

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE 2003-2004

Minutes of Meeting: 1/12/04, 1:30 p.m. in JB-404

Members Present: C. E. Tapie Rohm Jr.—BPA (Chair), Milton Clark (Admin), Susan Finsen—A&L, Ina Katz—ED, Stephen Kinzey (co-Chair)—NS, Allen Butt—SBS

Tapie welcomed the members and conducted the meeting. He reminded the committee that the option for a co-Chair (Stephen Kinzey) came about because of the state-wide and other faculty-related committees that he is on require much of his time. The Chair of the GE Committee should receive a class off; and although typically not filled by a non-tenured faculty, by having Stephen act as co-Chair this year, the committee will benefit from his experience.

Tapie warned the committee that the Faculty Senate meeting tomorrow (1/13/04) will be quite contentious, and gave a brief explanation of what they will run into at the meeting. Natural Sciences, one faculty in particular (John Craig), is in disagreement and is contesting the critical thinking classes, saying the Business faculty should not teach them; and that the College of Business should not even have any GE classes.

Susan Finsen asked if any recommendations can be offered, and Tapie said certainly; that ideas and solutions will, hopefully, be discussed to make it work for everyone. The GE Committee should ask if each course submitted for their approval meets the criteria for each GE request. Critical Thinking is one area that the course has to meet and it was removed from the agenda and so the course is now dead. The course can be resubmitted to go through the process again.

An informal discussion followed about “turf,” FTEs, and politics. Susan said she remembers when Ed White (former Professor of English) offered a course called “Writing Across the Curriculum” which was required before teaching the old 495 (now the 306) Expository Writing course. If a similar course was offered for faculty on critical thinking, it would give faculty an opportunity to “care” about teaching the classes. Secondly, part-time faculty could be hired for these classes having had the introductory course on how to teach them, and labs could be generated (in a perfect world) if this procedure was somehow implemented again. This would then allow the disciplines that do what the criteria call for, to get the FTEs because they put out the effort to do it properly.

The question was asked if the criteria for GE classes could follow the critical thinking guidelines or recommendations. As both Milton and Susan are on the Critical Thinking Committee, they felt that committee would probably agree to give the GE Committee a recommendation for a model for the four basic skills courses, and that recommendation could then be used to develop similar criteria as needed. (It becomes quality versus money through FTEs, which has been the problem in the past). But if it were worded, for

example, in the name of assuring quality in the critical thinking area, then this is what is necessary: then create the list of requirements.

Tapie said this committee needs to be thinking about the skills that a new student coming in now should have. The Capstone classes also need to be discussed, which are also attached to FTEs so no one wants to make changes to them. However, the committee needs to decide what is best for the student, politics aside.

A brief background was given about the change from the old RUMML Plan, which allowed a 5-unit course for each 4-hour class; which was then changed to the current 4 units for 4 hours plan.

Ina emphasized the impact the state's requirements have made on the Credential courses. They have lost many students because of the now-mandated, new system that the legislators set. She said each class has to be taught in the same way, with the same material, using the same syllabus; however, additions can be made, but no deletions to the set course and material from that syllabus (set by the state).

Milton said the Governor, in the 2004-05 budget, is including additional charges for any courses taken above 10% of a student's graduation requirements; so if they have 198 units required to graduate (or 180 with the new lower requirement), they will pay an additional 10% fee for every class above that amount. The possibility of reducing GE courses seems to be one way to help benefit the students and is another reason to take a look at them.

Tapie said we need to determine how we can serve more students in a shorter amount of time. That seems to be the mandate we will be forced to do if we don't create our own policies and course decisions.

He said the community colleges have a new system called CANS (Course Articulation Numbering System) which outlines the courses students take at the community college, so when they come to the university they only need the upper-division GE courses here. We need to prevent the problems the College of Education has faced.

Susan said, unfortunately, the upper-division Capstone courses seem to be the ones that should be looked at because they are negatively reviewed and they are usually packed above the maximum with students (rather than the ideal of small discussion classes) and seems to be wide open for criticism and deletion.

If we look at them and make sure they are good classes and meet our criteria, then they would not be cut.

Ina asked about the community college units that come in and have to be counted. This is a problem because students take many courses other than those required, for a variety of reasons and now they will be penalized by having to pay higher fees if they don't follow the exact outline to meet only the number of required units for graduation. The

community colleges are trying to keep their students at 60 units and not the typical larger number when they transfer to the universities.

Milton said the GE Committee, a few years ago, looked at several scenarios when the number of units required for a degree changed from 186 to 180. Perhaps those discussions could be looked at again as a good start on the current issue.

Tapie said the “turf wars” should not be a problem because we have so many students, and will probably be turning students away. He said the SFR (Student to Faculty Ratio) has just been increased again, by one. This is a way of not “funding” but teaching more students. It has gotten so bad that now we either need to build bigger rooms or stop taking new students.

Old Business:

1. Review of GE

Milton distributed a copy of the current review information sent December 4, 2003, to the deans of the Colleges of Arts and Letters and Social and Behavioral Sciences. The mandate is to evaluate GE curriculum Category C in addition to several courses that were not included in the prior review of SBS.

The memo includes the committee’s charge to focus on reviewing the content, consistency, quality and coherence of the courses within the categories; and to be especially concerned that instruction in each course satisfies the applicable GE criteria. The courses being reviewed are the ones that were taught in the fall quarter, 2003 (or the last time it was taught if not in fall).

The information also included the time table of deadlines:

January 23, 2004: The instructors of the courses being reviewed are to have to their dept. chair by this date the completed questionnaire and portfolio of information on the course.

February 13, 2004: The department chair prepares a summary of reviews and the section portfolios to be given to Undergraduate Studies by this date.

March 1, 2004: The GE Committee is to receive, by this date, the review of the capstone courses by the College of Arts and Letters.

The review packets (instructor portfolios and department reviews) should be available in Undergraduate Studies starting March 1, 2004.

End of Academic Year May, 2005: The GE Committee will report back to the College and departments and to the Faculty Senate with their findings.

Assignments for review will be given to each member of the GE Committee, who then goes to Undergraduate Studies and “checks out” the materials and prepares their report, which is then discussed by the GE Committee. More information on this process will be addressed in future meetings.

Milton also announced that there is a GE Committee link from the Undergraduate Studies website with information, and we will add the committee minutes to this website as well. He was asked, and explained, the cycle of reviews. There is a five-year cycle. In the 1st through the 3rd year the Humanities and Science courses are reviewed. The fourth year all others except the Humanities and Sciences courses, are reviewed. The 5th year is overall, unless something was missed or any new courses added.

He also said that after the 2nd year of requesting and not receiving materials, the recommendation will be made that the course be *decertified*. The Faculty Senate then reviews that recommendation.

New Business:

1. Dean Clark

DD-214 Credit:

Milton distributed a copy of information sent to and between Mary Chouinard (Records) and Jerry Pritchard regarding DD-214 credit. The committee will need to make a decision on this, but it is too late to have it included in the 2004-05 Catalogue; so it was recommended that we invite Mary to come explain the situation and how it would impact her area prior to the committee's discussion.

Steve advised the committee that a DD-214 is typically, an honorable discharge after having served in the military; thus it goes beyond just the initial or basic training stages. It was asked if it would shorten the time of the degree units and determined it would most likely cover the six-units of the Lifelong Learning category. Mary will be invited to attend the next meeting. In the meantime, the committee might review the E Category (Page 78) in the current catalogue prior to the meeting.

SBVC Courses for GE:

Milton distributed a copy of a letter from Jo Service, Dean of Academic Program Planning at the Chancellor's Office regarding the approval of SBVC courses for GE. The question was asked how this happens without our campus knowing before. Milton explained that the Executive Order dealing with this issue sets a minimum requirement, and then each campus can add to that requirement. The changes made by the CSU Advisory Committee on General Education outlined in the letter, will be added to ASSIST for faculty during advising.

Steve mentioned he has some problems with the ASSIST program showing an accurate PAWS report when he is advising. Milton said just contact his office and they will help anyone needing assistance with the program.

2. Outcomes Assessment Conference-Hilton

Tapie reminded the committee that the Outcomes Assessment Forum will be held March 4-6 at the Hilton in Long Beach. Susan Finsen and Steve Kinzey will attend; Tapie will go down at least one of the days, and Allen Butt said he will check his calendar to see if he can attend. Sandra Kamusikiri's office will make arrangements and pay for the trip.

3. Other

It was recommended and decided that ASI will be issued an invitation to ask a student to be a student rep on the GE Committee.

The next committee meeting will be Monday, January 26, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. in JB-404 .

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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