Grand Valley State University

*General Education Committee*

Minutes of 10-10-11

**PRESENT:** Kirk Anderson, Deb Bambini, Susan Carson, Jason Crouthamel, Alisha Davis, Chris Dobson, Emily Frigo, Roger Gilles, Penney Nichols-Whitehead Keith Rhodes, Paul Sicilian, Ruth Stevens, David Vessey, Judy Whipps

**ALSO PRESENT:** C. “Griff” Griffin, Director of General Education, Krista McFarland, General Education Office Coordinator

**ABSENT:** Jim Bell, Gabriele Gottlieb, Gary Greer, Paul Jorgensen

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| Agenda Items | Discussion | Action / Decisions |
| **Approval of**  **Oct 3 Minutes** |  | Approved as submitted. |
| **Approval of Agenda** |  | Approved. |
| **Director’s Report** | ***The Chair and the Director met with the Provost and others to discuss the overall revision timeline and the process by which faculty will submit proposals for the upper-level component.***  The Provost confirmed financial support for faculty development.  A handout was distributed for reference with the rationale of how to incentivize the re-envisioning of courses. As soon as proposal is passed (potential in January) by faculty governance, GEC can do an RFP to begin the process of evaluating proposal. It won’t take faculty very long to write the proposals.  At some point GEC will need to factor in how many courses will be considered. There will need to be a strategy for budgeting for how many courses and how many faculty can be accommodated.  The faculty development will start with the submission of a short, online component followed by a 3-hour workshop in May. There are two purposes of workshop: 1) here are goals and what we mean by them and 2) now start to design your course backwards, then by August 1 submit your new course to the online curriculum system. After all of this is complete, faculty will receive $1,000. This incentive will be available to faculty as long as there is money available money. There will be enough for 30 people, if there are more than 30 people we will need to reevaluate and continue to find ways to incentivize.  The Chair added that this will also help the proposal as both incentive and support from Provost. It also sends the signal that there is work to do.  A handout of the Timeline was distributed for review.  A handout of the proposed transition plan was distributed for review.  There are things the university records system both can and cannot do for the Themes and Issues to appear in MyPath. Most likely students will click on a list in MyPath that will take them to the full list of courses they can choose from.  The Director added that because we are saying that the Issues courses are extraordinary courses and are about skills, no courses at other institutions will fulfill this requirement. If a student transfers to GVSU, they will get credit for the transfer courses, but they will not get GE credit for Issues; Issues courses can only be taken at GVSU. They can’t retake the same course at GVSU, because they already got credit for the course.  The year 2014 will be the magical year that student can take any two Theme courses, any two Issues courses, or one of each.  A committee member asked if the Issues courses should have new numbers. The Director responded that we don’t want to renumber the courses because the departments might have other reasons for their numbering.    A committee member asked if it is really going to take until 2014 to convert. The Director responded that the summer of 2012 will be batch 1 of the first training. By October 1 unit heads need to know in order to schedule for 2013-14. Not everyone will be trained and ready to go by then. At this point it could be squeezed in, but she was not confident that it could come to scale by then. It will be hard to start at 2014 and then soft start at 2013.  A committee member asked if there will be issues if a student chooses a different catalog year because they want to do a different year for GE, but it has implications for the major’s requirements. The Director responded that yes this could be affected and there can be substitutions if needed. The window on Themes courses in 6-7 years out. The Themes courses will dwindle each year and keep declining.  A committee member asked if the issue of section limit size has been resolved. For instance, there are some departments that have Themes courses with 65-70 students. The Director responded that if the magical group size is 4-6 than departments will need to think about what they can do and make a compelling case. The vast majority of Theme courses across departments are 35-40 capacity. Departments will need to address these specific issues in their proposals. The committee member thought the GEC should address this in order to help our colleagues out. At the unit administrative level, there are responses that departments won’t be able to add a section because it is not in the budget. How is the unit head budget going to be adjusted to address that? The Director responded that GEC will be mindful of this and continue to listen to unit heads. There is no easy answer to this because you are also considering fulltime faculty versus adjunct faculty.  The Chair added that departments can still start with offering the same number of sections that they offered in Themes; change the number of students and not the number of sections offered. The Director added that with Themes there are well over 90% of students taking courses not in their major. Even when Themes go away there will still be a demand for courses. A committee member responded that there are some Theme courses that are offered as majors courses, so that could cause some staffing issues.  The Chair thought that the topic might be good for GEC to digest and come back to in later October. The Director added that if committee members come up with any other iteration to not delay and send to her right away so that she can keep building out the timeline and confirming the process with the Records department. | The Provost confirmed financial support for faculty development. |
| **Defining the Upper-level Component** | ***We will continue our discussion of the half-dozen or so “Issues” categories and work toward a consensus on the issues we wish to include in our draft proposal for discussion at the October 27 and 27 forums.***  The Chair distributed a handout of the GE Draft Proposal: Upper-Level Component (dated October 5). The document was used during the meeting with the Provost as a way to present on the upper-level component. The items in blue are things that still needed to be finalized before distribution to faculty.  At the last GEC meeting we decided to start with the observation of the possible list of issues categories from the perspective of the student. The Provost and the Dean seemed underwhelmed by the list and were perhaps expecting “jazzier” issues. On one level the power of the Issues will come from the course titles themselves and these will be more organizing guides.  In response, the Chair suggested that perhaps we have to give a nod to the fact that these Issues category titles will be what we use to draw people in to taking the course. Or perhaps we need to look at more of a description for each Issues category. The Director added that we need to envision the titles as what most people on the street would say the issues of the world are.  The committee continued to discuss the proposed list of Issues titles. There was support voiced for dropping Innovation, for adding categories for Identity and Culture, Women, Religion and Values, Intersectionality, and Health and Justice. It was decided that rather than getting tied up in the titles that the committee should start with a list of descriptions.  A committee member asked why we were married to having only one-word issues. The Chair agreed and the committee decided that the titles did not need to be one-word only.  A committee member noted that no matter what we pick there will be suggestions and complaints after the proposal is distributed.  The Chair suggested that for the purpose of the current proposal it will be helpful to have both a title and descriptors. There can be as many as 8-10 titles included in the proposal. A committee member strongly suggested only including 6 titles in the proposal. People process 7 +/- 2 items at a time, so it will be best to leave as low as we can. We will have more after we get feedback on the proposal.  The committee discussed titles and descriptors and agreed on the following list:   * **Globalization:** capitalism, economic, justice, migration, immigration, communication, borders, education * **Sustainability** – environment, population, natural resources, economic development, social justice, energy * **Health –** equity, disparity, health systems, finance, morality/ethics, access, quality, safety, happiness, human development, genetics * **Identity** – gender, sexuality, religion, culture, race, community, class, difference, family, education * **Human Rights** - democracy/ political systems, power, war and peace, violence, terrorism, wealth and poverty, religion, gender, women, children, disabilities, labor, aging, incarceration, torture * **Information, Innovation, and Technology -** media, privacy, access, transparency, intellectual property, ethics, economics, creativity, education, politics   There was committee consensus to use these categories in the proposal, knowing that there will additional suggestion and discussion after feedback from the proposal.  ***We will also discuss draft language for Knowledge Goal #3 and the core elements of the proposal to revise the upper-level component.***  The Chair distributed a handout to discuss proposing a new knowledge goal. This goal implies that students will be ready at the GE upper-level to study the goal explicitly. The Chair asked for suggestion to paragraph #3 in the handout. A committee member responded that it is consistent with mission statement and we how we define.  A committee member asked if it is possible that a class could be in a Cultures category and in a Theme. The Director responded that she didn’t see any reason to object to this, but the caveat is that faculty will have to teach and assess all goals for both categories. The current GE language encourages courses to double-dip, so we would go forward with this unless GEC wants to change it. The courses would need to be upper-level.  The Chair asked for feedback on the two-page document that will be distributed campus-wide. This will be what most people read, so what should we make sure to include? The committee agreed that:   * It should be kept to 2 pages, * The $1,000 incentive should be included * Teach and assess should be mentioned * Pull out language from the Feb 1 document on why we are replacing Themes * Direct folks to the website. * Bullet point as much as can – people will catch it more. * The document should also be sent out to all campus via hardcopy, on blue or green paper, as soon as possible. * With the Forums on October 26 and 27, the Chair will ask the ECS Chair to email to all faculty.   A committee member asked how the training works as far as proposing a course. The Director responded that the proposal will be for a specific course. The training is a general training how to teach and assess Issues courses, but faculty won’t receive the incentive money unless they submit a course. A committee member suggested calling it support, rather than training in the documents. The Chair would also like to look into the option of allowing the money to be used for the health savings account. Another committee member also suggested considering the option of splitting the money if there is a team of two people working together. The Director responded that we can definitely look into this and continue to flush out when we get to the RFP stage. | There was committee consensus to use the agreed upon list of categories in the proposal. (see list in body of Minutes)  The document on the GE upper-level component will be sent out to all campus via hardcopy. The  Chair will ask the ECS Chair to email to all faculty |
| **Curriculum Proposal** | ***Discuss Log #7120, a course-change proposal for CTH 373, submitted by Roger Ellis of the School of Communications.***  The proposal is to add a course, CTH 373, to the World Perspectives category. The course is currently a Theme course.  A committee member asked why the goals start with goal #2 in the GE documents. The Chair confirmed that the goals listed are the correct content goals; they were just numbered incorrectly.  A committee member commented that the sample syllabus seems to be more focused on global theatre than the syllabus of record does. The sample syllabus integrates global theatre. He would like to see syllabus of record saying a little more throughout the course. The Chair will ask for an amendment to the syllabus of record to request that they demonstrate how the general theme of globalism is integrated and not just covered in the end as with text book.  Motion to approve; seconded. Motion passed. The Chair will ask for an amendment to the syllabus of record and once received he will review and send forward. | Motion to approve; seconded. Motion passed. The Chair will ask for an amendment to the syllabus of record and once received he will review and send forward. |
| **Adjournment** | The Chair received information from both the information literacy and quantitative literacy groups and these will be added to the agenda for discussion at next week’s meeting. | Meeting adjourned at 4:12 pm |