University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC)
Meeting Minutes, December 9, 2020

Voting Members Present: Rob Groves, Joan Curry, Kyle DiRoberto, Adam Daly, Bayo Ijagbemi, Kate Alexander, Kim Jones, Steve Kortenkamp, Amy Fountain, Bill Neumann, Brandon Harris, Brennen Feder, Brian Moon, Jennifer Ravia, Jeremiah Paschke-Wood, Kevin Cassell, Larry Busbea, Maha Nassar, Tanya Quist, Ted Laetsch, Mark Stegeman

Ex-Officio Members Present: Elaine Marchello, Abbie Sorg

Guests: Julie Christen, Ryan Winet, Susan Miller-Cochran, Katie Southard, Matt Ostermeyer, Aimee Mapes, Analeigh Horton, Jess Kapp, Monica de Soto Vega, Nolan Cabrera

Chair Joan Curry called the meeting to order at 3:31 with a quorum of 21 voting members.

I. Approval of 2 December 2020 minutes
   ● Amy F. moves to accept the minutes. Bill N. seconds. 18 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. Minutes approved.

II. Announcements:
   ● SMC expressing gratitude to add to what Joan expressed - super appreciative of the committee going above and beyond.
   ● Beginning of the academic year - the Provost agreed to pay an additional stipend via OPS for the additional work. Followed up with HR to make sure that's going through, should see that soon. $1000 to acknowledge the additional work you're taking on.
   ● Thanks to Abbie and to Julie for support
   ● Hired Administrative Program Coordinator position; Itzel Íñiguez, recently completed her masters in Human Rights at UA
   ● Mónica de Soto Vega new senior manager for planning; in the UWGEC meeting today.

III. GE Policy Discussion, continued (2 left from last week)
   A. Approved Substitutions
      ● SMC: An updating of the language in the policy, primarily. Can address any comments or suggestions now.
      ● No comments
● SMC: Reminder - not voting on approval; just voting on rather we are ready to move to the next policy.

● Amy F: Procedural question - to what extent have Community College partners been looped in?
  ○ SMC: Pretty constant communication with partners at Pima. Lesser extent Maricopa and Cochise.
  ○ SMC: ATF meeting in early November, talked through the new policy from ABOR and shared potential changes.
  ○ SMC: really important to her to stay in contact with CC partners; started her career at Maricopa.

● Ready to move forward? 19 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions

B. Signature Assignment

● SMC: new policy that we didn't have before. Policy that describes the signature assignments used for assessment purposes and student reflection.

● Steve K.: Can you expand on the statement about "encourage students to engage subject matter in meaningful ways such that students can find personal or professional connections" (p. 1)

● Amy F., in chat: Is the purpose that students have material for their portfolios?
  ○ SMC: Portfolio approach, yes, but also aiming to meet the goals of the curriculum across the 3 universities. Does meet assessment needs.
  ○ Other central purpose is to give students an opportunity to reflect on their learning and to see connections between Gen Ed courses and what they'll do in their major and their profession (or personal lives, civic engagement). Help students see relevance of Gen Ed to other contexts. 2018 Task Force data says students don't see connections between Gen Ed and their major, so this aims to address that gap.
  ○ Aimee Mapes: Also based on a study of 3 universities that asked seniors when they first experienced a meaningful project that was motivating and engaging; goal is to make projects/assignments that students have an opportunity to relate their work in a meaningful way.
  ○ Connections was ambiguous, some read as "professional networking"
- Kim J.: that change also distinguishes from Building Connections
- Brian M.: will we get to show instructors signature assignments or showcase great examples of these kinds of assignments?
  - Katie S.: Working on creating a repository for signature assignments across disciplines and across modalities with Emily Jo Schwaller, the ePortfolios coordinator with GE.
  - Jess K.: Also talked about having some kind of awards for students portfolios/signature assignments; could also be for faculty
- Amy F.: Does this apply to Foundations, also?
  - Elaine M.: Only Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections
  - SMC: torn on this. Foundations Writing already has signature assignments they could use in this way, but adding Kim's language would be wise (below)
- Bill N.: The sentence before that with "Effective signature assignments encourage" seems really broad in terms of course proposals; will be a challenge to say whether a course doesn't meet signature assignment requirements
  - Seems like a lab report might say "they're reflecting on the business world, so we're done..." while knowing that it's not true to the purpose of signature assignments
  - Jess K. (in chat): Signature assignment has to address learning outcomes in the course and faculty will have to indicate which one
  - Nolan C.: A model from Berkeley we are trying to build towards: https://americancultures.berkeley.edu/students/community-engaged-student-projects
- Kim J.: Volunteered to skim back through the policies to make sure when we mean EP/BC, we aren't just saying Gen Ed.
  - Will send her links to updated policies for a skim-through once they're ready.
- Rob G.: Make it more clear about Foundations (Math, Second Language, etc.)

C. **Double dipping**
- SMC: We should have a conversation about the double-dipping policy, which didn’t appear on the agenda but is something we talked about last week
- 1 EP or BC course can count toward a major
SMC: Would having the elective boundary around this policy be an obstacle or helpful?

Amy F.: This makes me think of two cases in recent years: Nutrition and Psychology. Under the old rules: A Tier One Gen Ed course could not be an introduction to the Major.

Elaine M.: Perhaps these courses could count as a pre-Major course?

Kim J.: Didn’t we eliminate that loophole a few years ago?

Amy F.: We didn’t.

SMC: Could you help me understand the issue of double dipping a Tier 1 Gen Ed course to count for an intro to a major course?

Amy F.: Because Tier 1 courses are meant to be interdisciplinary (SLOs), whereas introductory courses to a major should theoretically be about one discipline.

Kim J.: So this won’t be so much of an issue with EP. But under current Gen Ed, this is an issue.

SMC: Rob is asking if it’s possible, even in EP, to satisfy the SLOs and also have the class count as an introduction to a major. My feeling is that in some majors the answer is yes but in other majors the answer may be no.

Brian M.: Music school has lots of courses and degrees that are built around strategic double-dipping in the current system, Tier 2 category. Student credit hours will probably remain a driver of this design. Some departments might be tempted to ask majors to take certain GE courses.

Jessica K.: There’s also assessment to think about. In my program, we assess student learning going back to the introductory course in the major. If we make this introductory course an EP course in GE, then we’re assessing two different sets of outcomes.

Elaine M.: I would like to say that the policy is allowing just one double dip. For instance: a student takes a course and they realize "I really like this area," it can count for both and they don't have to take another course so if you know it's just kind of one course that if a program could make it work great. If not, no harm no foul they continue the way they are.

Abbie S.: The additional issue is that allowing for one course to be double dipped makes the Advisement report much more complicated to put together and will be more difficult for students and advisors to interpret.

Kim J.: Abbie, right now is the Tier 2 double-dipping a manual substitution?

Abbie S.: I believe it is a manual substitution.
SMC: I do want to also bring into discussion some of the examples that have been written about in chat: A particular major runs an intro course with an enrollment of 1500 students then that double dip impacts other units as well. One of the things that we still have to talk through and resolve our issues of class sizes of how SCH is counted in the new GE, all of that we still have to work through in the spring.

SMC: As another example, in my own department, an EP course might be Artist, Humanist, or Social Scientist.

Elaine M.: These are all good points. But from an SCH perspective with this policy, I see it as a wash.

Jennifer R.: I agree with Elaine. I’d also like to say that double-dipping is logistically right now a very complicated thing.

SMC: I believe that if we can reduce barriers for students to change their majors, this is a good thing.

Amy F.: I agree, though I don’t know if we can say for sure whether or not a policy will help students until we have a better understanding of the financial side of GE.

SMC: I agree.

MC: Another thing I worry about is the possibility of a department gaming the system. I don’t think it would be a great outcome if a student was able to knock out multiple EP or BC courses in the same department.

Kim J.: We looked into this a few years ago and there wasn’t much evidence of this problem.

SMC: That’s very good to know. I think that this question of introductory courses in the major is an important one that we can return to as a distinct policy in the new year. So we haven’t really talked about any language changes for this policy, just the implications of the policy itself. Were there any changes?

Elaine M: Does it look like 9 of the 10 policies are fundamentally sound for the committee?

SMC: I was just going to ask that. We are getting close to 5PM.

Brian M.: Just to clarify: We table the policy about double-dipping until we know the RCM model but vote for the rest of the policies?

Elaine M.: Correct.

Kim J.: You know, the conversation we’re having right now isn’t really about double-dipping per se.

SMC: Perhaps we could develop a separate policy to be voted on next year addressing these specific concerns.
• Kim J.: I’d like to move to vote on these current policies with the understanding that we’ll revisit these issues in the form of new policies next year.
• Bill N.: There’s been some suggested wordsmithing. Would it be possible to make the policies available as one document and to vote through a Qualtrics survey so that we’re not trying to vote right at the end of the meeting.
• SMC: That’s exactly what I was going to propose.
• Joan C.: We’ve voted on several items through Qualtrics surveys before. So it’s been done.
• Kim J.: Motions to vote on current policies through Qualtrics survey in the following week.
• Bill N.: Second.
• Joan C.: I know that there was some concern about the Civics requirement.
• Let’s make it available to UWGEC members through Box. Motion to adjourn?
• Bill N.: Second. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned.

IV. Bulk approval vote on policies (10)
• To be completed in Qualtrics week of 12/14, with the exception of the Double Dipping policy, which will be revised and discussed in the new year.

V. Chair Joan Curry adjourned the meeting at 5:08PM.

Respectfully Submitted by Julie Christen, 1/11/21