University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC)
Meeting Minutes, March 17, 2021

Voting Members Present: Joan Curry (chair), Kathryn Alexander, Isabel Barton, Larry Busbea, Kevin Cassell, Adam Daly, Kyle DiRoberto, Brennen Feder, Amy Fountain, Rob Groves, Brandon Harris, Bayo Ijagbemi, Kimberly Jones, Steve Kortenkamp, Brian Moon, Maha Nassar, Bill Neumann, Tanya Quist, Jennifer Ravia, Mark Stegeman

Ex-Officio Members Present: Abbie Sorg, Elaine Marchello

Guests: Mónica de Soto Vega, Aimee Mapes, Emily Jo Schwaller, Jessica Kapp, Katie Southard, Matt Ostermeyer, Nolan Cabrera, Ryan Winet, John Pollard, Micheal Damein Beauragard, Susan Miller-Cochran

Chair Joan Curry called the meeting to order at 3:16pm with a quorum of 17 voting members.

I. Approval of 3 March, 2021 minutes
   a. Brian Moon moves to accept with the noted changes and comments. Bill Neumann seconds. 16 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention.

II. Updates
   a. Joan C: Packet sent out to UGC. Curriculum and policy subcommittee still working on vote. Vote will be via email in about a week. Getting answers on a few items such as transfer credit policies. Faculty Senate meeting with presentation and questions on 4-4-21.

   b. Susan MC: U-CAAC Presentation – Sub-committee focusing on Gen Ed had revisions on of policies. Revisions were minimal.
      1) John P: U-CACC can recommend proposals for advancement.
      2) Susan MC: Decisions on proposals like this one (Gen Ed) from U-CAAC and UGC are considered to move forward to Faculty Senate. Assuming the proposal moves forward, it goes to an ABOR Academic Policy sub-committee for review (~late April) and remains under review until their early June meeting.

   c. Ryan W: Packet being distributed to colleges and campuses was going to be three items, talking points/script, FAQs and Google slide presentation now just FAQs and presentation. Plenty of information on FAQs document and presentation.
      1) Susan MC: Timeline – hope to get those presentations scheduled soon.
d. Susan MC: Officially soliciting suggestions about Group A courses by distributing a survey to Associate Deans through U-CACC. Gen Ed Office will then send invites to those faculty to come to Quick Start sessions. There will be additional and future Live Online Quick Start sessions, additional opportunities for Group B-C, but survey to Associate Deans is for Group A recommendations only.

e. Katie S: Draft of the course approval guide from Alex Underwood and Liz Sandoval from Curricular Affairs. Purpose of the document is to make the steps implicit on minor modifications for the Group A proposals. Once finalized the Gen Ed Office can share a map of how this pans out.

III. College Presentations

a. Susan MC: Distributing information to colleges with overview of new curriculum. At same time asking Associate Deans to recommend/identify potential Group A courses. A lot easier for them to determine where their courses might fit if understanding the new Gen Ed therefore want to get that information to them ASAP. Plan is to schedule and conduct presentations to the colleges. Ideally by mid-April.

b. Susan MC: First proposed presentation format would include a faculty member and Gen Ed staff member with presentation led by the faculty member so they can tailor the presentation and make it relevant to their college faculty. Call to UWGEC for volunteers to serve in this role. Slides and FAQ can be used and adapted to make sense for each college. This college tailored presentation method is a way to respond to questions instead of sending packet of info alone.

c. John P: How do we articulate within our colleges or disciplines what it means to take the perspective? Opportunity for volunteers for presentations to get together and articulate how to articulate that within the presentations.

d. Jessica K (chat): In anticipation of the dreaded “RCM” questions that will come up in these presentations, are there any more answers from Liesl on how this will work? Are there some canned answers we can provide to people so they are not held accountable for answering this difficult question?

   1) Susan MC: Will make sure to have a provost approved response. RCM funding model isn’t in the purview of GE office.

e. Amy F: Hard to balance scripting and know what is or isn’t okay to share. Are some members more vulnerable than others in their position within their college and should these folks be giving these presentations?

   1) Isabel B (chat): I agree with Amy. This is going to be a difficult discussion in the College of Engineering no matter who gives the presentation. It has less to do with RCM than with approving a curriculum that may be perceived as de-emphasizing design and
science and uses up a lot of credit hours that some faculty would prefer to devote to technical topics. (Apart from the tendency of engineers to resist anything that they didn’t design themselves!)

2) John P: Afraid of retaliation, bases on the fact that presentation person may be perceived as being connected to a decision making?

3) Amy F: Balancing scripting vs. how much to say. Presenter is often viewed as the person behind the decisions made. Place where colleagues are asked to be vulnerable in ways that aren’t comfortable.

4) Susan MC: Can be based on how it is perceived within the colleges.

5) Bill N: Two concerns – Recollection of all detailed facts may not be completely on point and then there’s a game of 14 different telephones going around campus that may cause chaos. Second concern is not quite sure what role, newsreader? Don’t want to get in a situation where not sure what to say because it’s not on the script. Recommendation: GE person be the lead and college representative that is there to support.

6) Jessica K (chat): Maybe the “presentation” part is done by someone who is part of the GE refresh process (GE office or coordinators), BUT we invite folks from the colleges who are on board to be there as support, and to lead discussion?

f. Kyle D: Resistance at administration level in her department therefore Gen Ed support to present is needed.

g. Bill N: Chat with Liesl and Susan first? Campus hears the information all at once and then GE Office can visit each college.

1) Susan MC: Great suggestion.

h. Rob G (chat): I think I know this, but, the purpose of this meeting is primarily to distribute information (with a more human face and some emphasis on unit/college-specific details)? It’s not primarily to gather information and bring it back, or to workshop, but primarily to “teach” the folks in the meeting what we (mostly) already know.

1) Susan MC (chat): yes—that would be the primary purpose of the presentations, but we would also be answering questions. I’m guessing that in most of the presentations there will be questions and suggestions and feedback that should be brought back to the GE Office (or the Provost?), too, so we’ll want to have a systematic way to gather that feedback
2) Katie S (chat): @Rob, yes- one of the aims of these presentations was to "contextualize" the GE Refresh and make it applicable and integrated with the needs of each college

i. John P: Associate Deans partner with a UWGEC member and GE member in solidarity. Multiple folks to speak to different questions.

1) Joan C (chat): There are also representatives on UGC from the colleges that could also be part of this

j. Nolan C: One central message and it is a way to keep our finger on the pulse on what we are hearing about mistrust. It’s not just about getting information out there but fostering buy in in the process. Too much weight on central administration message will get message uniform but lose buy in. What can we do to navigate strategically?

1) Matt O (chat): Yes, Nolan. For this reason, I've been saying from the start that Susan needs to be CONSTANTLY touting how many career track faculty, staff, and graduate students have been in leadership roles in this process since she has been in charge. :)

2) Matt O (chat): We need to make clear the curriculum development process has been really bottom-up and gotten broad buy-in. But clearly differentiate it from the top-down decision making about RCM/finances (and all the real impacts). For me, that's the big challenge...

k. John P: Common message from colleges is that new Gen Ed is good for students. However, not recognizing that career track faculty involvement in this process has been a positive contribution and as an institution push against the opposite opinion. Equity issue. The new Gen Ed is an opportunity to unify, highlight the value of tenure and non-tenured (contingent) faculty, rethink course approval and modernize practices, re-align how to serve/teach students.

l. Susan MC: GE office can reach out to those who add themselves to volunteer list but GE Office follow up to obtain best way to proceed for each college.

**IV. FAQ Document**

a. Ryan W: First draft of FAQ. Appreciates comments shared thus far and invites others to provide comments/questions and feedback.

b. Ryan W: FAQ information and language needs to coincide with presentation slides. Goal is to have comments incorporated and slide deck updated by Friday 3/19/21 so that we can send out materials by next week.
1) Kim J: If something counted for the old Gen Ed program and it had not been retooled to meet the new Gen Ed program, we would not insist that it meet the letter of the law.

2) Rob G: Trying to expect people to navigate two sets of requirements, simultaneously, is a recipe for disaster on the proposals and UWGEC approval.

3) Joan C: Soften language or come up with another?

4) Susan MC: Continue working on that.

V. Deep Dive Signature Assignments
   a. Emily Jo S: ePortfolio workshop schedule and excited to share the instructional support and emphasize the community across boundaries and faculty rankings. Workshops to help instructors navigate through portfolio assignments.
      
      1) Kim J: How widely did the Deep Dive email get distributed?

      2) Katie S: Collaboration with OIA and it was widely distributed via various OIA listservs.

      3) Emily Jo S: UWGEC members are welcome to forward the message to others who may be interested.

VI. Attributes
   a. Joan C: attributes not being required towards graduation for first two-years.

      1) Susan MC: Different groups, such as advisors, administrators, and transfer personnel have raised concerns about how attributes articulate for transfer students, how they are sometimes difficult to map to different disciplinary courses, and that students could meet all and maybe more of the attributes needed just by taking the EP/BC courses. Need time to collect data on these issues to see if there are trends on the attributes they are taking. Are there gaps? Gives time to implement assessment to see how students are meeting the outcomes. Complexity of distribution. First two years, attributes tracked, but not required for graduation until incoming class in Fall 2024. That group will need to meet the requirement originally outlined.

      2) Steve K: Having data will be helpful to think about courses. There could be a course that has appealing title and description but doesn't have any of the attributes.
John P: Opportunity in BC for science courses. Think how scientific thinking can be expressed in the new interdisciplinarity part of the new GE curriculum. Science and writing. Get away from traditional mind set.

Jess K: Every course must carry at least one (1) attribute no matter what they are taking. Hope is that naturally students will get a good distribution of attributes. Are they going to avoid QR or DE? Data can let us know if students are avoiding QR for example.

Susan MC: All four attributes represent areas that we’re accountable to ABOR for. Content areas that they’re requiring that we include in curriculum.

Matt O: waiting until 2024 to establish attribute requirement for graduation is a concern. Policy says phasing in, so we need a very good reason to change that.

John P: One reason to do this is because if the curriculum was in place where 95% of our students just through registration of courses, completed all the attributes. Then mapping a requirement on to that might not be a complexity, need to map onto it so if the curriculum itself is taking care of the attribute requirements.

Katie S: Elevate a point Jess made on the chat. Promoting student autonomy in selecting their pathway through Gen Ed and being able to get a lot of the cross cutting/cross disciplinary methodologies and skills and contexts that are provided through the attributes.

VII. Double Dipping

a. Joan C: How has it evolved?

1) John P: Important particularly for ENGR and CAPLA due to their tight units and accreditation. Per current policy some students can count some courses towards T2 GE. If double counting occurs in a college (credit allows for degree and GE) this will be okay if the course is approved for the new GE and there will be a 9-unit cap on that amount of the double dip within the major.

Isabel B (chat): So e.g. the chemistry department will have to convert its intro courses to gen ed for them to be double-dippable?
• John P: Yes. This means some courses like CHEM will have to be modified to count towards a major and GE. CHEM is close to meeting requirements of the New GE. Outstanding opportunity for PHYS to modify or create an intro to PHYS.

• Joan C (chat): will this be for every major

• Rob G: Current system, tier ones can’t count for anything and tier twos can be used in minors but not majors. Makes sense.

• Isabel B (chat): If it were possible to count Engineering major introductory courses for gen eds, it would be a lot easier to sell the program since that is something that is within the power of the College of Engineering to control. Having to rely on other departments to manage their courses in a way that gives our students a break is not something that the college administration is likely to approve (at least, I think).

• John P: Course approved as Gen Ed it would be a responsibility like other Gen Ed courses. If an instructor teaches that course then pass the expectations of Gen Ed course.

• Rob G (chat): Will departments be able to **require** specific gen-ed courses in their majors? Departments may be tempted to abuse to ensure that their students stay in-house for gen-ed and undermine the idea of student agency?

  - Kim J (chat): @Rob And also undermine the idea that I think we want our GE to give our students a broad exposure to various content.

  - Jess K (chat): Rob, this could happen anyway, since we have also done away with say science majors don’t have to take NATS, for example. So of course departments are going to want their students taking their own gen eds. But I don’t know if they can require that.

• Abbie S (chat): Sorry if this has been stated already as I’ve had connectivity issues this afternoon. Allowing 9 units to double dip would only help solve the issue as long as the double-dipped courses met a distribution of Gen Ed requirements. If they’re all (for instance) approved as EP Natural Science, only one of those courses would end up counting toward the Gen Ed for any given student even if they take 3 courses because of their major requirements.
• Isabel B (chat): I appreciate that, John, and I hope I’m not being too much of a grinch. I agree with you that we need to think collaboratively and outside of the box and we can solve this. But having to teach 120+ CH of engineering to keep our ABET accreditation, while ABOR forbids more than 128 and the gen ed requirement is increasing, is the single biggest curriculum issue I hear coming from my administration right now, and anything that looks like a barrier to double-dipping is going to set off a lot of alarm bells.

• Kyle D (chat): I don’t know how well received this will be in my college but I think it will be a huge benefit to the students. They lack diversity in my opinion

2) Susan: GE setting the cap on double dip so students can still benefit from exploring. Other institutions have no caps on double dips. Not setting a cap on double dip would be a free for all which we can’t do under the budget model.

VIII. Chair Joan Curry Adjourned the meeting at 4:59PM.

Respectfully Submitted by Itzel Íñiguez and Mónica de Soto Vega, 3/22/2021