**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Figen Mekik, Chair, ECS/UAS

**CC:** Maria Cimitile, Academic Program & Curriculum Development Officer

C. Griff Griffin, Director, General Education Program

**FROM:** General Education Committee—Keith Rhodes, Interim Chair

**DATE:**  April 15, 2013

**SUBJECT:** GECAnnual Report

The General Education Committee met 22 times this year (Mondays 2:30-4:30 p.m.) and can report progress in these areas:

**GE Program Implementation:** Our three main projects for the year were generating enough of our new upper-level general education “Issues” courses to enable the transition from the Themes to Issues requirement, managing that transition, and arranging the General Education skills that our existing Foundations and Cultures classes would elect to teach and assess. Across this entire effort, we have also sought to feature our new emphasis on both teaching and assessing General Education skills in focused and deliberate ways. Already we have 54 new Issues courses listed and available, with more making their way through the final stages of approval. About 190 Foundations and Cultures courses have selected their two General Education skills goals, with each skill being covered by at least 25 courses. Our transition plan appears to be working smoothly, and the transition should raise no barriers to graduation even while preserving our continuing interest in upper-level integrative learning.

**Curricular Proposals:** We considered 47 course changes and 18 new courses, mainly related to the effort to develop new Issues courses. We were helped greatly in this effort by the “fast track” approval method for Issues courses, supported by grants from the Provost’s office, summer faculty development provided by Pew FTLC, and the good will of other committees and offices involved in curricular processes. We will have a smaller round of such proposals next year. While we sent a large number of those proposals back for amendment, we supported the amendment with comments based on review and even personal attention, so that by this point nearly all proposals have passed our approval. Mainly, we sought improved Course Assessment Plans (CAPs) that will greatly assist more effective assessment of these courses.

**Assessment:** We designed a more substantial, reliable, and valid assessment plan that works with our new general education goals. We have started implementing that plan, with assessments to begin on a three-year cycle starting in 2013-14. We designed rubrics for all nine skills goals. We reviewed about 190 CAPs for existing Foundations and Cultures classes, as well as the CAPs that were submitted as a built-in part of the Issues course proposals. We have prepared brief comments for improvement for the CAPs that seemed in need of them for the Foundations and Cultures classes.

It was a busy and productive year. We wish to thank Sarah Kozminski, GE Office Coordinator, C. “Griff” Griffin, Director of GE, and Maria Cimitile, our ex-officio designee from the provost’s office, for their efforts throughout the year to facilitate and support the work of the committee. And we also wish to thank past ECS chair Kris Mullendore, current ECS chair Figen Mekik, UCC Chair Robert Adams, and Christine Rener, Pew FTLC Director, for their help as we all navigated the complicated process of proposing and implementing major revisions in the General Education Program. Thank you.