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

**ROOM 110 NOEL FINE ARTS CENTER – July 12, 2011; 1 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Guay, J. Houghton, R. Olson, J. Sage, R. Sirabian, J. Schneider,

MEMBERS EXCUSED: M. Bixby, N. Fernando, G. Olsen

1. D. Guay called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

2. The minutes of July 5, 2011 were approved by general consent.

3. There were no announcements.

4. New Business:

Review of transfer document

The committee reviewed the revised “transferring credit to UWSP” catalog text. D. Guay explained that the text began with information that applied to all transfer students and then moved on to more specific information. The committee eliminated reference to a maximum of 72 credits accepted from the two-year colleges; the Board of Regents recently approved a new UW System transfer policy that no longer includes a transfer credit maximum for students transferring from the two-year colleges. The committee discussed at length transfer credits and revised the text to state that that the Admissions Office would review the student’s transcript and determine transfer credits. Discussion followed on at what point a student fell under requirements (i.e., degree, general education) specified in the UWSP catalog. It was noted that in the new general education program, degree requirements would be embedded into major requirements and major requirements had likelihood for change, therefore the “requirements” referenced would best be referenced as the General Education Program (GEP) requirements.

There was a lengthy discussion of the number of credits approved by the Admissions Office that would automatically satisfy the GEP and what type of course credits approved would qualify (general education or any transferrable credits). J. Schneider shared the Admissions Office personnel’s concern that not every Associate Degree (A.D.) was equal and questioned whether the GEPRC was comfortable with an A.D. with lower general education credits satisfying the UWSP GEP. Discussion continued on transfer credits that would satisfy the GEP. Committee members agreed that 40 credits seemed an appropriate number, but differed in opinion whether the credits should be general education or any transferrable credits. The committee reviewed the requirements of an Associate of Science degree from Vermilion Community College. It was noted that most A.D. required at least 60 credits. For an A.D. with fewer credits, such as 25, the credit threshold of 40 credits wouldn’t allow for satisfying the GEP, but credits could still transfer. R. Sirabian voiced that the underlying question was if the options differed in which one might better prepare the student transferring for success at UWSP. Discussion continued regarding the two options. D. Guay advised that the UWSP GEP differed from that of other institutions. He and J. Schneider expressed the impossibility of controlling the rigor of other institutions’ general education requirements. R. Olson suggested that the text be left as is; the Academic Affairs Committee would discuss the proposed text and propose any additional edits or revisions it viewed as needed. R. Sirabian noted that the faculty would also be given the opportunity to comment when the step 6 proposal was released to campus for feedback; any needed revisions could be made by the committee after that time.

J. Schneider inquired whether there would be a point established at which students would be unable to revert back to the general degree requirements (GDR) program; she supported establishing a deadline. J. Sage noted that there was a paragraph under transferring credit from the two-year UW Colleges regarding transfer students who were enrolled continually; he suggested that an additional area could be added for students not enrolled continually that could incorporate a point of no return to the GDR. J. Schneider will confer with Dan Kellogg.

J. Sage shared transfer statistics received from the Policy and Planning Office. He noted similarity of statistics for the UW colleges and Technical colleges. Statistics showed that the more credits a student transferred in with to UWSP, the greater likelihood for successfully completing a bachelor’s degree. Discussion followed on freshman year transitional challenges and the benefit of two-year institutions in helping students to establish study skills that resulted in greater success at the four-year university level. The committee noted that UWSP graduated the greatest percentage of students in the UW System from sophomore year on.

J. Schneider inquired if the 72-credit maximum for transfer students coming from technical colleges was still in place. R. Olson stated that the transfer credit maximum had been removed only for the two-year colleges; a transfer credit maximum was still in place for the technical colleges.

Review of application form examples

J. Sage informed the committee that mock-ups of the forms had been provided by Information Technology (I.T.).

The application form examples were reviewed by the GEPRC. Discussion followed on alignment of course learning outcomes with the GEP learning outcomes. It was suggested for clarity that course learning outcomes designate a specific GEP learning outcome that it maps to. The committee discussed whether a word, paragraph, or space limitation should be imposed in the course learning outcomes, statement of alignment, signature assignment, and how student learning will be assessed areas to encourage conciseness. The committee generally agreed that some space limitation would need to be imposed. R. Sirabian questioned whether there should be an overall limitation on the number of pages of the application packet, similar to university award application packet page limits. Committee members generally agreed that some page limitation would be appropriate. Committee members discussed the potential of an overwhelming workload for General Education Committee members if no limitations were imposed.

R. Sirabian inquired whether there would be additional examples included for the signature assignment. Additional examples are anticipated from Forestry and Interior Architecture. The committee discussed the assessment area. Members discussed how best to elicit information of how assessment information would be used to benefit current students as well as instruction going forward.

Overall, only minor revisions to the application form examples were suggested. R. Sirabian will revise the examples accordingly and forward the revisions to J. Sage for incorporation into the form.

Update on HLC Academy Team assessment document

J. Sage reported that the HLC Academy Team didn’t presently have a revised draft of the assessment document for the GEPRC to review. He anticipates that the revised draft will be completed by Friday. He will update D. Guay on whether it should be included as an agenda item for the next GEPRC meeting Friday morning.

J. Schneider informed the GEPRC that she had shared with C. Glennon the proposed test out for quantitative literacy (code 7 mathematics placement) that would be included in the step 6 proposal. She advised committee members of C. Glennon’s concern of adequate availability of quantitative literacy courses. J. Schneider asked who was responsible for sharing information regarding the step 6 proposal with the various university offices. D. Guay stated that the goal was to release to the campus the step 6 proposal for response early in the fall 2011 semester; the campus community would have the opportunity to review the proposal and provide feedback to the GEPRC and other appropriate entities. Presently the step 6 proposal was a work-in-progress.

J. Schneider clarified that the present GDR test-out policy was applicable to all GDR courses with the exception of writing emphasis courses. She noted that this was not the case with the GEP. She questioned whether students in the GEP could go to the departments for test-out of communication in the major or capstone courses. Committee members confirmed that students could go to departments for test-out opportunities for communication in the major or capstone courses; this was the only change from the present GDR test-out policy.

5. The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 3:05 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by:

Nanci Simon, Secretary to the Faculty Senate