

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, October 17, 2012

Hawai'i Hall 208

Attendees: Dore Minatodani, Joy Logan, Sarita Rai, Stacey Roberts, Amy Schiffner, Carolyn Stephenson (SEC), Ryan Yamaguchi (Admissions)

GEO support staff: Dawne Bost, Lisa Fujikawa, Todd Sammons

Excused: Comfort Sumida, Ron Cambra (AVCUE), Scott Rowland, Wei Zhang

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. The Foundations renewal was struck from the agenda because the proposal was not available on Lulima for GEC review.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The **minutes of October 3, 2012** were tabled until the next meeting to give members more time to review. There was discussion about how minutes should be drafted in the future:
 - Although guest presentations are sometimes not included in the minutes, GEC minutes have traditionally included that information.
 - Some preferred more brevity in the minutes but acknowledged that the committee benefited from more detailed minutes that provide a more thorough discussion, especially due to the complexity of issues and annual rotation of committee members.
 - It was pointed out that normal parliamentary procedure is to name people only when they are giving reports; other information is provided without names. It was explained that inclusion of names beyond the usual parliamentary procedure resulted from requests made by members of last year's GEC to attribute comments appropriately. After a brief discussion, it was decided that future minutes would not attribute comments to individuals except when appropriate under parliamentary procedures.
2. Several **requests for multiple Focus designations** were considered.
 - a. HON 491, Gordon Lee and Jeffrey Acido – E, O, W Focus
Discussion:
 - This course is team-taught, but it is unclear how the two instructors work together.
 - The E Board's discussion on Lulima indicated that one syllabus was clearer than the other. However, because the course is team taught, the Board felt that they could not refuse assigning the E designation based on weaknesses in one syllabus.
 - Some felt that information about the W Focus was lacking in the syllabus. It was suggested that the GEC request that the syllabus address the W Focus more clearly and also clarify the percentage of the grade that is attributed to writing.
 - The GEC was reminded that each Board looks only at its own Focus area. The GEC's responsibility is to look at the overall course and decide whether all Focus areas can be adequately addressed.Decision: 4-0-0 in favor of approving the E and O Focus requests. (The course already has a course-based W Focus.) The approval memo to the instructors will ask that W Focus information be included in the syllabus.
 - b. HON 491, Lonny Carlile – H, O, W Focus
Discussion:
 - Several members felt that the proposal was fine.
 - The proposal is a great example of how to meet the H Focus requirement.

Decision: 4-0-0 in favor of approving the H and O Focus requests. (Again, the course already has a course-based W Focus.)

3. The revised **Focus Exemption request** for a course taken in Japan through the Study Abroad Program was reviewed by the GEC. One member noted that the student cited all of the W Hallmarks this time around. All members felt that the student made his case for the Focus exemption.

Decision: 4-0-0 in favor of approving the Focus exemption request.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Dawne gave an update on a **General Education W Focus assessment project** that began last year in collaboration with the Assessment Office (AO). The project was extended to this academic year due to unexpected personnel and time constraints that delayed data collection and review planned for last semester. The project is looking at student writing in 400-level Natural Science and Social Science courses. Faculty members will review writing samples, after baseline expectations of senior-level writing are determined.

Under the guidance of Acting Mānoa Writing Program (MWP) Director Todd Sammons, the project was designed to include W Board participation. However, upon MWP Director Jim Henry's return, it was decided that the project is not congruent with current MWP research paradigms and goals, so the W Board and MWP will not participate officially in the study.

The assessment project will still move forward, but will now be conducted primarily as a response to WASC expectations. Consequently, the focus of the assessment has changed from looking at student proficiency in senior level W courses to looking at institutional learning outcomes (ILOs). GEO will provide the GEC with the details of the research design.

2. Dawne also updated the GEC on several **General Education focus groups** conducted since the beginning of the summer. Individual focus groups of instructional faculty, advisors, and Focus Coordinators have met to share views on General Education Office process and procedures and perceptions of Mānoa's General Education requirements. Dawne reported seeing trends in responses that went beyond the GEO's Focus procedures, touching on subjects such as Board interaction with faculty and proposal approval periods and requirements. The last scheduled focus group is with students on October 25, although there may be additional focus groups scheduled thereafter. Any GEC members who are interested in getting a brief summary of the results were asked to email Dawne. The results will inform the creation of a survey which will be distributed to the wider UHM community.
3. Dore presented two **proposed changes to the liaison information in the GenEd Handbook:**
1) Abolishing the requirement to have liaisons rotate every year and 2) Discontinuing the practice of having written liaison reports. The changes would be reflected on pages 3-3 and 8-21 of the current GEC Handbook. A handout with proposed language changes was distributed and will be discussed and voted on at the next GEC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Next meeting: October 31, 2012 from 12:00-1:00 p.m. in Hawaii Hall 208

Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder