University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC)
Meeting Minutes, February 19, 2020

Voting Members Present: Kate Alexander, Chair Joan Curry, Adam Daly, Kyle DiRoberto, Amy Fountain, Robert Groves, Steve Kortenkamp, Ted Laetsch, Jessica Maerz, Aimee Mapes, Maha Nassar, Matt Ostermeyer, Jeremiah Paschke-Wood, Tanya Quist, Jennifer Ravia

Ex-Officio Members Present: Abbie Sorg

Guests: Jessica Summers

Voting Members Absent: Bennett Adamson, Joseph Agosttini, Bayo Ijagbemi, Kim Jones, Mark Stegeman

Chair Joan Curry called the meeting to order at 3:15 PM with a quorum of 13 voting members. Two additional members arrived after approval of the minutes. Rob Groves voted as proxy for Kim Jones.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 15

Amy Fountain moved to approve the minutes for January 15th as submitted. The motion was seconded by Jeremiah Paschke-Wood, and passed with 12 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

II. TLS 100 Extension Request – Jessica Summers

The General Education Advisory Task Force met for the first time on January 14 and began reviewing data sets and reports from the past few years, including data from faculty focus groups in Fall 2019, student surveys in Fall 2019, a task force report from 2018, and a report from the AAC&U meeting in 2018. The task force is working to identify points of connection between those data sources. The projected timeline will see a conceptual plan presented to the Provost by March, infrastructure planned by the end of Spring 2020, and a communication plan in place for students by the end of Summer 2020 in order for the new program to be launched to incoming students in Fall 2021. UWGEC committee members and other faculty are still welcome to join the task force to participate in any of the pieces (curriculum, infrastructure, and communication) that they’re interested in.

III. Course Proposals

1) KOR 301, Third-Year Korean I – new for Second Language 4th+ Semester designation. No concerns were raised about course content or designation.

Rob Groves made a motion to approve KOR 301 for Second Language 4th+ Semester designation. Kyle DiRoberto seconded this, and the motion unanimously passed with 15 votes in favor.

2) KOR 302, Third-Year Korean II – new for Second Language 4th+ Semester designation. No concerns were raised about course content or designation.

Rob Groves made a motion to approve KOR 302 for Second Language 4th+ Semester designation. Kyle DiRoberto seconded this, and the motion unanimously passed with 15 votes in favor.

3) MUS 335, The Place of Music in North America – new for Tier Two Arts and Diversity Emphasis. The committee noted that the syllabus needs to be updated to clarify the revision requirement, and to
include a statement about honors accommodations. A committee member noted that there may be some content overlap with an existing course, HNRS 160D4, Musical Heritage of North America; it appears that the similarity between the two courses is superficial, but recommend the Music department review the course title of the proposed course to determine whether it should be updated to more clearly show the differences between the courses.

Rob Groves made a motion to conditionally approve MUS 335 for Tier Two Arts and Diversity Emphasis, pending updates to the syllabus as noted above. Maha Nassar seconded this, and the motion unanimously passed with 15 votes in favor.

4) RELI 240, Buddhist Visual Culture & the West – new for Tier Two Arts and Diversity Emphasis. No concerns were raised about course content or designation. The committee noted that it would be good for the syllabus to more clearly indicate how Information Literacy frames are addressed, though this isn’t needed for approval.

Jessica Maerz made a motion to approve RELI 240 for Tier Two Arts and Diversity Emphasis. Steve Kortenkamp seconded this, and the motion unanimously passed with 15 votes in favor.

5) PPEL 101, Ethics, Economy & Entrepreneurship – modification to an existing course to designate it as Tier One Individuals & Societies, add a crosslisting with a new department, and change the component type from Lecture to Workshop. Committee members noted that the course is currently listed (and apparently plans to continue) as a dual-enrollment course offered to both university students and high school students. It is unclear whether the high school offerings of the course are taught by University of Arizona faculty or by someone else; if taught by non-UA faculty, it may be difficult to ensure a consistent experience appropriate for university students from section to section or year to year. Committee members questioned whether this type of course is appropriate for the university’s general education program, and also questioned whether the workshop component is appropriate for the course and for the general education program. Thus far Tier One courses have only been approved with the Lecture or Lecture/Discussion components. The committee also noted concerns that the syllabus is not robust enough to determine what is being taught in the course; more detail on the readings may be needed if it is determined that the larger issues of dual enrollment and workshop component are indeed appropriate for a Tier One course.

Kyle DiRoberto made a motion to table PPEL 101 until the committee can determine what the policy is on Tier One courses offered for dual enrollment and with the Workshop component. Ted Laetsch seconded this, and the motion unanimously passed with 15 votes in favor.

IV. New Business

1) Check in on pre-review process – the committee is satisfied with the functionality of the new small group pre-review process so far. The groups that have been assigned courses so far found working together via email to work satisfactorily, and this appears to have opened up some time in the meeting for other fruitful conversation about course content and addressing new projects. No changes will be made to the pre-review process this month.

2) Discussion on hidden costs – the committee already considers “hidden costs” such as requirements to attend ticketed events, expensive required textbooks or materials, etc. when reviewing course proposals. Would it be helpful for the committee to put together a set of recommendations for faculty to reference when developing General Education courses? Amy Fountain volunteered to put together a draft to review as a group at an upcoming meeting.

3) Discussion on Second Language requirement – the committee has had multiple requests submitted recently for exemptions to the Second Language requirement for individual majors. While each of
these requests has been denied, it would be beneficial to create a philosophical statement to explain the reason for the institutional Second Language requirement. It may be that academic units seek exemption to the requirement because they don’t know why it exists, and why it is necessary for all students. The committee will draft and review this statement at an upcoming meeting.

Joan adjourned the meeting at 4:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Abbie Sorg, 2/26/20