

## Minutes of the General Education Committee

April 11, 2016

QLC 208

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Present: Hokulani Aikau, Kaitlyn Conner, Miguel Felipe, Dore Minatodani, Mike Nassir, Kapa Oliveira, Kiana Shiroma, Maria Stewart, Ryan Yamaguchi

GEO Staff: Lisa Fujikawa, Vicky Keough, Wendi Vincent

Excused: Ron Cambra, Alyssa Kapaona, Bonnyjean Manini, Nori Tarui

### 1. Action Items

- The **March 28, 2016 GEC meeting minutes** were unanimously approved as written by a vote of 6-0-0.
- The revised **course-based E Focus request for KRS 395** was approved for one semester only by a vote of 7-0-0. The GEC will follow up again to get additional information which will allow the course to be approved for the full five years.
  - Instead of submitting a master syllabus, the department submitted a third sample syllabus from a different instructor/semester. The GEC was concerned about the variability and inconsistency among the syllabi and felt that the department needed to identify a master syllabus.
  - The GEC was also concerned about the variability when the course is offered online (versus face-to-face) but felt that the issue should not hold up the approval. Adapting the E Focus for an online course format is part of a bigger discussion that will be continued in the Fall by both the E Board and the GEC.
  - In addition, if/when the course-based request is approved, the course description in the Catalog will need to be modified to reflect the inherency of the E Focus.
- The **course-based W Focus renewal request for SPAN 302** was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.
- The **course-based W Focus request for SPAN 351** was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0. The department has made a commitment to having writing be inherent in the course.
- The **O Focus Exemption request for Leo** was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

### 2. Announcements

- **Feedback from the Council of Academic Advisors (CAA): Transition from Foundations-Symbolic Reasoning (FS) to Foundations-Quantitative Reasoning (FQ).** It was reported that members of CAA agreed that it was better to have a sunset date on FS than to continue the requirement indefinitely. Several advisors expressed concern about the possibility of some FS courses, particularly MATH 140, not carrying the FQ designation after the transition. This could impact majors which currently use such courses to fulfill both major and GenEd requirements.
- **Proposed transition timeline for implementation of FQ/phase out of FS.** Wendi shared the proposed timeline, which phases out FS in Fall 2023.
  - The timeline will be shared with the Foundations Board next week and has already been shared with the University Council on Articulation (UCA) and the Academic Advising and Transfer Network (AATN). All groups have been asked for their input.

- The GEO will also be meeting with Ron Cambra to strategize and figure out more of the logistics and details, including how many seats will be needed each year for each requirement (FS and FQ). This information will determine whether or not FS course designations will be renewed when they expire after Fall 2018.
- The GEO is also taking into consideration how the transition will affect prerequisites, program sheets, four-year plans, registration, and other areas and plans to communicate with affected parties to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- Official communication will be sent out via the OVCAA in Fall 2016 to detail the FS to FQ transition so that it is as transparent as possible.
- **Council of Colleagues round table: Aligning GenEd Curriculum and Major Requirements.** This next GenEd workshop will be held on Tuesday, April 26 from 12:00-1:15pm in Kuykendall 106 (the Center for Teaching Excellence). Composition and Rhetoric Director Darin Payne will talk about 200-level writing courses and how such W Focus courses can build on ENG 100 skills and serve as a stepping stone for 300-level W Focus courses in the major. More generally, participants are being asked to bring in four-year plans and curriculum maps to do some hands-on work connected with the highly structured majors project. The group will also discuss “15 to finish” and how GenEd requirements can be incorporated into the major to help meet this goal.
- **Board liaisons had no issues to report.**

### 3. Discussion Items

- **Having lower division E and O Focus requirements.**

Background: A Leeward Community College (LCC) professor asked if UHM would be willing to entertain the possibility of having lower-division courses fulfill E and O Focus requirements.

#### Discussion:

- There was general consensus that it would be good to have a lower-division requirement reinforced by a requirement at the upper division, ideally with the latter requirement being offered in the major. However, it isn't feasible or reasonable to add more requirements.
- Several felt that if requirements *were* to be added, there are other areas, such as information literacy and sustainability, which should take precedence.
- Some questioned whether the E and O requirements should be expanded to include 200-level courses, especially if those courses focus solely on contemporary ethical issues or oral communication (e.g., COMG 251). Others felt that the requirement should remain at the upper division, especially if it continues to be fulfilled by only one course.
- Because of the many opportunities for video communication today, perhaps there should be a shift toward more oral communication and fewer writing intensive requirements. If the W Focus requirements were reduced to accommodate an additional O Focus requirement, the overall number of requirements would remain the same.
- There was also discussion about upper division courses that have no prerequisites, as well as majors that don't offer E and O courses. Even though the current upper division criterion was intended to build E and O into the major, there are still many departments that do not offer these courses for their majors, for a variety of reasons.
- At least one member felt that the current question should not be considered on its own, but should be raised if and when the current General Education requirements are reviewed in their entirety.

Decision: The GEC voted 7-0-0 that

- at this time, the request from LCC to accept lower division E and/or O Focus courses in order to facilitate articulation will not be entertained.
- Boards will be asked to do a year-end debrief. They will also be encouraged to include “larger issues for continued discussion” in their annual reports.

- **Focus approval for a UHM graduate course: What are the procedures?**

Background: This question was raised by an undergraduate student who was interested in taking a graduate level course but wanted to know beforehand whether or not the course would fulfill one of his (W) Focus requirements. Current practice has been for students to request a Focus Exemption after completing the graduate course.

Discussion:

- The GEO proposed that Focus designations for individual students taking graduate courses be treated similarly to directed reading courses (X99), where a “regular” Focus form is completed by the student and/or the instructor to demonstrate how the course will be meeting the Focus Hallmarks for the individual student.
- It was noted that if/when the proposal is approved, the individual student and his/her advisor would be notified so that the exception can be put in the student’s record; the Focus designation would *not* be added on to the course in Banner/MyUH.
- Some GEC members were concerned that asking the instructor to complete a Focus form would be too much, especially if there was the possibility that the student wouldn’t end up enrolling in or successfully completing the course.
- Another suggestion was to give provisional approval beforehand and then have the student request a Focus Exemption upon completion of the course. However, if the proposed graduate course is being taken in the student’s final semester (students can only take graduate courses in their final year), having to wait until the course is completed and then requesting a Focus Exemption would delay graduation.

Decision: The GEC voted 7-0-0 to allow Focus “pre-approval” of UHM graduate courses by having the instructor submit a “regular” Focus form, which would go through the normal review process.

**4. Next meeting** (if enough members can attend): April 18, 2016 from 3:00-4:30 p.m., location TBA

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

*Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder*