General Education Committee Meeting  
Date: Thursday April 16, 2015  
Location: 1st floor Conference room, Silcox rm. 105  
Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Deb Bidwell, Charlie Calvert, Lynne Ford, Shawn Morrison, James Williams, Chris Warnick

Agenda

1. Approval of minutes

2. Request for 2016 General Education Certification  
The committee approved JWST 220 for General Education Humanities credit starting Fall 2016.

3. Foreign Language Alternative Proposal  
Members of the FLA subcommittee shared the latest draft of the Foreign Language Alternative proposal and discussed challenges the proposal doesn’t yet address. Specifically, the subcommittee hasn’t yet determined how to involve study abroad, nor have they determined how to handle situations where students enroll in FLA after completing 101 and/or 102 foreign language courses.

After discussing different options for how to address both issues, members of the committee recommended that the program be revised from 12 hours to 9 hours, with the second course in category III being deleted. All students, regardless of whether they have completed 101 and/or 102, would be required to complete all 9 hours. Lynne suggested that the proposal include a provision for creating an FLA Coordinator position, similar to that of the General Education Coordinator. The FLA Coordinator would advise all students in the program and would earn a stipend and one course reassignment per year. Lynne suggested asking Chairs and Deans for input on how to include study abroad courses in the program, with one option being that departments create specific courses for this need. Karen stated she would email Chairs and Deans for a possible meeting in May.

Finally, the committee discussed the Registrar’s concerns about prerequisites and decided to eliminate references to prerequisites.

General Education Committee Meeting  
Date: Thursday March 12, 2015  
Location: 1st floor Conference room, Silcox rm. 105  
Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Charlie Calvert, Giaconda Quesada, Kevin Keenan, Shawn Morrison, Chris Warnick, James Williams

Agenda

1. Approval of minutes  
The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the February 12th meeting.
2. Requests for 2016 General Education Certification (JWST 200, URST 313 and 361)
The committee discussed the URST proposals with Kevin Keenan, who informed the committee that the courses have been approved by the Faculty Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate. For URST 313, Shawn suggested to add language to the syllabus indicating that the signature assignment would come from a student's last journal entry. She also suggested to delete the statement that the entry would count as 2% of a student's overall course grade. For URST 361, Shawn suggested to delete from the syllabus the phrase “and it will count toward 5% of your overall exam grade.” The committee voted unanimously voted to approve both proposals.

A representative from Jewish Studies wasn’t able to attend the meeting to discuss the proposal to add JWST 220: History of Israel to the list of humanities courses. However, members of the committee noted that the signature assignment wasn’t included with the proposal. The syllabus indicates that the signature assignment would be a short paper, but the assignment prompt wasn’t included. Committee members also had questions about the length of the paper prompted by signature assignment. The syllabus suggests that short papers are 4 pages long, and several committee members brought up a concern that members of the Humanities ARG had about limiting the length of the student artifacts. Karen informed the committee that she would email Larry Krasnoff with the committee’s questions and concerns.

3. Student Focus Groups
The committee crafted questions that could be added to the survey given to FYE students in their synthesis seminars. The committee came up with two questions: 1) Why do you think you’re required to take General Education courses? and 2) What impact have General Education courses had on your learning? Chris volunteered to email Chris Korey about adding these questions to the FYE survey. Shawn volunteered to email Karin Roof about adding these questions to the survey given to students at graduation.

4. Foreign Language Alternative Program
Karen informed the committee that revisions to the Foreign Language Alternative program were approved by the Faculty Senate, with the goal that the committee will develop an assessment plan that will be presented to the Senate in the fall.

General Education Committee Meeting
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2015
Location: 1st Floor Conference Room, Silcox

Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Deb Bidwell, Charlie Calvert, Lynne Ford, Chris Korey, Giaconda Quesada, Jerry Mackeldon, Shawn Morrison, Chris Warnick

Agenda
1. Approval of minutes
The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the October 16th meeting
2. Focus Groups
Members of the committee spoke with Chris Korey about how our efforts to conduct focus groups with students about their general education experiences might align with current assessment efforts in the First-Year Experience program. The discussion yielded at least two opportunities for collaboration. One long-term collaboration would involve isolating any information about general education that is collected as part of a longitudinal study of student learning that FYE is sponsoring. Chris Warnick, who is participating in this research, agreed to update the General Education committee with this information. A second, short-term collaboration would involve adding questions to an end-of-semester survey that is delivered in first-year synthesis seminars. Lynne suggested a question such as “Why are you required to complete general education courses?” Chris Korey agreed to ask Paige Keller to send the committee a copy of the survey.

The committee then discussed more long-term focus group efforts and brainstormed possible questions. One suggestion was to start with seniors, asking them to define their general education experience, what they found effective and ineffective, and why they think they’re required to complete general education courses. One way to recruit students could be to identify a cohort of seniors in capstone courses to complete the prompt. The committee also discussed the importance of helping students in the first year learn about the importance of general education, which might involve coordination with advising. Chris Warnick volunteered to pilot a survey or focus group in his Summer I online English 215 course.

3. Update about Faculty Senate decisions
Karen updated the committee that the proposal to remove AAST 300 from the general education list of humanities was approved by the Senate. The Senate also approved the proposed revision to the Math/Logic requirement.

4. General Education Coordinator Updates
Gia informed the committee that she will email department chairs with feedback on signature assignments compiled by ARGs. Most ARGs have asked that department chairs address prompts that do not align with the SLOs or rubrics; however, Gia indicated that this process may be revisited if there continues to be misalignment in future semesters.

5. Foreign Language Alternative
The committee was informed of updates to the revisions to the Foreign Language Alternative. Shawn has updated the list of courses, deleting special topics courses and ensuring that all courses are current catalog courses with the correct acronym and course title. Mary Bergstrom and Lynne reviewed the course list and made final revisions. One additional change was suggested. Under the old structure students were required to take courses with different acronyms in Section III: Other Nations and Regions. It was proposed that students now be required to satisfy this requirement by
taking courses with the same acronym. The committee voted unanimously to approve
the revisions and forward the proposal for the March Senate meeting.

General Education Committee Meeting
Date: Thursday, January 29, 2015
Location: 1st Floor Conference Room, Silcox

Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Mary Bergstrom, Deborah Bidwell, Cathy Boyd, Charlie
Calvert, Bob Mignone, Jerry Mackeldon, Shawn Morrison, Gioconda Quesada, Chris
Warnick

1. Approval of minutes
   • The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the November 13, 2014
     meeting.

2. Removal of AAST 300 from General Education list of humanities
   • Karen shared the signed forms for the proposal. Committee members asked about
     the rationale for the proposal, but Karen indicated that the form does not ask for the
     information. The committee unanimously voted to approve the proposal. Karen
     indicated she would follow up with AAST to let them know the course will be
     removed but that it needs to be offered and assessed until Fall 2016 because of the
     freeze on General Education courses.

3. Changing the Math/Logic Requirement
   • Karen opened discussion by reminding the committee this proposal was introduced
     at our last meeting, when we came up with revised language, which read as follows:
     “6 credits of mathematics and/or logic courses selected from the list of
     approved courses or demonstrated proficiency at the level of Calculus
     exhibited by credit for Math 120 (HONS 115) or a more advanced course for
     which Calculus is the prerequisite.”
     The proposal has since then received support from SSM chairs, Honors, and
     Philosophy. After being asked questions about how to handle transfer students who
     enter with credit for Calculus II, but not the prerequisites, Bob proposed changing the
     proposal to:
     “Either MATH 120, HONS 115, transfer credit for any one of MATH 220,
     MATH 221, MATH 323 (each of which requires proficiency in the content of
     MATH 120); or 6 credit hours from the remaining list of approved courses
     satisfying the math or logic general education requirement.”
     The committee unanimously approved the proposal. Bob agreed to send the
     language to Mary and follow up with her for further discussion. Karen agreed to
     present this proposal at the next Faculty Senate meeting and reminded the
     committee that the change can’t go into effect until Fall 2016, after the freeze on
     General Education has been lifted.

4. Student focus groups
   • Karen discussed the committee’s ongoing efforts to conduct focus groups with
     students and faculty. Chris indicated he would follow up with Chris Korey about the
     committee partnering with FYE assessments. He also indicated he would contact
Kevin Keenan about an informal one-on-one meeting about conducting focus groups. Chris stated he would follow up with the committee at the next meeting.

5. Alignment of foreign language alternative to gen ed assessment
   - Karen updated the committee about the work completed by the subcommittee charged with revising the foreign language alternative program. The subcommittee has revised the list of approved courses, ensuring that all of the classes on this are currently being offered. This list has been forwarded to Mary and will go into place for Fall 2015. Mary recommended cutting the last page, leaving only the list of classes. Shawn will send the list to Mary electronically and Mary will follow up with Lynne.

   - Karen reminded the committee that we also needs to create learning outcomes and an assessment plan for the program. She discussed the subcommittee’s findings that there are no similar programs at peer institutions and their tentative recommendation that the program and its assessment not be tied to specific courses. Shawn updated the committee on the Linguistic program’s efforts to develop a SNAP section of LING 125 because the current Ling 125 course involves content that is more for minors than SNAP students. This SNAP section of LING 125 would be aligned with SLO1: Students will evaluate the role language plays in the construction of culture.

   - The committee discussed the SLOs recommended by the subcommittee. The SLOs were revised to 3 SLOs, with the recommendation that the foreign language Assessment Reading Group read student artifacts from an online assessment the subcommittee still needs to devise.

   - The next step will be for Karen to follow up with Lynne and then send a list of approved courses to Chairs, Deans, and Associate Deans. She will also invite faculty to a meeting where faculty can provide feedback about the committee’s proposed revisions and learn more about whether they want to opt in or out of the program. Once the foreign language alternative revisions are complete, the committee will turn its attention to the Math alternative.

6. Continue to develop a coherent rationale for Gen Ed
   - This was tabled until the committee’s next meeting on Thursday, February 12th at 3:00 p.m.

   General Education Committee Meeting
   Date: Thursday, November 13, 2014
   Location: 1st Floor Conference Room, Silcox

   Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Mary Bergstrom, Cathy Boyd, Lynne Ford, Jerry Mackeldon, Shawn Morrison, Chris Warnick, James Williams

   1. Approval of minutes
      - The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the October 16th meeting.
2. General Education Rationale
   · The committee discussed a draft of the General Education rationale and shared ideas for how this statement could explain what makes our distribution model coherent. Committee members agreed to conduct research for the next meeting that would help with this work. Chris agreed to create a Google doc and share with the committee. It was decided that the Committee's goal is to forward a statement to the Faculty Senate by March 2015.

3. Focus Groups
   · Karen shared the findings of her meeting with Karin Roof, who informed her that she no longer conducts focus groups but that there is a tutorial that can help with this. Chris told the Committee about his meeting with Chris Korey, who said he would meet with the Committee to discuss ideas for possible focus groups. Karen encouraged members of the Committee to speak with faculty with research interests in this area to help out.

4. Math/Logic General Education Requirement
   · Karen discussed an informal proposal brought to her by Bob Mignone to revise the Math/Logic General Education Requirement. He has shared this proposal with Philosophy and Math, who approve it, and he wants the Committee's advice on how to word the proposed new requirement. The Committee discussed several options, eventually settling on the following language: “6 credits of mathematics and/or logic courses selected from the list of approved courses or demonstrated proficiency at the level of Calculus exhibited by credit for Math 120 (HONS 115) or a more advanced course for which Calculus is the prerequisite.”

5. Foreign Language Alternative Alignment
   · Lynne asked the Committee to assist with reviewing and revising the foreign language alternative. The current approach has a three-part structure that parallels the old credit-based foreign language general education requirement, not the current competencies-based model. The current system is also inconsistent: French and Spanish currently offer sections with instructional modification while other language requirements are satisfied by students taking courses from a “Master List” that cover three areas (Grammar/Language, Global Awareness, and Other Nations and Regions). Lynne explained that the Committee would have three tasks: to review the current foreign language alternative, to review the “Master List” currently in use, and to consider a process by which the foreign language alternative is revised/updated and operated by faculty through the General Education Committee.
   · Committee members discussed possible changes to the foreign language alternative, including whether it should be treated as a program and, if so, how it would be assessed. The Committee also brought up other considerations, including making the revised foreign language alternative parallel to the standard requirement; recognizing that foreign language alternative courses can’t double-count toward a major, which could cause problems for international studies and other majors; and recognizing the need for collaboration with other faculty and departments. Karen indicated that she would send an email inviting interested faculty to a special meeting during final exam week and that she would contact individual chairs as well.
General Education Committee Meeting  
Date: Thursday October 16, 2014  
Location: 1- floor Conference Room, Silcox

Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Shawn Morrison, Gioconda Quesada, Chris Warnick, James Williams

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of Minutes
   - The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the September 11th meeting.

3. Update on General Education assessment
   - Gia updated the committee about the General Education assessment process. Specifically, Gia has sent department chairs a detailed list of courses whose outcomes listed on the syllabi don’t align with the General Education goals. In addition, she has held meetings with Assessment Reading Groups (ARG) to discuss sampling procedures and the process for providing departments with feedback. She informed the committee that the new rubrics allow ARGs to provide feedback about the assignment prompt’s fit with the student learning outcomes. Based on her meetings with each ARG, departments will decide what feedback methods best suit the department’s culture. Members of the committee asked questions about who currently has access to instructor information for student artifacts, and Gia clarified that she is the only individual who can associate faculty information with assessment samples.

4. Irish and Irish American Studies Minor
   - Karen shared a request she received from Joe Kelly to lift the current freeze on new General Education courses and consider three courses in the proposed Irish and Irish American Studies minor for General Education history, social sciences, and humanities credit. (The proposal is currently going through the Faculty Curriculum Committee.) The committee discussed the request and agreed that Joe could bring a formal request to the committee once the freeze on new General Education courses has been lifted in 2017. Karen informed the committee that she would follow up with Lynne Ford about this decision and follow up if necessary.

5. Focus Groups (Student and Faculty)
   - Members of the committee discussed possible ideas for conducting focus groups with students about General Education. Members explained how the committee could further examine how existing assessment initiatives, such as senior exit interviews and alumni surveys, could assist in assessing General Education. Another possibility the committee considered was to use current seniors and alumni as a baseline for comparing students enrolled under the current General Education outcomes. The committee identified individuals on campus who have previous experience running student focus groups. Karen agreed to contact Karin Roof and report back to the committee. Chris agreed to contact Chris Korey and report back to the committee. Gia volunteered to conduct a web search on other focus group assessments. Shawn volunteered to examine materials on focus groups from the Assessment Institute.

6. General Education
   - The committee shared ideas for developing a coherent rationale for the General Education program. Gia shared examples of rationales from other universities, and based
on this discussion the committee agreed to format our draft of the rationale as a paragraph-
long description of the program followed by a list of the different areas of the program and
each area’s outcomes. Gia agreed to draft a version, which the committee will discuss at
their next meeting. Members asked questions about the approval process for the rationale.
Karin indicated that after the committee approves the rationale, it would be shared with the
ARGs for feedback before being presented to the Faculty Senate.
Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 13th at 3:00 pm.

General Education Committee Meeting
Date: Thursday September 11, 2014
Location: 1st floor Conference room, Silcox
Attending: Karen Smail (Chair), Charles Calvert, Mary Bergstrom, Lynne Ford, Jerry
Mackeldon, Shawn Morrison, Gioconda Quesada, Chris Warnick
1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Elect Secretary
   · Chris Warnick volunteered to serve as secretary
3. Old Business
   · The committee unanimously approved the minutes from the April 17th meeting.
4. October Faculty Senate Agenda Items
   · Karen announced that she would present three URBST courses approved during the
committee’s April 17th meeting at the next Faculty Senate meeting.
5. CLA+ Pilot Project
   · Lynne discussed the possibility of the College piloting the CLA+ assessment, a 90-
minute exam where students earn badges in particular competencies. Lynne explained
how piloting the exam would allow the College to participate in national conversations
concerning student learning, but the expense and time-intensive nature of the exam,
along with SACS reaffirmation and other ongoing assessments the College is
participating in, may make it difficult to pilot this year. Lynne indicated that she would
research the CLA+ further and report back to the committee.
6. General Education Assessment Update
   · Gia reported on last year’s General Education assessment process and shared
results of the August 12th meeting attended by ARG members, chairs, deans, and
others. Gia mentioned several ideas that emerged from this meeting, including the next
agenda item, that she asked the committee to follow up on this year.
7. Focus Groups
   · The committee discussed how it might follow up on a recommendation during the
August 12th Gen Education assessment meeting to conduct focus groups with both
students and faculty on general education. Members brainstormed possible questions,
methods, and resources. Karen mentioned how we could make focus groups a priority
for a next meeting and that, in the meantime, committee members might think of faculty members who could participate.

8. Transfer Credit Committee
   · Gia discussed piloting a process where the General Education Coordinator and two members of the Faculty Committee on General Education would consult with Chairs to evaluate transfer applications for courses not already recognized in the transfer inventory. Members of the committee asked Gia how many cases typically arise, and Gia indicated that there have been only a handful of cases in the last two years. Charlie and Shawn agreed to serve on the committee along with Gia.

9. SACS-COC Alignment
   · Karen reported that the SACS-COC report is due Fall 2016 and that the committee will begin preparing elements of the report this year. She discussed three specific core requirements (2.7.3; 3.5.1; 3.5.3) that will require the College to provide evidence that our general education curriculum is “substantial,” that is ensures “breadth of knowledge,” and that it is based on a coherent rationale. Committee members discussed several resources to consult to begin crafting this language (e.g., the Strategic Plan, feedback from the ARGs, etc.). Lynne suggested that another resource would be for committee members for draft their own individual general education rationales before the committee's next meeting. The committee agreed that they would write individual rationales and share them during the next meeting.

Next meeting scheduled for October 9th from 3:00-4:30 in Silcox 105.