

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

12:00-1:00p.m., QLC 208

Attendees: Bob Joseph, Joy Logan, Sarita Rai, Stacey Roberts, Scott Rowland, Todd Sammons (GEO), Kiana Shiroma, Carolyn Stephenson (SEC), Ryan Yamaguchi (Admissions)

GEO support staff: Dawne Bost, Lisa Fujikawa

Excused: Ron Cambra (AVCUE), Pete Garrod, Amy Schiffner, ASUH representative (not yet assigned)

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

1. Action Items

a. Minutes from the September 11 and October 2 meetings were approved as amended.

b. Course-based O Focus proposal for SLS 312

- One member couldn't find all the Hallmarks addressed in the syllabi. O Board liaison Joy said that some of the information was on the chart but not in the syllabus. The chart also indicates on what page Hallmark information can be found.
- Another member asked whether it is common for the same two syllabi to be submitted with a course-based proposal. Dawne said that it is not unusual, especially when a course has a master syllabus.
- A third member questioned the practice of students working in pairs. There was concern that one student often dominates in group situations. However, it was pointed out that this concern is addressed in the syllabus. In addition, O courses allow for both individual and group presentations and so should not be discounted because of group work.
- Because the O Board felt the proposal was a good, clear example of how to meet the O Hallmarks, they did not submit a rationale for their recommendation to approve. There was also little discussion on Laulima or at the Board meeting. The Board focused on other proposals which they felt were unclear and required follow-up. Lisa will be setting up a Google doc to track who's reviewed what and who's been assigned to contact instructors on those proposals that require follow up.

The GEC voted 6-0-0 to approve the course-based O Focus request.

Discussion about requiring Board rationale for recommendations

- Dawne reminded the GEC that while written liaison reports are no longer required, a short explanation should accompany each Board recommendation. The explanation helps the GEC to understand how the Board came to its recommendation.
- One member asked why the Boards are being made to do extra work when GEC members carefully review each proposal anyway. Dawne explained that the practice was established last year, after the GEC reviewed multiple-designation requests that the Boards recommended for approval. In several cases, the GEC was unable to see how the proposal met the Focus Hallmarks, and they had to go back to the Board(s) for clarification, which delayed final approval or, in some instances, resulted in marginal approval because of time constraints.

- Although the Board's explanation might be redundant in cases where it is clear how the proposal meets the Hallmarks, for consistency's sake, the explanation should be required in all cases.
- Stacey will send a memo to all Boards asking them to provide a brief justification whenever a proposal is sent to the GEC for final approval. The Board can provide this justification on Lulima or via email.

2. Discussion item: Can a UHM graduate course be used to request a Focus Exemption?

Background: The GEO has received several requests for Focus Exemptions based on graduate courses taken at UHM. The question is whether taking a graduate course at Manoa can be considered an "extraordinary experience" for a UHM undergraduate, thus allowing students to apply for a Focus Exemption with a UHM graduate course as the basis. One of the requests is from a student in the Master's Entry Program in Nursing (MEPN). The program recently started granting BSNs, so students now need to fulfill both graduate and undergraduate requirements.

Discussion:

- Lisa raised the question with Manoa's Council of Academic Advisors (CAA). She reported that the advisors' primary concern was not allowing students to "double dip" courses to fulfill requirements for both graduate and undergraduate degrees.
- Kiana went on to explain that undergraduates who want to take a graduate-level course are required to complete an "excess credit" form. The form states that the credits earned from taking a graduate-level course are "in excess" of the credits required for the undergraduate degree. Stacey suggested that students be asked to submit a copy of this form when requesting a Focus Exemption for a graduate course.
- Another suggestion was to modify the Focus Exemption form so that it clearly states that graduate courses are eligible only if they do *not* "count" toward graduate degree requirements.
- Some felt that graduate courses should be eligible for Focus Exemptions because students do not receive academic credit for the exemption.
- One member suggested that a W designation was appropriate in cases where a graduate course has an undergraduate counterpart with writing requirements that meet or exceed the W requirements for the undergraduate course. Other members questioned whether student/teacher interaction would be the same in graduate and undergraduate courses. For some members, interaction on the writing is the same for grads and undergrads; for others, it is clearly different.
- There was a question about how many students would apply for a Focus Exemption if UHM graduate courses became eligible. Kiana thought that most undergraduates who take graduate courses are in the Honors Program and consequently are advised to fulfill requirements by taking appropriate courses rather than by seeking exemptions. Advisors could also be asked to inform their students that while graduate courses *may* earn them a Focus Exemption, it is a gamble to count on the exemption being granted.
- Kiana said that some Honors students take graduate courses as part of their Honors track, in fulfillment of their Bachelor's degree, while other Honors students take graduate courses to get a head start on their graduate education.
- It was pointed out that the GEC has a better sense of what happens in a UHM graduate course than in a Study Abroad course, the latter of which can already be used to request a Focus Exemption.

- Some members felt that there are many other ways to fulfill Focus requirements, while others felt that any “extraordinary experience” (including taking a graduate course) can be used to apply for a Focus Exemption.

Decision: The GEC decided to allow students to apply for a Focus Exemption using a UHM graduate course as the basis for the exception. However, they made it clear that an exemption would not be granted if the graduate course was also being used to fulfill degree requirements for a graduate program (i.e., being “double dipped”). The Nursing Program will be notified of the decision since it may affect their MEPN students.

3. Information item: System articulation of E and O

Lisa explained that the E Board had received a request from UH Maui College (UHMC) to have one of its 300-level Nursing courses designated as fulfilling Manoa’s E Focus requirement. Currently, students can only fulfill their E and O Focus requirements at UHM; no other System campuses have courses that articulate as fulfilling these two upper-division requirements, and no system was put in place to make articulation possible. After discussion at an Advisory Group meeting, it was decided that UHMC would be asked to follow the same procedures that all campuses followed for HAP articulation prior to the creation of the HAP Multicampus Articulation Agreement: a Focus articulation form (very similar to Manoa’s Focus form) will be completed by the UHMC instructor, signed by the campus’s Chief Academic Officer, and then submitted to Manoa’s E Board for review. If the proposal is approved, the GEO will notify Admissions so that the information can be recorded on students’ transcripts if/when they matriculate to Manoa.

4. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 6 at 12:00 p.m. in HH 208.

M e e t i n g a d j o u r n e d a t 1 : 1 0 p . m .

Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder