

Minutes

General Education Council

February 15, 2021

Members present: Dr. Robin Blankenship, Dr. Christina Conroy, Dr. Laurie Couch, Dr. Wilson Gonzalez-Espada, Dr. Michael Fultz, Dr. Mark Graves, Dr. Shannon Harr, Dr. Karoush Jenab, Mr. Keith Moore, Dr. Robert Royar, Dr. Edna Schack, Dr. Chris Schroeder

Absent (excused due to University weather closure): Dr. Morgan Getchell, Ms. Kerry Murphy, Ms. Lora Pace, Dr. Bo Shi, Dr. Timothy Simpson

The General Education Council met via on February 15, 2021 via webex. The information below is a summary of the discussion at the meeting:

I. Progress on Fall 2020 General Education assessment submissions

Dr. Harr reported that 62% of the general education sections from Fall 2020 have submitted assessment data so far. Large amounts of data from English and the Eagle Scholars program is expected soon, which will raise the percentage of submissions up quite a bit. In addition, Dr. Harr is in contact with other departments that have outstanding data to be submitted. The data that has been submitted thus far looks promising in terms of attainment for the SLOs, but it is too soon to tell if we will meet targets with a large portion of the data still out.

II. Transition to the new General Education program

a. Verification process

Drs. Graves and Couch reminded everyone that for each course in the new general education program an assessment plan must be submitted and verified for appropriateness by the GEC. The plans must be implemented in all sections of the course (beginning in Fall 2021), and require the application of approved rubrics to common assignments in order to determine attainment.

Dr. Graves shared that because of the approved cycle of assessment for the program, the reporting of attainment data for SLOs is staggered across time, potentially allowing for a staggered verification process. If the Council adopted this approach they would request assessment plans this spring only from those courses assessing SLOs this semester or next year. Submission of the remaining plans would be delayed using a “just in time” approach for verification. Dr. Conroy expressed that she initially favored this approach, because it would be easier to determine the appropriateness of a course plans when focused on all of the plans for a given SLO/rubric at once, but asked whether other courses would need to begin monitoring student progress on SLOs before the time when official assessment/reporting occurred. Dr. Royar suggested that rather than stagger the process it would be important to verify all assessment strategies at the beginning of the program so departments would understand what was expected of them as the program began, and Dr. Schack proposed gathering all of the plans at once and dividing them into groups so everything associated with a particular SLO could be considered together.

After a brief discussion, the members of the Council unanimously agreed that the verification process should be done all at once. Dr. Couch then indicated that she would send a request to the college deans immediately asking for departments to submit plan

with a month. Based on this timeline, the Council should expect to discuss the plans by SLO grouping during the next few GEC meetings.

b. First round assessments

Drs. Graves and Harr reported that the assessment cycle for the new general education program calls for SLOs 3 and 5 to be in the continuous improvement planning phase for the 2021-22 academic year, which requires those courses that assess these SLOs to gather attainment data this academic year (i.e., in advance of the official start of the program). The courses involved are COMS 108 (which assesses both SLO 3 and 5), FYS 101 (which assesses SLO 5), and ENG 200 (which assesses SLO 5). The Department of English, Communication, Media and Languages has developed assessment plans for verification by the GEC for ENG 200 and COMS 108, and the FYS Subcommittee is in the process of developing plans. The plan for ENG 200 already was verified by the Council (i.e., as part of the ENG 200 course revision proposal), but the plans for COM 108 and FYS 101 still need to be considered. All three courses will administer assessments during the Spring 2021 semester using their verified plans so they will be ready for discussions about continuous improvement in the Fall.

c. Scheduling of courses

Dr. Couch reported to the Council that general education course scheduling for the Fall 2021 semester will be more complicated than usual. As always, her office provided the college deans with historical enrollment data for each category of general education in order to guide their planning, but because the new general education program is not structured exactly the same way as the old (e.g., courses won't always reside in the same future categories as they did in the current version of the program, the number of courses per category is different, etc.) the data may not be as useful to them this time when planning the schedule of courses. In addition, because we will be running the old general education program simultaneously with the new program for at least one year, and because incoming students may have had different levels of access to dual credit courses during the pandemic than usual, it will be difficult to know what the demand will be in each area. The strategy the deans favor is to offer a compliment of courses similar to what we have offered over the past few years, and then adjust as needed based on reports from Dr. Couch's office after each SOAR session. Post-SOAR reports may suggest the need for additional seats in some areas, and cancellations of sections in other areas based on demand. Enrollment data for 2021-22 will serve as a new baseline for future planning.

III. FYS subcommittee report

A full report of the FYS subcommittee was not available at this meeting due to the university weather closure; however, Dr. Graves provided a summary of the most recent FYS subcommittee meeting at which a workgroup was named to develop the assessment plans for the new SLOs. The workgroup, assisted by Dr. Harr, will rewrite some existing FYS assignments so the rubrics can be applied for the new SLOs, and they also will consider any future changes to the existing lessons that may be needed to foster the SLOs more fully. Plans for the verification process are expected to be submitted soon, and a full report from the FYS subcommittee will be provided at the next GEC meeting.

IV. Old business

Dr. Jenab requested an update on the general education-related changes associated with

associate's degree programs. Dr. Couch reported that all of the associate degree programs had curriculum changes approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee last month to align with the new general education requirements. In addition, since last meeting the members of the GEC reviewed the webpage changes that reflect the associate degree general education requirements, and only minor (e.g., grammatical/punctuation) changes were suggested.

V. New business

n/a

The next meeting of the General Education Council is scheduled for **Monday, March 1**.