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

**ROOM 110 NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – June 7, 2011; 1 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Houghton, G. Olsen, R. Olson, R. Sirabian G. Summers

MEMBERS EXCUSED: M. Bixby, N. Fernando, D. Guay, J. Sage, J. Schneider

VISITOR: K. Weis

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

2. The minutes of May 31, 2011 were approved by general consent.

3. UW System (UWS) Associate Degree (A.D.) workgroup update: K. Weis

K. Weis reported that the UWS A.D. workgroup received its charge to revise the A.D. standards and outcomes. She was fairly encouraged in that it appeared that the workgroup was in agreement of the revised UWS A.D. focusing on learning outcomes. The workgroup was asked to provide UWS with a written report by November 2011; workgroup members questioned the plausibility of meeting the November 2011 deadline.

In revising the A.D., the workgroup was asked to envision what the A.D. should look like in the twenty-first century as well as the fit with UW campuses’ missions. K. Weis shared that a report was circulated that detailed A.D. awarded by UW institutions in the last decade. UW-Stevens Point awarded 20 A.D. the prior year and was second only to the UW Colleges in awarding A.D. The workgroup discussed who was offering an A.D. and what the A.D. was referred to among the campuses; she noted that A.D. references varied widely. A.D. transferability will be an issue addressed by the workgroup; the workgroup will look at how each UW campus accepts the A.D. Some individual campus flexibility in aligning with A.D. learning outcomes and the mission of the A.D. is desired. G. Summers asked whether the UWS would issue A.D. guidelines or requirements. K. Weis responded that her understanding was that they would be A.D. guidelines. K. Weis reported that the workgroup briefly discussed the Wisconsin Technical colleges A.D. offered. She added that the UW Colleges provost shared that the UW Colleges had created emphases for their A.D. The goal of the workgroup at this time is to review all A.D. information in preparation for a June meeting where future steps would be determined.

J. Houghton surmised that the lower number of A.D. awarded by the comprehensive campuses was largely due to the low level of awareness. He suggested that by raising A.D. awareness, there would be a greater number of students who would take advantage of the opportunity. G. Summers suggested the benefit of the group discussing Project Win-Win. G. Summers shared information and goals of Project Win-Win; the GEPRC briefly discussed UW-Stevens Point Project Win-Win initiative. K. Weis reported that it was expected that the revised UWS A.D. might be the impetus for campuses to give greater attention to their A.D. resulting in an increase in campuses promoting the A.D. She informed the GEPRC that she had shared the Step 4d learning outcomes with the workgroup; the workgroup liked the focus on learning outcomes. She advised that A.D. policy changes would need to be approved at each UW campus as well as by the Board of Regents. She will keep G. Summers informed of the workgroup’s progress.

4. There were no announcements.

5. Old Business: GEP Course Application & Approval form

G. Summers gave an update of the GEP Course Application & Approval form. Information Technology (I.T.) personnel believed it possible that the electronic form could be available for use by fall semester. He explained the subtleties of the form related to SharePoint. I.T. personnel intend to have a test form to the GEPRC by July 1; G. Summers will receive regular updates on progress. G. Summers suggested that the GEPRC hold off on the paper form at this time.

6. New Business:

Discussion of trial proposals by committee members for transitioning existing GDR’s to GEP

G. Olsen asked what GEPRC members had discovered in the general degree requirement (GDR) to general education program (GEP) transitioning exercise. J. Houghton shared that the form was fairly easy to work with and should it have to be in paper form, he thought it would work effectively. G. Olsen informed the GEPRC that he had investigated other programs that might be able to provide the automatic form features should the SharePoint form not be possible by fall semester. He noted that with these optional programs embedded files would also be possible.

R. Sirabian asked the rationale for including the catalog description in the form. A brief discussion of inclusion of the catalog description area followed. It was noted that requiring the catalog description would serve as a check of whether the catalog description was adequate or in need of revision. G. Summers advised that new course catalog descriptions would go through the Curriculum Committee (CC) with the new course proposal. The GEPRC discussed adding an area on the form that required notation of CC approval of new courses. G. Summers suggested that it might be helpful to include a statement that courses must first be approved by CC. The GEPRC agreed to add the statement to the bulleted listing in the coversheet.

R. Sirabian asked for clarification of what would be appropriate to be filled in for the “who will teach course” area of the form. GEPRC members noted that either instructor name(s) or descriptor qualifications might be appropriate depending upon the course.

R. Sirabian questioned whether an “n/a” option should be included in the GEP Category boxes; he noted the possibility of a category without any selections having been missed. R. Olson suggested the use of a “none” option; GEPRC members agreed to add a “none” selection to the three GEP Category selection areas of the form.

GEPRC members discussed how information should be formatted in the GEP and Course Learning Outcomes areas (paragraph or bulleted listing). It was noted that the GEP Learning Outcomes area would automatically be populated with a bulleted listing. The information would be dependent upon the selection(s) made in the GEP categories; GEP categories would be limited to one selection in each category. The course learning outcomes would most easily be formatted into a bulleted listing similar to the GEP learning outcomes. R. Sirabian asked about the progress of the “show me an example” areas. G. Olsen advised that examples still needed to be generated. A brief discussion followed regarding maximum/minimum word count requirements in the course learning outcomes, statement of alignment, signature assignment, and how student learning will be assessed areas. The committee decided to forego any word limitations in favor of flexibility but reiterated the need for providing good examples. R. Sirabian will work on examples for the four areas. It was noted that for the statement of alignment, signature assignment, and how student learning will be assessed, a paragraph of explanation would be provided on the form and corresponding information (e.g. exam, rubric, assignment) attached. GEPRC members discussed the benefits and challenges of an electronic process and supporting documentation.

GEPRC members discussed revisions to the first paragraph of the coversheet; G. Olsen will work on revising the opening paragraph of the coversheet as well as other form revisions. He will forward revised information to G. Summers to submit to I.T.

R. Sirabian asked how the department vote would be handled. The GEPRC discussed the necessity for an intermediate stage to allow for department review and possible revision of the application. G. Summers explained the complexities related to permissions for SharePoint sites; he suggested that perhaps there could be a public area of the GEC SharePoint that allowed for department membership permissions for form editing purposes. A brief discussion regarding editing of the form followed. The GEPRC agreed that the department vote would be a required field of the GEP Course Application and Approval form; submission to the GEC would not be allowed without the department vote information being entered. The “save,” and “print” functions were discussed; G. Summers will investigate the possibility of an automatic save of the form.

2011-2012 timeline for department work to transition to GEP

G. Summers posted a draft timeline to the GDR/GEP transition folder in the GEPRC workspace. He noted that it was only a partial draft and additional work was yet needed. Timeline items for fall 2011 include degree requirement decisions, proposing GEP courses, and revising/approval of step 6 of the GEP. He questioned whether workshops were the best approach in facilitating the transition or if another means might be better. G. Olsen asked about college meetings to help in distributing transition information. G. Summers noted that it would be good to have coordinated meetings that had consistent information and deadlines that could be shared with faculty. J. Houghton suggested that creating a template for each college would be helpful. GEPRC members discussed different ideas for transitioning. R. Sirabian supported having at least one workshop for faculty to work through transition issues with resources readily available. G. Olsen suggested that GEPRC members could also serve as resources to departments.

G. Summers will continue revision of the timeline for GEPRC review at the next meeting. Four major initiatives involved in transitioning were defined: 1. Mapping of existing courses, 2. Degree type choices, 3. Department requirements of Capstone and Communication in the Major, and 4. GEP requirements of Experiential Learning and Interdisciplinary Studies. G. Summers cautioned GEPRC members not to underestimate the efforts required regarding degree type decisions. G. Olsen asked what would be required of students double majoring. G. Summers advised that this was still an open question in need of resolution by the Academic Affairs Committee. He noted that there was no flexibility in the implementation of the GEP and therefore there could be little or no flexibility in the corresponding timeline deadlines.

June 14 work assignments:

* G. Olsen will revise the GEP Course Application and Approval form and coversheet.
* R. Sirabian will prepare examples for the course learning outcomes, statement of alignment, signature assignment, and how student learning will be assessed sections of the GEP Course Application and Approval form.
* G. Summers will continue revision of the GDR to GEP transitioning timeline. The goal is to finalize the timeline at the June 21 GEPRC meeting.

7. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 2:37 p.m.

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