

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

QLC 208

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

GEO support staff: Dawne Bost, Lisa Fujikawa

Excused: Pete Garrod, Scott Rowland, Amy Schiffner, ASUH representative (not yet assigned)

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

1. **Minutes** from the September 11 meeting were deferred until the next meeting.

2. Action items

- a. The **W Focus Exemption for “Noah”** was approved by a vote of 5-0-0. Members felt that the experience met the Hallmarks, especially with respect to student/teacher interaction on the writing.
- b. The **course-based W Focus request for ARCH 342** was also approved by a vote of 5-0-0. Kiana liked the fact that the Hallmarks were clearly stated on the syllabus, and Stacey felt that the proposal did a good job addressing the Hallmarks about student/teacher interaction.
- c. The **Foundations proposal to repeal delegation of approving authority** was presented to the GEC.

Background:

- The original policy proposal requested that the GEC delegate approving authority for Foundations courses to the Foundations (F) Board in cases where the vote was unanimous. The policy proposal was approved by the GEC in December 2012.
- In Spring 2013, the new policy was tested for the first time when the F Board approved a course proposal that they had some concerns about. Although the course proposal was unanimously approved, the Board sent it to the GEC. This resulted in some confusion, because the GEC didn't understand why they were being asked to review a course proposal that had already been approved. The situation made it clear that the original F Board policy proposal had been approved without full consideration of how it was to be implemented.
- As a result, AY13 GEC Chair Dore Minatodani met with F Board Chair Amy Schafer at the end of Spring 2013 to discuss the GEC's concerns. These concerns were also discussed at the first F Board meeting of Fall 2013. They included the following:
 - The original rationale was that the F Board should be able to approve their own courses they way Focus Boards do. However, the Focus Boards are only approving individual sections of courses, taught by specific instructors. Course-based Focus requests are still sent to the GEC for final approval.
 - Another argument for delegation of approving authority was saving time. The F Board felt that course proposals would be approved faster if they didn't have to go through GEC review/approval as well. In addition, allowing the F Board to approve would reduce GEC workload. While it is true that some time is saved, the small number of Foundations proposals reviewed each year doesn't seem to necessitate the change.

- The idea that the GEC merely “rubber stamps” course proposals that are sent by the Boards for GEC review/approval isn’t true.
- Dawne brought up several other areas of concern/confusion:
 - The GEC traditionally sends the approval memos. However, the AY13 GEC Chair wasn’t comfortable signing a letter of approval for a course that her committee had never reviewed nor discussed.
 - The GEC only discussed part of the F Board policy proposal before approving it. The section about allowing the F Board to send course proposals to the GEC at its discretion was not reviewed or addressed before the whole policy proposal was approved.

Discussion:

- One member was surprised by the F Board’s 180 degree turn but now understands the reasons why.
- Another thought it was admirable of the Board to bring the new policy proposal to the GEC.
- Several felt that it was good to have another set of eyes reviewing course proposals and consequently supported going back to the original procedure of having both the F Board and the GEC review.

Bob moved that the GEC accept the F Board’s proposal to retract the 12/12/12 approval which granted approving authority to the F Board when the vote was unanimous. The motion was passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

3. Lisa distributed the **Fall 2013 calendar for Spring 2014 Focus proposals**. The calendar is also posted on Laulima.

4. **Foundations-Symbolic Reasoning (FS) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges’ (WASC) quantitative reasoning requirement**

Background: Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) Reed Dasenbrock talked to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) several weeks ago about WASC’s modified requirements, which now include quantitative reasoning. Mānoa’s FS requirement does not align with this new WASC requirement. A good example is PHIL 110, which meets the FS requirement but cannot be considered a quantitative reasoning course. The problem needs to be straightened out if Mānoa is to get reaccredited. Reed and Stacey began by bringing the issue to the Foundations Board at their last meeting.

Discussion:

- There may be some issues with articulation, but Mānoa needs to make changes in order to meet the new WASC requirements. Reaccreditation is the priority.
- The VCAA’s office should have the exact language of the new WASC requirements, perhaps posted on their website. This is what Mānoa will have to work with in revising current requirements.
- It’s likely the F Board will have to rewrite the FS Hallmarks.
- Because the issue (FS vs. quantitative) has been debated quite a bit over the last four years, it was suggested that the F Board begin by reviewing the discussions of the FS working groups and past F Boards, GECs, and F multicampus groups.
- The GEC and the Faculty Senate will also play a part in the process. Recommendations from the F Board need to flow through the GEC, and ultimately need to be approved by the Faculty Senate.

- Although the F Board has been charged with determining next steps, if they don't feel comfortable making recommendations on their own, they can consult with other interested/involved parties on campus.
- Several members had questions about the ramifications of changing existing requirements and the logistics of implementing the changes.
 - There was general agreement that if the FS requirement is modified to meet the next WASC standards, current FS courses will retain the designation until it expires, at which time the designation would have to be renewed following the revised Hallmarks.
 - It was unclear what effect such a change would have on current students, but it was clear that such effects need to be taken into consideration.
- Although Mānoa has been accredited through 2021, the problem needs to be addressed as soon as possible, since the process for reaccreditation will begin in 2015. Loss of accreditation would mean, among other issues, loss of federal funds and other financial aid.

NEXT MEETING will be held on Wednesday, October 16 at 12:00 p.m. in HH 208.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder