Grand Valley State University

***General Education Committee Meeting***

3015 James H. Zumberge Hall

Minutes of 8/25/2014

**PRESENT**: Kirk Anderson, Chair; Karen Burritt; Emily Frigo; Gabriele Gottlieb; Melba Hoffer; Sarah King; Brian Kipp; Haiying Kong; Jose Lara; Paola Leon; Jagadeesh Nandigam; Linda Pickett; Martina Reinhold; David Vessey

**ALSO PRESENT:** C. “Griff” Griffin, Director, General Education; Jeanne Whitsel, General Education Office Coordinator

**NOT PRESENT:** Paul Sicilian

| Agenda Items | Discussion | Member |
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| **Approval of Agenda** |  | Approved per consensus |
| **Approval of 4/14/2014 minutes** |  | Approved per consensus |
| **Introductions and discussion of Faculty Council election** | Members introduced themselves.  A Faculty Council election will be held to fill two open seats on the GE Committee. Members were encouraged to recruit fellow faculty to seek election. |  |
| **UAS Charge to GEC for 2014-15** | UAS charge to GEC for 2014-2015 (draft charges are below; official charges are forthcoming)   * **Suggest additional Professional Development workshops that FTLC or others might host for teaching General Education Skills.**   GEC will let FTLC know what we want them to teach, and they will set up workshops for faculty. Sessions can be tailored to particular goals being taught that semester or year. We have two Issues course “brown bag lunches” scheduled in September. GE has sent invitations to faculty teaching Issues this fall. At a member’s suggestion, we will also invite those who taught Issues last Winter or will teach in Winter 2015 to come and share their experiences and ideas. FTLC extends invitations to all faculty because others teach those goals too, though the GE rubric will be used.   * **Continue to monitor the General Education assessment process, and make adjustments to CAPs and CARs as needed to streamline the assessment process.**   It was suggested that Course Assessment Plans (CAPs) be streamlined. Options included supplying a dropdown box for the “how will you assess/measure” response, including an “other” option, or dropping the question altogether since our concern in the CAP is how the course will be taught rather than how it will be assessed. We can consider how to streamline CARs when those come up later in the year.   * **Continue to support the development of additional Issuescourses.**   Instructors with low-enrollment courses are encouraged to convert the courses to Issues to boost enrollment. More Issues courses will be needed in upcoming years, because beginning this year, all new students will have to take two Issues courses. The director is also working to have instructors convert Themes courses to Issues. GEC members are asked to encourage colleagues in their departments (and others) to create Issues courses as well. We have model Issues courses on line as examples to assist faculty in designing their own courses.   * **In light of the IZN Task Force recommendations, conduct a comprehensive review of the “World Perspectives” portion of the General Education requirements.**   During the year, we will consider:   * The definition of World Perspectives (WP) and our current goals. * Is “World Perspectives” the most up-to-date, relevant, accurate term to use? * Is what we are teaching the freshest approach to preparing our students to function in today’s world? * There may be a concern with courses that double dip. We have to hold all WP courses that double dip to the same standards as those that don’t, to ensure they perform at same level. Are the courses being taught consciously as WP? Does the WP emphasis fall behind the other category? * Suggestions: Rewrite our objectives to match the Task Force’s language, and guarantee them that students are getting level 4 instruction in WP courses. We will track this via the assessment process. * **Continue the dialogue with the Honors College described in the EOY report.**   The chair will seek clarification on this – what do they want us to do here?   * **Investigate ways to streamline the Gen Ed step in the curricular review process.**   This is covered above in the second bullet point for UAS charges to GEC.   * **Examine the new Michigan Transfer Agreement to determine what adaptations might be prudent for its implementation at Grand Valley, and advise Administration regarding recommended local adaptations and/or consequent adjustments to the General Education program at Grand Valley**.   The MACRAO completes a student’s SWS and Foundations requirements. Cultures credit is only given if specifically designated in the course title. Issues courses are not included; these courses are not about content, the skills being taught are what count. However, a course can transfer in for GVSU credit even though it won’t qualify for Issues. No adjustments to the GE program are anticipated; we will make sure Administration is aware of the above facts as they relate to the MTA replacing the MACRAO. |  |
| **Curriculum Items for consideration** | Log 8248: Course change – GPY/ENS 410, Landscape Analysis   * Returning Issues proposal – GEC requested amendments 1/15/2014.   (The prior review group was Kirk, Roger, Melba, Brian and Martina)  The requested amendments were returned and included much of our language.  Concerns: Collaboration objective # 2 talks about student contributions to the group but does not specifically say how the instructor will teach the goal or how they will facilitate bringing in those contributions. How are students trained in reviewing each others’ work or providing peer reviews? Are feedback and peer reviews forms of collaboration? Is there enough information under Collaboration as a whole to pass? The proposal isn’t clearly matching up with the SOR – is better alignment needed?  We want specific examples of what an instructor will do to actively teach the material, though they don’t need to list *everything* they will do. If more than one instructor is teaching the course, the examples can be less specific. Instructors who follow model proposals must make sure the model is modified to match their own course.  Members wondered whether the instructor’s approach lends itself to indirect instruction. Is the intention to create a particular environment and draw the learning out of the students? The chair will ask the proposer and see if that’s the case. He will seek clarification on what the instructor is doing to facilitate learning. Also, he will attempt to determine whether we are clear about what we are expecting. We need to be specific enough to obtain what we need while also leaving the instructor some leeway.  The Problem Solving objectives are good. The chair can point out that that part is well done, and we would like to see this across the other goals.  The chair will request further amendments, then immediately contact the instructor via email. A phone call or in-person meeting will be set up. The chair will speak with the instructor about the further amendments in an effort to increase the chances of a successful proposal.  Log 8465: New course – LIB/HST 319, Human Traffic & Trafficking   * Returning Issues proposal – GEC requested amendments 4/6/2014.   (This was reviewed by all of GEC via email circa 3/27/2014 or so)  A member who is also an editor of the proposal expressed an enrollment concern: The cap on Issues courses is 40, but upper level History course enrollment is capped at 30. The director clarified that the Issues cap of 40 means that there can be fewer than 40 students but not more, so the History cap is fine.  The course name was changed in response to the concern that it was confusing. In the teaching measure section, proposers made a clear effort to use instructor language and did a good job of addressing GEC concerns. The committee is satisfied with the amendments and voted to approve.  Committee members involved in proposals recuse themselves from voting, so the editing member abstained.  We will make sure the course has been entered this winter with the correct attribute.  The director asked that if the committee is particularly impressed with a submission, they let her know and it will be used as a model Issues proposal. | K. Burritt moved to request amendment and have chair talk with instructor. G. Gottlieb second. Motion carried 14-0.  M. Hoffer moved to approve, D. Vessey second. Motion carried 13-0 with one abstention. |
| **Chair’s Report** | The chair invited members to contact him via phone or email with any questions or suggestions. |  |
| **Director’s Report** | The director gave members an overview of the new GE website, and asked for suggestions or additions they would like to see.  She also mentioned potential resources for instructors creating Issues courses:   * John Berry, Director of the Design Thinking Initiative, may have suggestions to help with course design. * Ruth Stegeman, Director for Community Engagement, can help instructors find community partners if they wish to involve them in their Issues courses.   We’re creating an assessment report using Fall and Winter data, and will use this to present what we know about student learning. We will soon begin receiving CARs for review, and can decide whether we like the format being used or if there might be a way to streamline it.  A member asked if students were involved in the assessment process. Director will ask if instructors will consider asking students two or three questions on Blackboard regarding what helped them to learn the goals being taught, and how well they felt they had learned them. These questions would be separate from teaching evaluations, and would be presented 1-2 weeks before evaluations. This would become a piece of the assessment process. |  |
| **Adjournment** |  | 4:25 pm |