

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Tuesday, November 23, 2010

Hawai'i Hall 208

ATTENDEES: Jim Caron, Ernestine Enomoto, Joe Jarrett, Mike Nassir, Mamoru Sato, Comfort Sumida, Wei Zhang

Ex officio: Garrett Inoue (A&R), Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa (SEC)

Support staff: Lisa Fujikawa (GEO), Jo-Anne Nakamoto (GEO Recorder), Todd Sammons (GEO)

Guest: Tim Merrill (IRO)

Excused: Ron Cambra (AVCUE), Sianha Gualano (ASUH), Galen Sasaki, Ryan Yamaguchi (A&R)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Chair Ernestine Enomoto.

1. Minutes of November 3, 2010 were approved with the following changes/corrections (in *italics*):
 - Delete comma in Jim Caron's attendance listing (Jim, Caron).
 - Action/Information Item #3, 2nd bullet, 4th indent: *For the WASC visit in March 2011. We, we could state that it is a "work in progress."*
 - Action/Information Item #3, 6th bullet, 3rd indent: *Is "Diversification" when taken as a whole meant to a general statement on students' broadened a student's field of knowledge, or do should students receive a broad exposure to survey of a field each Diversification area? If the latter, then 400-level Diversification courses cannot provide this. do not meet the definition.*
2. Vote to Approve Proposals
 - TIM 321 (Multiple Focus Designations, E, O, W) "Sociocultural Issues in Tourism"
 - Some GEC members felt that the O Focus portion needed to be strengthened. This concern will be included in the memo to the instructor.
 - GEC voted unanimously (7 for, 0 against, 0 abstained) in favor of approving TIM 321.
 - MATH 161 (FS) "Pre-calculus and Elements of Calculus for Economics and the Social Sciences"
 - Discussion – there appears to be no restriction to admission to this course (i.e., no placement exam or other prerequisite). The course also does not appear to be a prerequisite for other courses at this time.
 - Although numbered higher than 135 and 140, MATH 161 is meant to be a lower-level course. However, the department couldn't find a lower number that hadn't been used. Credit will only be given for one of the three courses (MATH 135, 140, or 161).
 - GEC voted unanimously in favor of approving MATH 161 (7 for, 0 against, 0 abstained).
 - TIM 102 (FGB) "Food and World Cultures"
 - Received broad support at Foundations Board meeting, with small issues concerning clarification of the syllabus.
 - Similar to CTAHR course (FSHN 141) which was also proposed for an FG designation, but there no cooking involved. (It is also not really in the purview of the Foundations Board or the GEC to determine whether courses overlap significantly.)
 - GEC voted unanimously in favor of approving TIM 102 (7 for, 0 against, 0 abstained).
3. High Failure Courses - Tim Merrill, Mānoa Institutional Research Office
 - Refer to Working Group Report and Tim's data (emailed and handed out)

- Discussion
 - D grades are currently included. Should they be? (Note: D grades include D-, the latter of which does not constitute a passing grade for GenEd purposes. The D/D- distinction will be broken down in the next report.)
 - Are there different ways to look at the data that would be helpful to the GEC?
 - What do I(ncomplete) grades turn into? (They are “failure to proceed” grades, not necessarily failing grades.)
 - Average grade distribution may be different if limited to Natural Sciences (vs. Humanities); for example, the norm in CHEM is 15% D. Tim will do average by college.
 - Some faculty see differences in grade distribution from semester to semester, depending on the quality of the students in the class. Other faculty grade on a curve.
 - Some students seem to think that it’s better to get a W instead of a C. There are a variety of reasons why students get W’s.
 - Tim will check the ratio of how many times a course appears on the list vs. in how many semesters it was offered over the 10-semester period.
 - Why are students failing to proceed? Is the next step talking to departments?
 - What was beneficial to the working group is having different disciplines represented to get a better sense of which courses are working/not. Encourage more discussion with involved departments.
 - For 100/200 level courses, departments should be serving a broader range of students. However, many professors are resistant to the idea of offering a “service course.”
 - If there is a service component to courses, the affected departments should sit down and discuss what can be done to serve all.
 - Suggestion: Remove GenEd designation until the course meets the broader needs of the students who are taking the course.
 - Some courses on the list are unit mastery (e.g., PSY 100), which might contribute to the problem of high failure. Students in unit mastery courses need to be self-motivated to pass the course. On the other hand, LING 102 is also unit mastery, but no problem.
 - Suggestion: Have “A” (grade) students “test the test” to determine whether the problem is the test or the students.
 - Departments are not aware that their course(s) is/are on this list. Permission is currently being sought to share the information with Deans. Department input is needed to explain why courses have such high failure rates.
 - Could we send the info to ASUH to get their opinion? Student feedback is important.
 - Lilikala thanked the working group on behalf of the SEC.
 - What are the next steps GEC must take? How do we move forward? Conversation to continue next time; probably unable to report to Faculty Senate this semester.

Announcements

1. Diversification subcommittee will meet on Tuesday, November 30, 3-4 p.m., room TBA.
2. Please review **February 13, 2009 FS Report** in Laulima.

The next meeting of the GEC will be on December 7, 2010, 3:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Submitted by Jo-Anne Nakamoto, Recorder.