

MEMORANDUM

TO: Felix Ngassa, Chair of the Executive Committee of the University Academic Senate
CC: C. Griff Griffin, Director, General Education Program
FROM: General Education Committee—Gabriele Gottlieb, Chair
DATE: April 10, 2019
SUBJECT: General Education Committee End-of-Year Report

The General Education Committee (GEC) met 23 times this semester on Mondays from 2:30-4:30 p.m., and can report progress in the following areas.

Curriculum: We received 35 course proposals and at this point have reviewed all proposals at least once. We approved 25 courses so far with 7 more courses not having returned after an amendment request. We rejected 3 courses but also advised the faculty of two of those courses to resubmit their course under a different GE category.

Assessment: During the fall semester, we reviewed 32 Course Assessment Reports (CARs) and, during the winter semester, we reviewed 55 CARs. For this academic year, GEC has suspended the assessment of Skills Student Learning Outcomes, pending the revisions of rubrics for each Skills SLO (see below for details). CARs are reviewed by groups of committee members but any questions or concerns are raised before the committee as a whole. We also respond to each CAR individually with feedback to the faculty who assessed the course. The dedication to high quality instruction by faculty was evident in the authors' thoughtful and in-depth reflections throughout the CAR reports.

Changes to the Assessment Process:

While reviewing CARs, we also continuously strive to improve the assessment process. For example, we revised the CAR questions 11-13 to more accurately reflect what the GE Committee would like faculty to consider when addressing their course's assessment data. Additionally, we added a representation of the assessment data in tables so that faculty will be able to easily see whether and what percentage of students reach the target level. We believe that in the future this will allow faculty to reflect on their assessment data more in depth and will help them adjust their teaching and improve student learning of the GE Knowledge and Skills Student Learning Outcomes.

Furthermore, the GEC developed a rubric rather than writing a letter to provide feedback to faculty and departments about GE assessment, providing insight into what portions of their response we valued most highly and what additional information or improvements we would like to see in the future. In addition, this change has made the evaluation of CAR reports easier for committee members and evaluations more consistent.

The GEC also changed the order of the CAR reports based on faculty suggestions to make the writing of the report easier, combining questions about teaching and assessment for each SLO rather than separating the CAR into a teaching section and a separate assessment section.

Closing the Loop: In an effort to follow up on the results from the Assessment cycle 2013-2016, we approved the 2013-2016 Report on Assessment, the Report Detailing Changes for the Years 2016-2019, which describes student learning of the Knowledge and Skills SLOs as well as changes GEC made to the assessment process, and a four-page report summarizing student learning during the assessment period 2013-2016, which was then distributed to all faculty members across campus.

We continued to discuss the assessment outcomes from that cycle in the Winter semester, considering various ways to address concerns such as levels of student learning based on demographics, and unusually high or low results in SLOs such as Collaboration and Oral Communication, which also led to a revision of all SLO rubrics (see below).

Accreditation: Several committee members as well as the chair and the GE director took part in various meetings during the HCL Accreditation process, discussing anything from the structure of the program to the assessment conducted by the GE Program.

UAS charges 2018-2019

1. Rubric revision
 - a. Revise the nine rubrics for the various general education skills, consulting with the appropriate stakeholders.
 - b. Convey revisions to faculty who teach general education courses and provide training as needed for their implementation.

As of now, the GEC has completed the revision of all rubrics for the nine Skills SLOs. Each rubric was discussed several times in meetings and edited both in meetings and outside meetings. For some rubrics we decided on major changes such as removing or adding an objective while others remained fairly similar to our existing rubrics. Faculty who are teaching in the GE Program are currently being informed of the changes and the GEC will provide assistance to faculty if needed in the upcoming semesters beginning with Fall 2019.

As the result of this charge, GEC suspended the assessment of Skill SLOs throughout this academic year but continued assessing Knowledge SLOs. Assessment of all SLOs will resume in Fall 2019.

2. Develop materials for faculty to assess the Gen Ed Skills and Knowledge Student Learning Outcomes.

As GEC just concluded the revision of the rubrics, we have not yet begun to develop materials to assist faculty. The plan is that the GE director and GEC chair will develop preliminary materials over the summer and the GEC will discuss, revise and approve those early in the Fall semester.

The GE director, however, continued to hold regular assessment workshops to assist faculty with the assessment of their courses.

3. Consult with UAC to agree on a format for the annual report on student performance of the general education knowledge and skills outcomes to faculty governance specified in responsibilities of GEC.

The revision of Skills rubrics took priority over all other activities because we needed to finish those before the end of the Winter semester. We have communicated with UAC but have not formalized an agreement but we are hoping the format of the 2016-19 report (described above) will meet their needs.

4. In an effort to engage more faculty in our shared governance system, prepare a mid-year progress report at the end of the Fall semester to be posted on the GEC website and disseminated to ECS/UAS and College Deans (a full report is expected as usual at the end of the year).

The mid-year report was posted on the GE website. We will do the same with this report.

Conclusion: As the chair of this committee, I would like to commend the GEC members for their extensive work outside of committee meetings done throughout this academic year, especially when it comes to the revision of the Skills rubrics.

The GEC would like to thank the GE Program Director C. "Griff" Griffin, the GE Office Coordinator Jen Cathey, Graduate Assistant Adam Heiss, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Ellen Schendel, UAS Vice Chair Shawn Bultsema, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Chris Plouff, the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, the University Assessment Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, the College Curriculum Committees, and the University Academic Senate for supporting us in our efforts to ensure the implementation and quality of the General Education Program.

Attendance: The GEC met 23 times. The number after the member's name represents how many meetings he/she attended during the academic year.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences: Abdullah Alrebh (15; joined later in semester); Brian Bowdle (9); Yasmin Gopal (20); Gabriele Gottlieb (23; chair); David Laughlin (19); Keith Oliver (22); Peter Riemersma (21); Amy Stolley (18); Patrick Thorpe (18); Seidman College of Business: Dori Danko (19); College of Community & Public Service: Mark Gleason (10); College of Education: Linda Pickett (17); Padnos College of Engineering & Computing: Shirley Fleischmann (21); College of Health Professions: Dawn DeVries (11); Kirkhof College of Nursing: Kim Lohr (20); Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies: Kimberly McKee (8, fall semester only); University Libraries: Lindy Scripps-Hoekstra (17); Student Senate: Haley Sawatzki (6; joined committee later in the semester; different representatives of the Student Senate were present in two more meetings).

Gabriele Gottlieb – GEC Chair, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Abdullah Alrebh – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Brian Bowdle – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Yasmin Gopal – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Dori Danko – Seidman College of Business

Dawn DeVries – College of Health Professions

Shirley Fleischmann – Padnos College of Engineering

Mark Gleason – College of Community and Public Service

David Laughlin – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Kim Lohr – Kirkhof College of Nursing

Kimberly McKee – Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies (fall)

Keith Oliver – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Linda Pickett – College of Education

Peter Riemersma – College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Haley Sawatzki – Student Senate (fall)

Lindy Scripps-Hoekstra – University Libraries

Amy Stolley – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Patrick Thorpe – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Ex Officio Member: C. Griff Griffin, Director, General Education; Ellen Schendel, Provost's Office