

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
2005-2006

Minutes of Meeting: 1/18/06, 2:00 p.m. in JB-404

Members Present: Susan Finsen—A&L; C.E. Tapie Rohm, Jr.—BPA; Susan Spitzer—ED; Allen Butt—SBS; Milton Clark—Admin.;

Absent: Stephen Kinzey (Chair)—NS; Ruben Diaz—ASI (Student Representative)

Tapie served as chair as Steve was ill and unable to come to the meeting.

Old Business:

1. Regarding a new interpretation of EO 595 – proposing an updated FSD 91-06.R3 (Milton)
 - a. Objective: To provide a short clinic on the impact of the three documents recently e-mailed to us: EO 595, FSD 91-06, and AA-2005-21

Tapie gave a brief overview of the documents to be discussed and said questionnaires were sent out and the state committee should have more feedback about March. It is necessary that the campuses system wide answer to let the Chancellor's Office know what they are doing about the subject "Facilitating Graduation," through the State Senate Committee, "to encourage and monitor campus progress and identifying additional actions that all campuses should embrace."

Milton provided a handout on the campus response to Coded Memorandum AA-2005-21 "Facilitating Graduation." It listed the 22 items the System wants reported and includes a description and the status of each of the items.

Tapie sent an e-mail to forum that includes the URL website for the campus reports submitted in December 2005, which is: <http://www.calstate.edu/AcadAff/cafg.shtml>.

The most recent Faculty Senate document FSD 91-06.R3 or FAM 455 was last approved on January 21, 1997. The committee needs to insert criteria for the review of the Critical Thinking and Upper Division Writing Requirements and Milton distributed a handout of recommendations from each of those committees and their recommendations for changes (Category A; Basic Skills Category, #4 Critical Thinking). When the GE Committee is satisfied with the recommended changes he will strike through the existing document and insert the new wording for the Faculty Senate to review. The same can be done for the Category F Upper Division Writing Requirement if changes are made to it.

The GE Standards for courses in the Critical Thinking Basic Skills Requirement was discussed by the committee as submitted by the Critical Thinking committee. Susan stated that the three goals listed were created after a two-day, in depth "seminar" of the CT committee and they decided they wanted to make it shorter. Some of their members felt the original document tells students how to use critical thinking and wanted to keep certain language but some of the old Exec. Order 595 did not have the best wording. She explained some of the reasons the committee used certain wording in their goals. For instance Goal 2 is intended to add some content and though compact, more substance. Goal 3 emphasis is on application.

Milton said the language has to be considered as it applies to both EO 595 and Title 5 and the guidelines required by the State committee that Tapie is on. Tapie said he would like to see a little more specificity

by following the a, b, c format under the goals that gives a little more information showing what a course is to meet. For instance, if a class comes for evaluation, then if we have more information, it can be reviewed to say yes, it meets this, but doesn't meet that. Could also take the longer version the committee created and add it as an appendix to the end and put in that the curriculum is being met.

Milton would like to take that as a charge from this group back to the committee so they can develop the changes. The committee agreed the format should be the same as the old document. There was a brief discussion about some of the wording, i.e., including valid deductive arguments and strong inductive arguments under goal 2, and it was decided that Susan will come up with what was originally looked at and send it out to the committee to have the Critical Thinking committee add the language to the document to make its content agreed on by that committee in order to then have the format approved by the GE Committee.

Milton agreed to reconvene the Critical Thinking committee by sending a memo to the appropriate chairs for a new committee to be reorganized.

The committee reviewed the Draft of the Objectives for the Upper-Division Writing Requirement (306 course) that was drafted by the 306 coordinators in May, 2002. The discussion included questions about the principles still holding true; differences in the draft and the wording in EO 595. Our campus lists the UDWR as a graduation requirement and happens to have it listed under the GE Requirements. Tapie said we do want to stick to our course that we do want writing to improve and each campus is allowed autonomy on their interpretation (so that is why we are constantly reviewing the EO 595) as changes need or should be made.

Milton said the question could be raised that the breadth requirement does not actually require it. Other comments made were: should we discuss long-distance courses so it is applicable for those courses; the wording of item "b" about papers being written "in class" needs to be addressed as does item "d's" oral communication requirement; the community colleges no longer have a distinction between long-distance or on-line courses. Milton said it could be added as a new area and recommended to the committee that it does not have to be in there because it is addressed in "xx" breadth requirement. Tapie recommended that Milton go back to the committee and ask them. Apparently, Jim Monaghan (director of Distributed Learning) and our campus are calling on-line courses, "blended" courses. (Milton said he will remind the committee when UDWR is again reviewed to say something about the intersection of GE courses and on-line courses as "blended" courses.

Milton said he will develop a plan of attack for the next meetings of the items the committee needs to address. Tapie said the FAM 455 document can be tweaked before it goes to Faculty Senate. (Milton will forward the FAM 455 FSD document to the committee.

The committee returned to the "Facilitating Graduation" document for closer review. They discussed each item individually and Milton provided further information on the status or outcomes of the completed ones.

Milton said the responses were done by him and submitted according to the request by the "Facilitating Graduation" memo. Each of the 22 items was discussed; and while they are self-explanatory, there were further discussions of some of them as follows:

He mentioned that in #3, the emphasis will be on graduation in Orientation Sessions especially for incoming freshmen to get them used to the idea by calling them the Class of 20xx. Then they will, hopefully, identify themselves with that number and have a desire to actually graduate by that year (which will be four years from the date they start). There was a brief discussion about the affects of setting the number of units on students coming in (transfer versus freshman). Tapie said the CSU is concerned about having students occupying seats in a class that they do not need to graduate and by doing so, preventing a new or transfer student from occupying that seat.

Item #4 has to do with the one-page fact sheets that describe each major. The idea is to have them put on a web page (which is to be up and running by April 4th according to Dr. Jenny Zorn).

Item #5 is another advising tool by making the department websites uniform and implemented by next academic year. Milton said Pres. Karnig is dissatisfied with the way the web page looks. There may be a system-wide policy that will make it mandatory that students declare a major at 90 units and holds put on until they do declare one... right now, that is a rule but they only have to come in to talk about it... they want the "road maps" on the web (see #8).

Item #6 is regarding CMS and the link between a student filling out a designed schedule for the future and an advisor then being required to try to make that happen. Currently is not available.

Item #9 involves the study plan that is required by Financial Aid, but is not available to a student on any of the CMS systems, which causes problems at this time because it does not support individual student study plans.

Item #10 also involves CMS. There s a study of all long-distance courses and average grades (which actually goes back eight years) showing the mean GPA by all students in all courses and then put in ascending order – and then it can show how new students took courses (what is the most popular course, etc.). It did show 13 courses that have really low, mean GPAs and large numbers of students taking the course which can have a variety of meanings to the instructors, the departments, etc. (Milton will share this information with the committee).

Item #12 We are not that different from the rest of the system, but we did increase the number of signatures required to drop a class after the census date; and hopefully that will help deter students from signing up or at least think about it before they do sign up for classes and create fewer drops.

Item #13 We are different from the rest of the system because we do allow more courses to be repeated and to replace a grade even if the first grade was an "A-." This policy is being reviewed for revision. Now a course with a grade of C or better will not have the grade replaced but both grades will be factored into the GPA.

Item #14 Lorraine Frost is heading up the CMS efforts for advising.

Item #15 Milton said the mandatory advisement upon declaring or changing a major has been completed and the deans should have notified all faculty that mandatory advising is required at entry and at the 90-unit point for all students; as well as each department should have a minimum of annual mandatory advising.

Item #16 PAWS reports are still available to faculty and students and when completed, CMS will have a version of the reports available.

Item #18 Mandatory advisement as student approaches/exceeds minimum units required for the degree. A new policy is in the final stages for recommendation and expected to be completed by February 1st. It would require students to enroll in any available courses needed for the degree once the student has earned 100% of the total units needed for graduation in his or her major. If they enroll in courses other than their required degree courses, they may lose matriculation and/or have to pay extra fees for the additional courses. The idea is to force students to complete their degree and move on... There are concerns about it and there will be further discussion before the final policy is put into place.

Item #19 Milton said a committee will be appointed by the Provost to suggest appropriate indicators to be added to the campus web site. These will be “dashboard indicators” for campus-wide monitoring of graduation. These things could include a variety of statistical numbers such as time to degree, class sizes.. things that would be important to the student.

Item #20 Review by CSU Academic Peers. There will be teams of visitors from other campuses in the system (and CSUSB will go to other campuses) to review the efforts of the degree program at encouraging graduation; in other words, validation visits will be performed.

Tapie thanked Milton for the handout and explanation, and reminded the committee they can go to the URL web site to read all the responses of all the campuses.

New Business:

1. Discussion of state wide GE issues (Tapie)

Tapie just reminded the committee that it is important to respond to the requests because it is up to each campus to make their own interpretations and to put into place policies that meet the Title V, EO 595 and/or any other system requirements, while fitting the needs of the individual campuses and their own students.

He will be in state meetings during the next several weeks and will report at each meeting any new developments.

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The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 1, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in JB-457 (right across the hall from JB-404).

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