

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, March 6, 2013

Hawai'i Hall 208

Attendees: Ron Cambra (AVCUE), Dore Minatodani, Sarita Rai, Stacey Roberts, Scott Rowland, Amy Schiffner, Todd Sammons (GEO), Carolyn Stephenson (SEC), Comfort Sumida, Dwane Tegman (ASUH), Ryan Yamaguchi (Admissions)

GEO support staff: Lisa Fujikawa

Guest: Amy Schafer (Foundations Board Chair)

Excused: Dawne Bost (GEO), Joy Logan (sabbatical), Wei Zhang

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The **minutes of December 12, 2012** were approved by a vote of 5-0-1. The **February 20, 2013 minutes** were approved by a vote of 4-0-2. In both cases, members who weren't present at the meeting covered by the minutes abstained from voting.

2. **Foundations Board proposal to change the approval period for new Foundations courses from five to three years**

Discussion:

- Foundations Board Chair Amy Schafer attended the February 20 GEC meeting to discuss the proposal and answer questions.
- The question of requiring that approved courses be taught a minimum number of times before renewal was discussed again. One member suggested that the proposal be approved with that contingency. The GEC decided to vote on the current proposal, with the option of creating a second proposal to address the question of how many times an approved course should be taught before being eligible for renewal.
- It was pointed out that Foundations courses should be taught regularly – a minimum of once a year.
- Ryan reminded the group that transfer courses would continue to be evaluated on a five-year basis, effectively giving those courses a five-year approval even if new Foundations courses at Manoa are approved for only three years. The Admissions Office will do its best to make sure that this is not the case, but it is possible that it may happen.
- It was pointed out that even with current five-year approvals for both transfer and Manoa courses, the courses are often not on the same five-year approval schedule. In addition, the number of courses that will be affected is small, since there are few if any brand new Foundations courses proposed each year.

Decision: The vote was 6-1-0 in favor of approving the proposal to shorten the approval period of new Foundations courses from five to three years.

3. Requests for **Course-based Focus Designations**
 - a. **HWST 107** was unanimously approved (7-0-0) for a renewed HAP Focus designation.
 - b. **AMST 481**, a senior thesis/capstone course, was approved (6-0-1) for a renewed W Focus designation. One member abstained from voting because she had not reviewed the proposal.

4. Request for **Multiple Focus Designations (H, O, W): AMST 320**

Discussion:

- Oral Communication (O)
 - Some felt that the oral component was “slim.” Others had difficulty seeing how the course meaningfully addressed the O Hallmarks.
 - One member was concerned that much of the O Focus seemed “passive.”
 - When questioned about the O Board’s discussion, the O Board liaison said that the Board had been able to resolve their issues on Laulima and consequently had not discussed the course at their meeting.
- Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Issues (HAP)
 - One member felt that AMST 320 did not have as much Focus on HAP as other HAP-approved courses did.
 - Another member felt that HAP was folded in well, especially given the short period of time in which the course was being offered.
- Writing-Intensive (W)
 - 60% of the grade can be attributed to the writing assignments, with students earning 10% for each of six response essays.
 - The course appears to meet all W Hallmarks.
- Multiple Designations
 - The GEC noted that the course was being taught during the Summer Session, which makes it an intensive six-week course. It was unclear whether the course was offered during the year (Fall, Spring) as well. However, it was pointed out that the length of the term should not be taken into account, since Summer courses are considered to be the same as those offered in the Fall and Spring terms.
 - Some Board members were concerned that a “no” vote signified that the GEC was going against individual Board recommendations. It was explained that the purpose of the GEC review is not to question the Boards’ recommendations, but to look at the overall course to see if all requested Focus areas are being sufficiently and successfully integrated into a cohesive whole.
 - Several members questioned whether all three Focus areas could be sufficiently addressed in the course.
 - If the GEC does not approve the multiple designation request, the instructor has the option of offering the course with two of the three requested designations, since all of the individual Boards have given their approval.

Decision: The GEC unanimously decided not to approve AMST 320 with all three Focus areas (vote: 0-7-0). Dore will draft a memo to the instructor with several options: a) revise and resubmit an enhanced proposal addressing the integration of all three Focus areas, b) remove one of the Focus designations and offer the course with the other two, c) offer the course with two designations over the Summer and resubmit a proposal to have the GEC consider the course for three designations from Fall 2013.

5. Request for **O Focus Exemption** (Ashley)

Discussion:

- The student is requesting an O Focus Exemption for a Spanish language course she took through the Study Abroad Program. One member pointed out that simply learning a second language is not sufficient for the O Focus.
- Another member felt that the information provided “did not add up to the equivalent of an O course.”
- Some felt that the Alaska Airlines experience was a better argument for an O Focus exemption.

- It was suggested that the “Global Experience Preferred Option” might be possible for the student if her Focus exemption request is not approved.
- There was some concern about why the Focus Exemption request was being received three years after the Study Abroad experience was complete, and why the request was being submitted so close to graduation. It was pointed out that advising is only mandatory in the first two years, so that the student may not have received advising after she entered her major. (Advising requirements vary by major.)
- The GEC asked that clearer links to the Focus Exemption information and Hallmarks be posted on the GenEd website so that students can find the information more easily.

Decision: By a vote of 3-4-0, the GEC did not approve Ashley’s request for an O Focus Exemption. Dore will draft a letter to Ashley with the GEC’s decision, giving her the option to resubmit if she can provide a better explanation of how her “extraordinary experience” meets the O Focus Hallmarks.

INFORMATION ITEM

Todd announced that all GenEd Boards are fully staffed for the 2013-14 academic year, with the exception of the Vice-Chair position on the GEC. That position needs to be filled by an incoming faculty senator.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Submitted by Lisa Fujikawa, Recorder