

General Education Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 10/26/2021

Attending members:

Suanne Ansari (Chair)	William McCorckle
Brigit Ferguson (Co-Secretary)	Carmen Grace Gia Quesada(ex-officio)
Karen Smail (ex-officio)	Kate Owens

Apologies communicated: Gabriel Williams, Jacob Craig

Guest in attendance:

Morgan Koerner (Co-Chair Ad Hoc REI Committee)
Mark del Mastro
Simon Lewis

Minutes from September 28 meeting approved.

Simon Lewis Presented plan to market Gen Ed

Want to revamp how we market General Education requirements to students (and parents), so they have a sense of why they need to take these courses

Mark del Mastro added that currently there is no explanation for why students must take Gen Ed. His daughter at Clemson was presented a much more coherent vision of the purpose of Gen Ed

Gen Ed as a “meta-major”? This term comes from Lynn Ford. We need to get on the same page regarding the requirement

Questions for repackaging:

- In your view, what is the purpose of the Core Curriculum, and what does it accomplish?
 - Gia: well-rounded education, different perspectives. Opens students’ eyes to areas that they might not otherwise explore.
 - Kate: a sense of how different disciplines ask questions. Major answers those questions. Guides students to lead a well-examined life, opens them up to different ways of posing questions
 - Karen: foundation that opens your mind to different ways of perceiving problems, bring this into the major.
- What do you tell students is the value of the core curriculum? Why is it not just hoops to jump through or requirements to meet?
 - Simon: faculty and students need to know why.
 - Will: teaches EDUC 201. This will complement whatever career you pursue. It will be helpful for your career to know something about education
 - Suanne: provide students with tools to become productive members of society. Tools for life-long learning.
 - Carmen: some students would not take a foreign language without requirement. This exposes students to cultures they might not be exposed to otherwise.

Understanding of diversity necessary for modern life. Links, collaboration - something positive.

- Simon: consilience. Try to get everybody talking to everybody else. People need to be able to speak across disciplines. “Linking for thinking”? Especially important for areas like science and the humanities
- Gia: life skills.
- Morgan: Prestige and Quality. While other (state) schools have raced to the bottom in reducing GenEd requirements, we have kept a robust GenEd requirement that is only rivaled by other excellent schools.
- Simon: These courses are important both in themselves and collectively.
- Morgan: “upward mobility” GenEd trains students in the x-factor for success, critical thinking and seeing different perspectives as Kate and Karen note. The more I interact with C-suite managers, the more I hear this point, critical thinking, communication, problem solving, soft skills
- Kate: How do students know whether what they are learning is useful? These courses may not be directly applicable right away. Gain more perspective over time.
- Simon: Experiences in college, especially when they are hard, help prepare students to be life-long learners. We need to consider how these topics will influence students 30 years from now
- Gia: Marketing folks need to be included in this conversation. Tap into alumni.
- Mark: want to gather as much info as possible before going to marketing.
- The core comprises various subject areas. Is there any cohesion or over-arching theme that connects these various areas?
 - Karen: we have lots of data showing strongly that this is the case.
 - Gia: breadth of intellectual curiosity enables depth later.
 - Simon: we need to make these links more apparent. Have considered clustering courses.
 - Karen: we do learning communities in FYE, but not beyond that. Could we do something similar in other areas?
- What words occur to you when you think about our core curriculum? What pops into your head?
 - Kate: ginormous. We have so many GE courses! Logistically a nightmare. From student perspectives, we offer so many possibilities to fulfill these requirements, allow students to follow their own interests. We want students to make the connections themselves. The meanings they make will be unique to their own experiences.
 - Morgan: robust
 - Mark: meta-major
 - Suanne: intellectual breadth
 - Carmen: options can be overwhelming, need something to simplify the options. Need a simple, attractive graph that visualizes Gen Ed.
 - Simon: flow charts that demonstrate how GE flows into majors.
- Is there anything that you find exciting about our core curriculum?

- Suanne: choices
- Gia: global nature of some of the courses. Really value the language requirements. Daughter and friends talking about impact of immigration, takes students out of their silos to be global citizens.
- Simon: need to stress the importance of language, global connections. We are only college in SC with this requirement. So many students come to us very under-educated, with very narrow world-views.
- How would experiential learning enhance the GE requirements?
 - Gia: this tends to be more emphasized in the majors.
 - Brigit : one of the most memorable and meaningful experiences for students (in the FYE context)
 - Kate: GE and experiential learning don't necessarily go together easily
 - Simon: don't forget about labs
- What do you see as the role of experiential learning? Should it be required?
 - Will: in large courses, this can be hard to implement
 - Kate: we are so reliant on adjuncts. Asking overworked, underpaid adjuncts to take this on seems untenable.
 - Will: there could be options, put students into smaller groups.
 - Gia: opportunities outside the classroom, collect "experience points" throughout college, such as going to see speakers, other activities to complement what happens in the classroom. She is attending conference on high-impact courses.
 - Simon: co-curricular transcript was discussed at some point. Current model would be hard to implement without it being required in the individual class.
 - Karen: perhaps use GE SLOs as ways to assess experiential learning within the major. This was discussed at some point.

Update on REACH Act

Senate approved resolution. Does this take review standard out of GE committee?

Mark: the review standard should be developed by soon-to-be-formed committee. Can't take action until that standard is in place. The timeline allows the to-be-formed committee to do this, it is not urgent at the moment. This needs to be submitted to Mark by February 4.

The university sets the actual rubric for how it is examined.

As far as law goes, the courses just need to include all of the documents. 12 courses already count for this.

The exam requirement is no longer in place. Have to take a 3-credit hour course instead.

If in early 2022 committee has not yet developed the standard, will GE committee just look at courses and see if they meet all the requirements of the law?

CHE verifies that syllabi satisfy the act. Just looking for that list of documents covered in their entirety.

So it seems that this is off our plate!

Review of REI proposals

Problems with British Lit course

Religion in US South - does not specify how SLOs will be met

Courses on this meeting's Agenda in Curriculog

CSCI 115 for Math/Logic approval:

- Kate: Syllabus says that it fulfills the Math/Logic requirement, which it does not. It should say Math/Logic Alternative. Karen will fix this.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes

This course counts toward the Math/Logic requirement for General Education.

- ✓ To demonstrate the ability to undertake a procedural method for solving a problem/producing a product relevant to the specific discipline of the course.
- ✓ Students will demonstrate an understanding of the underlying theoretical principles or abstract structure of the primary topic of the course.

These outcomes will be assessed on:

- Final Project (Final Project category)

- Math/logic alternative SLOs do not appear on Math/Logic GE courses
- Committee votes to approve pending the fix. Suanne will not forward to Senate until this has been fixed.

REI Courses Approved

ENGL 207

ENGL 233

ENGL 234

ENGL 352

ENGL 353

ENGL 358

ENGL 371

HIST 255

HIST 263

HIST 226

HIST 252

ENGL 328:

- No specification of how SLOs will be met
- Big, blank table at the end
- Approved pending correction of course calendar in syllabus. Suanne will contact faculty member.

SOST 175:

- Syllabus does not include how REI SLOs will be assessed
- Suanne will contact Morgan and the instructor about this

- Approve pending correction
- Right now there is no assessment process for REI, but this course does not yet seem to meet approval criteria.

Report from Math/Logic Alternative subcommittee (Kate and Carmen)

Looking at courses that have been previously approved, courses that are in pipeline. So far CSCI is only course so far.

SNAP wants more courses to fulfill this requirement, their students have a hard time finding courses. Plan to solicit more courses.

Adjourn

Next meeting November 12 at 2PM on Zoom