Grand Valley State University

*General Education Subcommittee*

Minutes of 4/12/10

**PRESENT:** Deborah Bambini; James Bell; Susan Carson; Phyllis Curtiss; Roger Gilles; Lauren Kaercher; Sheldon Kopperl; Kari Kensinger; Hugh McGuire; Penney Nichols-Whitehead; Keith Rhodes; Paul Sicilian; David Vessey; Kathryn Waggoner; Judy Whipps

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

**ABSENT:** Dana Munk; Shelley Schuurman

**GUESTS:** Maria Cimitile

| Agenda Items | Discussion | Action / Decisions |
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| **Approval of April 5 Minutes** | Approval of the Minutes for April 5 was tabled for review until the next meeting. |  |
| **Approval of Agenda** | Motion to approve; seconded. | Approved. |
| **LEAP GOALS/ GE Structural Revisions** | *We will try to reach consensus about the rough contours of the upper-level GE component we’d like to see. Let’s begin with two basic questions: should we require LIB 100? And should we require two courses or three?*  The Chair listed the following items on the board for discussion. The goal was to see where everyone’s support of these issues lies, with the intention of going back to discuss the models after.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Global Issues Courses* | *GE 4XX capstone* | | *LIB 100* | *No LIB 100* | | *2 courses* | *3 courses* |   ***LIB 100 discussion:***  Our guest from the Provost office shared some data that was received from Institutional Analysis. We would need approximately 180 sections of LIB 100 per year if we require it as part of our upper-level component. Approximately 35% of undergrads are transfer students, of which about 500 students satisfy the MACRO and therefore wouldn’t need LIB 100. Note: the other institutions tell us who satisfies the MACRO; GVSU does not make this decision. We would need 5200 seats per year. If you divide that by 28 students per section it equals about 180 sections. There are currently 50-60 sections for LIB 100, so we would be looking at an additional 120-30 sections. This quantity does not account for the students that would satisfy the MACRO.  A committee member stated that they were in agreement with LIB 100 or a LIB X00. Their big concern is with getting the GE4XX faculty to teach and then finding additional faculty to train to teach the LIB 100 course also. Aside from the monetary resources, the concern is more with the amount of time and commitment we would be asking for.  A committee member asked if they thought enrollment would change dramatically if we added LIB 100. A committee member responded that she thought it would work best if it was in conjunction with a decrease in the number of Theme classes required. She wouldn’t want the LIB 100 to be taught by just LIB faculty; it should be campus wide. The current course uses a reader that is organized around the LEAP goals.  A committee member said that if we have LIB 100 requirement and change the other items with the upper-level component, then he would be in support of LIB 100.  The Chair asked if it would be best to call it GE100? A committee member said she had no strong feelings either way.  A committee member thinks it will be a huge problem to find faculty to cover both LIB 100 and GE 4XX courses. Faculty like Themes because they get to teach in their discipline, but get to share their experience with students in other disciplines. She thinks we need to think about the number of faculty that we would need to get buy-in from. In response, a committee member said that if one of our concerns is to find willing faculty for LIB 100 or GE 4XX, than perhaps a straw poll could be done of the GES committee to see who would be interested to give up a course to teach a non-disciplinary section. Approximately 50% of the committee said they would be interested, although it was noted that the group is slightly biased so the overall campus percentage would probably be less.  A committee member responded that while faculty is one way to look at the situation, we need to look at the student needs. Are we empowering them with different skills? This should be the greater question.  **Discussion of capstone versus Global Issues courses:**  The Chair asked why a committee member was in support of capstone instead of GI courses. She responded that it was more of a liberal education perspective. We would be asking faculty to step out of their discipline and we would be preparing classes to be more integrated. A committee member added that we would be asking faculty to step out of their comfort zone. It might be a good idea to take courses out of the discipline and to facilitate going “beyond”.  A committee member said that we are a niche university; we believe in liberal education across the curriculum. However, we tend to see liberal ed coming through the GE program and not through the majors. Therefore he would be in support of three courses. Our guest also commented that we need to be careful in assuming that majors aren’t doing more than they are. The Chair added that we did see this with the LEAP inventory. We can say it is happening in both, but would like to see both majors and GE working towards it.  A committee member said that we can’t really make a decision about the capstone versus GI courses discussion because it is abstract. We have to look at the desired outcomes first and then decided what we need to do to get there.  A committee member commented on the practicality of courses that double-dip. If we have three courses, but then take out double-dipping there will be an outcry; two courses without double-dipping may work.  Our guest responded to a comment about time to graduation. She reminded everyone that this request came from Student Senate and Faculty Governance and not Administration. Please keep this in mind when you are in conversation with colleagues.  **Discussion of 2 courses versus 3 courses:**  A committee member thought that 2 courses would simplify things; fewer course equals fewer hassles. He didn’t think that the extra or multi-disciplinary discussion is going to come from the students if we have a capstone.  A committee member responded that she thought the multi-disciplinary from students was not only doable, but thinks there will be more obliged to apply them. She thought that one course was not enough. Students are bad at synthesis and need more than one course.  The Director shared some data from F09 and W10. There were 350 sections of Themes courses offered and only 20 of them had less than 20 students in a section.  A committee member said that if we were really looking at efficiency and integration of LEAP goals than we should just require majors to work LEAP goals into their majors discipline. The Chair responded that this wouldn’t be inter-disciplinary.  A committee member agrees with an earlier statement that one course isn’t going to get students where they need to be.  A committee member liked the GI courses. The capstone is not giving them a choice. If you have two upper-level choices then they can pick from the GI topics. A committee member agreed and said that if students are not interested in the course they aren’t going to apply the knowledge.  The Chair asked what the committee needs to do to arrive at a proposal. If we come up with a single model it is probably not possible to get done this semester. The Director responded that one option might be for a subset of the GES committee to work on over the summer. They could read more deeply into the documents provided, weigh out the pros and cons and report back to GES in the Fall. They could consider more closely what these courses, and possible syllabi, might look like.  A committee member also noted that the committee may have preferences, but there are also things they could agree on with these models.  A committee member was in agreement with the Director. If we could have a subcommittee look at what other universities are doing, best practices and pedagogy than we have something to build on.  A suggested task list for the group:   1. Doing LEAP goals – better GES 4XX or GI? 2. What would GE100 look like? 3. What should Global Issues be?   Five committee members responded that they would be interested in serving on the subcommittee: Hugh, David, Judy, Penney, Roger. Deb responded as a possible. The Director added that FTLC would be a natural to help facilitate.  The Chair would like us to come back to the idea of building consensus and move toward models that we can support publically and live with.  **Discussion of the other aspects of the GE program that we wish to discuss as part of our overall proposal for revision of the program: SWS, WRT 305, MTH 110, etc:**  The Chair gave an update on the status of SWS, MTH 110, and WRT 305. The Chair has not talked to Kay Losey, but thinks SWS would be open to the possibility of satisfying SWS within GE. A committee member commented that if one SWS is in a major and one is in GE that would make it even easier: presumably, students would need just one SWS course within GE.  The MTH 110 discussion is not going to happen this semester. It will be revisited in the Fall.  The Writing department is committed to having the junior-level writing proficiency included in GE and getting rid of the separate testing component for WRT 305. |  |
| **Chair’s Report** | *Plan for the April 19 year-end report and April 23 report to UAS.*  The Chair will write a report on what the GES committee has done this semester. He will send the draft out by Thursday or Friday to the committee for review before submitting to UAS. | The Chair will send a draft report to the committee for review. |
| **New Business** | The Director shared an email with the committee that she received about the idea of considering Health and Wellness as a GE requirement and/or part of the GE program.  The Chair noted that this was not submitted as a proposal for GE consideration at this point. Our guest added that while it is a great idea to consider, right now might not be the best time as our focus needs to be on the upper-level component.  The Director will attend an upcoming informational meeting and report back to the group.  The Chair will invite the Provost to the next meeting. We will also invite next year’s committee member and elect next year’s Chairperson. | The Director will attend an upcoming informational meeting and report back to the group.  The Chair will invite the Provost to the next meeting. |
| **Adjournment** | Motion to adjourn; seconded. | Adjourned at 4:25pm |