

General Education Advisory Council

Friday, October 15, 2021

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

ZOOM Meeting: <https://fsw.zoom.us/j/84297808639>

Present – Don Ransford, Eileen DeLuca, Andrae Jones, George Manacheril, Gus Cameron, Jamie Votraw, Martin McClinton, Mary Ellen Schultz, Monica Krupinski, Randy Moffett, Suzanne Biedenbach, Steven Chase, William Van Glabek, Dani Peterson, Fernando Mayoral, Jennifer Summary, William Kelvin

Minutes

- I. The minutes from the September meeting were approved.
- II. Information Items
 - A. Professor Ransford spoke about the annual SACSCOC meeting which will take place from December 2nd through 7th in 2021. Early registration for this event is October 31st. Here is a virtual link to this event: <https://sacscoc.org/annual-meeting/>
 - B. Dr. Brandon Jett and Dr. Sholondo Campell will be invited to the Friday, November 19th meeting to discuss the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative).
- III. Action Items
 - a. Professor Ransford spoke about the role of the General Education Advisory Council in the process of course proposal changes (Curriculum Committee).
 - i. Following the September meeting, there were concerns with the designation of “rejection” on those courses that the General Education Advisory Council decides do not meet the criteria of a general education course. Ransford will meet with both Dr. Sheila Seelau (Curriculum Committee chair) and Dr. Elijah Pritchett (LAC chair) to find a better way to address this concern. As of now, in Curriculog, once a proposal is “rejected”, the faculty member proposing the changes must go all the way back to the beginning of the proposal process. The following are some suggestions from the committee for how to include GEAC in the review process without disrupting the workflow of Curriculum Committee.
 1. Upon reviewing the course, GEAC could provide a letter of support of non-support.
 2. GEAC could be removed from the Curriculog process entirely. The faculty would present the course to GEAC before going to Curriculum Committee.
 3. The label could be changed from “approving” to “supporting”.
 - ii. There are criteria for courses labeled general education, but, it was suggested that these be finalized into a checklist and made available to faculty members.
 - b. The Flex Model for General Education Requirements has potential impacts on the Communication Studies Department. Several members were invited to speak about these impacts and to discuss strategies for mitigating these impacts in future semesters.

- i. Here is a summary of the previous actions taken by GEAC. The plan to change the requirements from 9 hours in “Communication/Composition” and “Social Sciences” to 6 hours to give students more flexibility was approved at a previous meeting. It was noted that Amanda Sterk approved of this model for dual enrollment students, also.
 - ii. The following summarizes the conversation between the Communication Studies faculty and GEAC members.
 1. Concerns were raised about students getting the necessary oral communication education that is required for future education and employment, and that while this model does allow for more flexibility, the communication that students are learning seems to be writing intensive and less focused on other forms of communication.
 2. Advising is currently working on pathways that include Communication Studies classes. There are 16 programs where a speech course is still embedded in the program. Advising also mentioned that once the changes to the general education requirements go through Curriculum Committee, students who are still active in previous programs/catalogs will continue to need those requirements for up to four years.
 3. The following are some suggestions that came up during the discussion.
 - a. Communication Studies faculty might create specific Capstone and Cornerstone courses.
 - b. They might consider team-teaching with faculty from other disciplines.
 - c. This department could speak with Christy Gilfert and Keith Martin to collaborate with advising for those students looking at degrees and meta-majors in four-year institutions in Communication Studies. (Also, they could look for information about oral communications courses in those “feeder” universities.)
 - d. There was a suggestion to create a “speech intensive” course (similar to those courses labeled “writing intensive”). There was another suggestion that courses might have an “oral communication” designation.
 - e. There was also a question to GEAC as to how these changes to the general education requirements might be assessed after the changes have been put into place.
- IV. The next meetings are scheduled for the following dates: November 19, January 21, February 18, and April 15.
- V. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.