I. Call to Order and Welcome—Joan Curry

Chair Joan Curry called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM and welcomed new and returning members. A quorum was established with 19 voting members. New and returning committee members were introduced.

This year will be different than previous years for the UWGEC, as the committee works with the General Education Refresh team to review existing courses to approve their inclusion in the new General Education curriculum, to be offered to students beginning in Fall 2021 (launch date for the new curriculum was changed to Spring 2022 shortly after the meeting). Given the short window of time during which the bulk of courses need to be reviewed in order to be ready for scheduling the Fall semester, during Fall 2020 the UWGEC will meet twice monthly.

II. General Education Refresh Curriculum and Timeline—Susan Miller-Cochran

The General Education Refresh team is in the final stages of developing a proposal for the new General Education curriculum. The new curriculum, as currently planned, will include the following changes:

- Two new course categories (Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections) will replace the current Tier 1 and Tier 2 sequence. These new course categories will not be hierarchical the way Tier 1 and Tier 2 are; students may take courses in whatever order they choose.
  - Exploring Perspectives courses will be deep dives into four disciplinary domains: Artist, Humanist, Social Scientist, and Natural Scientist. Students will take 12 units from this category; at least one course from each perspective.
  - Building Connections courses will encourage students to bring together knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines or perspectives. Students will take 9 units from this category.
- Two attributes – Writing and Diversity – will be developed to be attached to courses in both the Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections categories. An emphasis on writing will no longer be a requirement for every Gen Ed course; students will need to ensure that two of their Gen Ed courses are tagged with the Writing attribute, and two are tagged with the Diversity attribute, regardless of category. It could be possible for students to fulfill multiple requirements with the same course.
  - Since writing will be a focus of specific courses within the new curriculum (rather than a requirement for every GE course), those courses that are labeled as Writing...
courses should have a significant focus on writing - 75% of the course grade should come from writing assignments, including a signature assignment.

- Discussion is still ongoing on the best way to define and categorize Diversity courses. These decisions will be important as they must reflect the values, the physical and academic location, and the student body of the institution, while also meeting the requirements in the General Education policy approved by ABOR last year.

- Two new 1-unit courses will be developed to bookend the Gen Ed experience – an introductory course to orient students to the perspective and goals of General Education, and a concluding portfolio course to help students reflect on their General Education experience as a whole.

- A General Education Office will be created to partner with colleges/units on enrollment management and schedule, and to provide faculty support.

The expected timeline involves the approval of the policies surrounding the new curriculum by 11/2/2020. Since courses would need to be in place by December in order for departments to usefully plan for the Fall 2021 semester, the UWGEC should expect to begin reviewing and approving courses for the new categories prior to the official approval of the new curriculum. Susan asks that members of UWGEC be willing to take the Quick Start course soon, to provide feedback on that process before most faculty go through it to prepare their existing courses for the new curriculum.

The review process for UWGEC is envisioned as being split into subgroups based on the 4 categories of courses (EP, BC, Writing, and Diversity), to allow representatives to focus on courses proposed for a specific category. Susan hopes to appoint additional (non-voting) faculty members from the Gen Ed Refresh team to consult with and coordinate the work of each of the subgroups. UWGEC members should expect to begin seeing course proposals for review in October, and should expect to do a lot of course review between October and early December, given the timeline we’re currently working under.

Discussion

- Need to clarify the approval process. A number of questions were raised that need to be decided on:
  - What fields/information should be required on the course proposal forms, aside from an updated syllabus?
  - Will the 40% rule still be in effect? Is there a way to re-envision this requirement in a way that doesn’t require the committee to crunch numbers on every course? There is a general desire for fewer hoops to jump through, while still maintaining the integrity of the program as a whole. Maybe more qualitative requirements rather than quantitative.
  - What about courses that fall out of compliance with their existing T1/T2 status as a result of aligning with the new curriculum?
  - When will the rubric/requirements for each category be ready for faculty and for the UWGEC to review?

- How will the funding model affect departments that offer General Education courses? How will departments currently under threat manage their financials under the new curriculum? Right now the funding model is still under discussion. The first priority of the Gen Ed Refresh team is to do no harm. Until the funding model is decided upon, it’s difficult to give concrete answers about how it will affect departments. Hoping to create a model that will encourage fewer very large Gen Ed courses.

- Concern has been expressed about the way Diversity courses will be defined - the current information makes it appear that this category will lean heavily toward U.S.-centric diversity and away from global diversity. Is there a way this can be updated to focus on both? Perhaps require one U.S. and one global diversity course for each student? The Gen Ed Refresh team is aware of
this concern and is still working on how to best structure this requirement while meeting the requirements in the ABOR policy.

Joan adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Abbie Sorg, 9/16/20