

Minutes of the General Education Committee

Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Hawai'i Hall 208

Attendees: Jim Caron, Richard Chadwick (SEC), Sianha Gualano (ASUH), Joe Jarrett, Dore Minatodani, Scott Rowland, Mamoru Sato, Comfort Sumida, Ryan Yamaguchi (Admissions), Wei Zhang

Support staff: Dawne Bost (GEO), Lisa Fujikawa (GEO), Jo-Anne Nakamoto (GEO Recorder), Todd Sammons (GEO)

Excused: Fred Birkett, Ron Cambra (AVCUE), Garrett Inoue (Admissions)

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Joe Jarrett at 12:01 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Minutes of February 22, 2012 were approved with the following correction:
 - Action Item #2, 6th bullet: replace “placing” with “appropriate”.
2. Proposal for GEC Vote: **AMST 454** (SS12) Multiple Focus Designations (EOW)
 - The GEC voted unanimously to approve this multiple Focus designation proposal (8-0-0).
3. Proposal for GEC Vote: **SOCS 150** (FS)
 - Discussion - GEC was given the Foundations (F) Board's recommendation. The F Board did not recommend the course in its current form for a five-year FS designation. (The vote was 2 for, 5 against, 0 abstentions.) The F Board unanimously recommended another one-year provisional approval. The following F Board concerns were discussed:
 - The F Board questioned the rigor of the SOCS 150 syllabus and concluded that the syllabus doesn't demonstrate that the course meets the FS Hallmarks. Several GEC members compared the course syllabus with other current FS course syllabi and concluded that SOCS 150 meets the FS Hallmarks as well as other current FS courses do.
 - There seems to be no development of symbolic complexity over the course of the semester, perhaps because each instructor teaches his/her own independent unit, which does not build on the information learned in the previous unit(s). GEC stated that this is common if you have several lecturers.
 - There were problems with meeting Hallmark #6. GEC noted that one quantitative section was replaced for another section on symbolic reasoning, probably because instructors were told in the December 2011 denial memo that the course needed to increase symbolic reasoning.
 - F Board believes instructors are telling students what conclusions to draw versus students deriving conclusion from statements given.
 - Additional GEC Discussion points
 - Some GEC members felt that SOCS 150 is a welcomed additional FS course for students; the practical emphasis of the course has possible positive bearings on students' lives. Others felt that while the course is a strong addition to the general curriculum, it doesn't adequately meet the FS Hallmarks.

- Some questioned whether approving this proposal would compound the already-existing problem of interpreting the Hallmarks. Ultimately, it is the students that we are looking out for. How will the decision about SOCS 150 affect them?
- The F Board is making their recommendation after a careful review to see how the course is following the Hallmarks. The Board even went back to the original authors of the Hallmarks to make sure the intent was being met.
- The suggestion was made to give the course a 3-year probationary approval to give instructors an opportunity to make additional changes. They will probably have to tweak the course further to gain full 5-year approval.
- The GEC voted unanimously to approve SOCS 150 for an FS designation for a 3-year probationary period, effective Fall 2012 through Summer 2015. The approval memo will provide detailed information about what will be required for a full five-year approval when the probationary period expires. (A new proposal will need to be submitted in Fall 2014.) Lisa will recheck the status/location of the UHM-2 form required to add the FS designation to SOCS 150. It is still unclear if the addition will be reflected with Fall 2012 courses and in the Catalog.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Update: FS Working Group -- Group to meet on March 16th.
2. Update: Degree Qualifications Profile (“DQP”) Workshops with WASC representative Jill Ferguson.
 - WASC may consider changing its language regarding “college-level quantitative skills” to “quantitative reasoning” or “quantitative literacy”.
 - There are many ways to teach and WASC wants to acknowledge this fact.
 - Manoa has joined the pilot program for assessing the five proficiencies (written and oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy, quantitative skills).
 - Right now WASC is re-evaluating how to assess the five proficiencies.
3. Report: Institutional Learning Outcomes (“ILO”)
 - Group took recommendations from MAC, CAPP, and GEC and revised the document. Next step: route the ILOs to the SEC, then disseminate them broadly to faculty before a vote in the Senate.
 - Mention was made regarding the third section concerning “Value” outcomes, and that it would be difficult to assess achievements occurring predominantly outside the classroom. Departments might want to supply more descriptive/detailed objectives to assist with “value” assessment.
 - Because SLOs are often major-specific, many were not included in the ILOs.
4. DQP Workshop at Ala Moana Hotel, March 2, 2012
 - Several colleges/universities statewide were represented including UH system schools and private O‘ahu-based schools.
 - Peter Ewell and Jill Ferguson presented information about development of the DQP and its current criteria. It was written with a goal of providing consistent measures of both General Education and more specialized studies within the majors. DQP may also provide a more accurate manner of accrediting non-traditional start-up colleges, including schools offering degrees online.
 - UH was volunteered by Linda Johnsrud to be part of a pilot program testing DQP.
 - Literature providing information about DQP is posted on the VCAA website.

- Ewell stated the current DQP is a beta version and should be used as such by pilot participants and others interested in its content. Faculty should decide if the DQP is useful after making efforts to determine ways their courses can be adapted to meet the current criteria. The DQP authors and sponsors will be reviewing and incorporating suggestions offered by users of the beta version when finalizing the DQP components for wider distribution and use.
 - Conference attendees generally agreed it appears to be more challenging to have a continuous set of proficiencies at a larger university than a smaller one.
 - The manner in which the DQP will be used at Manoa was not communicated at the workshop.
 - Manoa faculty have expressed concern that departments will be scored by how well they meet the DQP criteria. The workshop did not address these concerns specifically; however, Ewell and Ferguson both stated DQP will not be imposed on faculty by WASC.
5. Report: GEO/MWP and AO Research Collaboration: Writing Proficiency in the Senior Year
- Bost wrote an IRB for this project since the AO thought the study may qualify as human subject research. The IRB application is still under review.
 - The information gathered from the study may be used for upcoming WASC reviews and future research publications and conferences.
 - The project is a step toward fulfilling the goal to increase GEO projects with the AO.
 - One purpose of the project is to establish if the W Focus Hallmarks are demonstrated in the writing proficiencies of senior level students in the Natural and Social Sciences. The VALUE Written Communication Rubric will be used by volunteer faculty to evaluate the papers.
 - Natural and Social Science faculty will be asked to submit student papers to determine good, average, and poor samples for norming purposes.
 - Potential student contributors will be contacted directly by email, though faculty will be notified that students in their classes are being asked to participate in the study.
 - Faculty readers to evaluate the collected papers are needed; emails will be sent to faculty to recruit volunteers.
 - Students may be asked to submit unmarked copies of their final assignment in the selected W Focus course. Submission of an assignment does not guarantee that it will be used in the study.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Next meeting: March 21, 2012, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Submitted by the GEC Support Staff