised to include the academic advising representative. R. Olson informed committee members that the question of what assistance would be provided to departments regarding general education program (GEP) advising had been raised at the College of Letters and Science (COLS) retreat. “Advising” was added to the work ahead area of the HLC self-study document. Because of mention of movement away from department names common in the general degree requirements (GDR), brief discussion followed on whether justification was needed for keeping communication and English in the GEP. It was noted that the intent was to move away from specific department responsibility. Communication and English described titles of categories in the GEP and not specific departments necessarily. It was clarified that other departments could offer the designations if it was shown that the learning outcomes were met.

R. Sirabian suggested that greater emphasis of the improvement of the GEP over the GDR should be stated. He suggested emphasizing that the GEP addressed shortcomings of the GDR with better integration and better communication of the value of GEP courses. It was noted that although GDR courses are good, their value had not been communicated properly to students. The student could more easily see the GEP and the major, yet the two were simultaneously linked.

J. Sage advised that information had been included in the HLC document regarding degree types. Explanation was given how degree types and student choice differed with the GEP. In the past students largely determined their degree type by courses desired; departments had little say over what degree type (B.A. or B.S.) the student obtained for its major. With the implementation of the GEP, degree types will be more intentional in majors. Departments will have greater control by determining what degree type is most appropriate for the majors offered by their department.

The committee briefly discussed the quote on page 9. R. Sirabian noted his understanding that this was a direct quotation, but questioned whether in actual practice the statement, faculty who don’t have sufficient training or experience in the areas in which they were trying to offer a course, might be more accurate than “no” training or experience.

R. Sirabian advised that the description of GEP course approval implies a clear sequence but Step 5 didn’t suggest a clear sequence. Step 5 states that the General Education Committee must seek advice from the department and then “may” ask for the curriculum vitae rather than “expected review” of the curriculum vitae. J. Sage will make the needed edits.

College meetings

The committee discussed the COLS, College of Natural Resources (CNR), and College of Professional Studies pre-class college meetings. GEPRC members agreed that the packet regarding upcoming changes of general education, degree requirements, and assessment was well received. They agreed that it was a good way of starting the process of departments thinking about what needed to be done. The College of Fine Arts and Communication had not discussed the upcoming changes at its pre-class meeting; discussion would take place at a later time. It was noted that departments would need to have conversations with other departments regarding general education course offerings. The possibility existed that an undue amount of pressure could be put on some departments for needed general education courses. Communication would be necessary in helping to alleviate this potential problem. J. Houghton passed along thanks to J. Sage from CNR faculty in providing the GDR grandfathering forms which should help to facilitate the populating of the GEP with courses.

5. Old Business:

Step 6 proposal editing

Minor revision was made to the English area under Application of UW System Placement Tests at UWSP.

J. Schneider shared Dale Rohm’s, Mathematical Sciences, concerns related to the QL grid and confusion of quantitative literacy (QL) and math pre-requisites. D. Rohm suggested that only the QL bulleted items be used in the QL area and not the grid. Discussion followed on a higher level QL course with a QL pre-requisite satisfying the QL requirement. It was noted that there was no advantage to this for QL. It may make sense for other categories with six credits required, but QL was a three-credit requirement. A brief discussion of the QL grid followed. GEPRC members revised the QL area to delete the grid and add the statement, “The UWSP Mathematics Placement Code you receive from the UWS Mathematics Placement Exam determines which Mathematics and/or Quantitative Literacy course(s) you are eligible to take.” It was noted that the math placement code number was interpreted differently by individual campuses. J. Schneider will follow up with D. Rohm.

J. Schneider will review the test-out and credit-by-exam area of the catalog and make appropriate edits to the Step 6 proposal.

Editing of Step 6 will continue at the next GEPRC meeting.

6. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 10:52 a.m.

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