

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

Hawai'i Hall 208

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

Attendees: Ron Cambra (OVCUE), Kaitlyn Conner (ASUH), Pete Garrod (Chair), [Nicole Iwasaki](#), Bob Joseph, Joy Logan, Mike Nassir, [Kapa Oliveira \(Vice Chair\)](#), Stacey Roberts (SEC), Todd Sammons, Amy Schiffner, Kiana Shiroma

GEO support staff: Dawne Bost, Lisa Fujikawa

Excused: Ryan Yamaguchi (Admissions)

1. **Minutes** from the October 29 meeting was approved as written.
2. The **E Focus Exemption request for Monique** was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0.
3. **Course-Based Focus Requests**
 - The **W for MET/ATMO 416** was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0. Both the GEC and the W Board discussed the question of whether exams in this course should “count” when determining whether or not the course meets the W Hallmarks. The W Board felt that although the exams were timed, they should be counted because feedback is given and revision is possible.
 - The **W for ENG 405** was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0.
4. The **multiple Focus designation request (E, O, W) for Maya Soetoro-Ng’s PACE 410** was approved by a vote of 6-0-2. One member wasn’t sure students were doing enough writing, because it wasn’t clear how many pages the daily reflections would be. Another member said that it was also unclear how some of the assignments factor into the grade. Joy said that the instructor addressed the concerns in the revised syllabus she provided.
5. **Foundations Requests**
 - The **FGA for OCN 105** was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0. It was noted that the course focuses on pre-history and even pre-humanity, so the “A” designation is appropriate. The Foundations Board has already drafted a memo to the department with suggestions if the course is approved.
 - The **FGB for POLS 120** was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0. Lisa explained that the department will most likely be creating a new course, POLS 150, to carry the FGB designation. The primary concern is that modifying the existing POLS 120 will cause many articulation problems, because the course already exists as a Diversification-Social Sciences (DS) course on several other UH campuses and articulates as equivalent to the Manoa course.
6. **Liaison Reports**
 - **E Board** (Kiana/Dawne): The Board is still negotiating three proposals and is reviewing a fourth. They are also looking at redoing the E rubric. They will not meet again this semester.
 - **H Board** (Bob/Dawne): The Board has two outstanding proposals and is looking at redoing their part of the Focus form. They will not meet again this semester but are looking for a new Board member to replace I-Bei Lin, who resigned.
 - **O Board** (Joy): The Board has a new member, Cathy Clayton, who will be filling the vacancy that the Board has had all semester. The Board is still negotiating two proposals, one of which is less pressing because the course is not being taught in Spring 2015. They plan to modify their part of the Focus form to mirror the changes made by the W Board. They will not meet again this semester.

- W Board (Amy): The Board has made several changes to their part of the Focus form, including adding a checklist to try to help instructors avoid making common mistakes. They are hopeful the checklist will mediate some of the problems they have had with Focus form completion. Pete would like the Board to report back on how successful the changes were.
- F Board (Mike): The Board last met on November 11 and will be having their final meeting on December 4. They reviewed five transfer credit requests, which Dawne noted was an unprecedented number. They also reviewed and recommended for approval the two Foundations requests that were voted on earlier.

7. Discussion: Can a student apply for exemption from multiple W requirements with one experience?

Background: The GEC recently decided that students can earn exemption for up to three Focus requirements. These can be earned in different Focus area by using one or multiple experiences as the basis for the request. The question was whether or not one experience could be used to apply for multiple W exemptions.

Discussion:

- Some W courses are more rigorous than others, but students always receive one W credit per course, regardless of the amount of work involved. In addition, it is not possible to petition for multiple W exemptions for one course. This was also the position of Council of Academic Advisors (CAA).
- Members also felt that different types of writing from the same experience do not warrant multiple W exemptions. Students often are required to do different types of writing for a single course, for which they receive only one W “credit.”
- There was also the question of whether the length of the experience made a difference. For example, if a student did the website and minutes for a company for ten years, would that warrant multiple W exemptions? Most felt that if the work was essentially the same over the entire period of time, multiple exemptions weren’t warranted. If, on the other hand, the student was promoted to a different position within the organization, with different responsibilities, then the second position might be considered a separate experience, which could be used to apply for another W exemption.
- If the spirit of the W requirement is to have five different writing experiences, then each experience should be eligible for only one W exemption.
- Some were concerned about making a hard and fast rule, but others pointed out that an exception could be made if the GEC felt a particular request warranted it.
- Some felt that exemptions should be used sparingly, and that students should try to fulfill their Focus requirements within their major or field of study.
- It was noted that Manoa doesn’t give credit for prior learning, as many of the community colleges do. Focus exemptions do not earn students course credit, but allow them to graduate without having to take as many Focus-designated courses.

Decision: There was consensus that students can only earn one W exemption per experience.

8. Updates

- **Board vacancies**
 - The E Board will have a vacancy in Spring 2015 when one of its members goes on sabbatical. The member has offered to review proposals if needed.
 - Amy Schiffner will also be on sabbatical in Spring 2015.
- Interviews for the **General Education Office (GEO) Director** position will be held next week.

9. The last **Fall 2014 meeting** will be held from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3 in Hawai‘i Hall 208.