

Minutes of the General Education Committee
Wednesday, October 28, 2009
Hawai'i Hall 208

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. by Chair Scott Rowland.

Present: Ernestine Enomoto, Mike Nassir, Scott Rowland, Galen Sasaki, Todd Sammons, Mamoru Sato, Carolyn Stephenson.

Ex officio: Ron Cambra (OVCAA), Jan Heu (A & R), Susan Hippensteele (SEC)

Support staff: Tom Hilgers (GEO), Lisa Fujikawa (GEO Recorder)

Excused: Lynne Higa, Jo-Anne Nakamoto (GEO)

MINUTES: Minutes of the October 14, 2009 meeting were approved with the following corrections:

- Under #2, Ruth Mabanglo's name was added to the first course, FIL 330, to indicate that the proposal was instructor-specific rather than course-based, as the rest of the proposals were.
- In the heading for #3, "Focus" was changed to "GenEd Core."

ACTION AND INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Vote on course-based O Focus proposal for SPAN 303
 - O Board recommended approval after the department submitted proposed modifications to the existing course description in the Catalog.
 - The fact that there is a lot of overlap in the sample syllabi seems to indicate that the course will be taught in the same manner regardless of who teaches it.

ACTION: Unanimously approved.

The vote also prompted more general discussion about the E and O Focus requirements.

- O Board has been meeting with language departments to clarify how foreign language courses can meet the O Hallmarks. (O involves more than just a matter of language acquisition.)
- O Board's experience is similar to the results of GEC's outreach efforts; faculty are often unaware of the requirements and interested to learn more about them.
- Question was raised as to whether the E and O Focus courses need to be in the major, and whether they should be restricted to upper division courses.
- Research methods courses seem like they would naturally meet the E Focus requirement. How many departments offer such a course, and how many of those courses currently have an E Focus?

2. Vote on elimination of Focus proration for UH System transfer students (CAA proposal)
 - No anticipated adverse effects on non-System transfer students if the proration for System students is eliminated.
 - Community colleges should be notified of such a change directly.

- Notification of the change can be put into the 2010-11 UHM Catalog, in anticipation of the change going into effect the following year. Catalog language will also be amended to reflect the fact that students cannot earn Focus credit outside the UH System.
- GEO determined that the GEC has the authority to make this change. (The original proration policy was created in Fall 2002 by the GEC.)

ACTION: Motion to “Eliminate Focus proration for UH System transfer students [Manoa students who complete all coursework in UH System], effective Fall 2011” was unanimously approved.

3. Update on Foundations data request

- Fujikawa talked to A&R and confirmed that producing the data is “possible but not easy.”
- Due to logistical challenges, data will probably be pulled for entering classes rather than for graduating classes.
- Data may help support arguments that students should take Foundations courses early in their college career.
- Analysis of data will look at time taken to complete Foundations requirements versus time taken to graduate; any correlation between the two?
- Some had concerns that correlation may be an indication of student motivation or self-discipline rather than a reflection of how effective Foundations courses are.
- Recent implementation of mandatory advising and declaration of major may also affect the time taken to graduate. Students who declare their major early are more likely to graduate, and completing Foundations courses makes it easier to get into many majors (which often include Foundations courses among their prerequisites). Are there correlations between when the GenEd Core requirements are completed and when a major is declared?
- GEC discussed including the Assessment Committee and the Assessment Office for a more complete picture. Suggestions included conducting exit interviews with graduates and talking with faculty who teach Foundations courses.
- GEC also discussed whether to move forward with enforcement of the FS and FG requirements in the first two years on a trial basis, before comprehensive assessment is complete. At this point, the most probable way to enforce would be to delay registration times for students who fail to complete the requirements in a timely manner.

ACTION: Formal request for Foundations data will be submitted to A&R. Assessment Committee and Assessment Office will be asked to help with Foundations assessment.

4. Chair’s Report

a. Discuss Draft MOA on Transfer of GenEd Core Requirements

MOA Details

- MOA says that students who complete Foundations and/or Diversification requirements on one UH System campus are considered to have fulfilled the same requirements at any UH campus to which they subsequently transfer. (Currently, only students who have completed an AA are considered to have fulfilled all GenEd Core requirements at UHM.)
- Goal of the MOA is to make it easier for students to transfer within-System.
- Proposed implementation would be by creating a new “checkbox” which would be marked by the sending campus upon completion of the Foundations and/or Diversification requirements.

- UH Academic Affairs Director Joanne Itano will solicit comments from “registrars and student affairs officers,” revise the memo, and then re-circulate. February 2010 is the deadline set by the System, by which time all campuses’ Faculty Senates should have made a decision. (Several have already approved the MOA in principle.)

GEC Discussion of MOA

- Diversification subcommittee members had no problem with all Diversification requirements being completed at the lower level.
- Some language in the MOA is unclear. For example, it says that “requirements will not be subject to course-by-course review,” presumably meaning that the receiving campus cannot second guess the sending campus’s evaluation of GenEd Core fulfillment. However, course-by-course review is still necessary for prerequisite checking purposes.
- Do campuses with more stringent GenEd requirements have concerns about the MOA? Scott was unsure, as all campuses weren't present at the UCA meeting.
- Some felt that the MOA contributes to the erosion of each campus's authority to determine what meets their degree requirements. The MOA tells campuses how they should accept courses (i.e., what requirements the courses should fulfill). Campuses will no longer be able to make the determination about how courses will transfer (except for the purposes of prerequisite checking).

ACTION: Scott will write a report presenting what the GEC sees as the pros and cons of the MOA. Report will go to Susan (and the Faculty Senate) after being circulated to all GEC members for feedback.

- b. Discuss possible report to Faculty Senate regarding change of FS requirement (“symbolic” vs. “quantitative”)
 - Most of UH campuses currently have a quantitative skills requirement. Not all of Manoa’s FS courses meet such a requirement.
 - GEC discussed forming a working group to look at the current FS requirement. Members would include the current Foundations Board and representatives from other interested/affected groups and departments.
 - Charge to the working group would be to determine whether the current FS requirement is adequate. Are students getting the skills that they need from the current array of FS courses?

ACTION: Working group will be formed, composed of Foundations Board members and other involved parties. GEC members should send suggestions for group members to Scott.

For next agenda:

- Enforcement/implementation of Foundations in first two years
- Networking with departments re General Education
- Diversification – need for 400-level Diversification courses?

Meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Next meeting: November 18, 2009, 1:30 p.m., HH 208.

Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder