**General Education Advisory Council**

*Friday, September 1, 2023*

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

MINUTES

Recorded by: Jamie Votraw

Attendance:

Dani Peterson, Steve Chase, Martin McClinton, Rebecca Harris, Randy Moffett, Joyce Rollins, Steve Chase, Tim Bishop, Mary Schultz, Don Ransford, Joel Reinking, Elijah Pritchett, Alex Schimel, Cara Minardi Power, Kari Sizemore, Elizabeth Schott

1. Guest Presentation:
	1. Dr. McClinton reviewed SB 266. He explained that the bill requires the following:

-SB 266 instructs the SBOE and BOG to appoint committees and recommend General Education core course options by July 1st, 2024, and subsequently every four years.

-SB 266 specifies course principles, standards, and content.

-SB 266 requires institutions to report which courses meet general education subject requirements.

b. We briefly reviewed several curriculum-specific bill texts, such as:

-SB 266 mandates that institutions cannot use college money to promote, support, or maintain programs that violate the DEI statutes.

-SB 266 prohibits teaching identity politics or content that violates statute 1000.05.

-SB 266 requires that institutions meet communication standards, including writing clearly and engaging in public speaking.

-SB 266 states that humanities must include curriculum from the Western canon, and Statute 1007.55 states that BOE rules, such as including Western documents, must be met.

-SB 266 details that failure to comply will result in loss of performance-based funding.

-Additional rules are to be created by SBOR and BOG to help with the implementation of these provisions.

c. Professor Peterson noted that these details are taking place at the state level, so we need to wait for more information. Dr. McClinton pointed out that we do need to report by Dec. 2024, and since the curriculum process usually happens in the Fall, we need to be ready for changes. He recommended that we go to the FL DOE website and identify which courses are General Education core courses and determine which institutions offer them.

d. Dr. Schott commented in the chat that doing background research might help us identify any at-risk General Education courses. If other institutions don’t offer a particular course as a Gen Ed, and FSW is the only/one of the only institutions doing so, we might have a problem keeping it a Gen Ed. Dr. Harris agreed and commented that she prefers to recommend that students find courses that are more popular across institutions. She explained that the legislature will determine what counts as a Gen. Ed. Thus, hypothetically, if a course was offered as a Gen. Ed. at only 5% of FL institutions, the state could tell us we can’t offer it as a Gen. Ed. Dr. McClinton added that if a course isn’t offered in many institutions, it might not transfer well. To prepare, Dr. Harris offered to do background research to determine if there are Gen. Ed. courses at FSW that are not offered widely. Professor Ransford pointed out that some courses are offered in certain places because of their regional connections. Dr. McClinton agreed, but noted, we might lose some local control.

e. Dr. Minardi-Power asked if the main goal of these changes is to improve transferability. Dr. McClinton indicated yes, but like Professor Ransford, he pointed out that different places have different foci, so it’s not a perfect science.

f. Professor Moffett asked for clarification - will GEAC decide on these matters, or will the State make these calls? If the latter, what is the role of GEAC if a State-level General Education committee exists? Dr. McClinton explained that he wants awareness at this point, so potential changes are not surprising to faculty. For faculty teaching classes that are not core general education courses, they might experience some programmatic changes. He pointed out that once Dr. Harris collects the data, GEAC can inform faculty of the current situation. The FSW faculty/GEAC members may be asked to compare Gen. Ed. classes against some provided standards to ensure sure courses are meeting the definitions defined by the state. Professor Moffett summarized that we need to concentrate on faculty awareness and understanding the role of GEAC.

1. Initial Motion:
	1. Professor Peterson made a motion to approve the minutes. The committee had no objections to the minutes and approved the minutes from the last meeting.
	2. Dr. Bishop suggested that we ensure the minutes are complete and uploaded in a timely manner.
	3. Professor Moffett suggested we also agree to review them before the meeting.
2. Introductions & Announcements
	1. All members gave a brief self-introduction.
	2. Professor Peterson gave a special introduction of the new members:
		1. Dr. Pritchett – representing humanities
		2. Professor Reinking – representing social science/history
	3. Professor Peterson mentioned the administration wants GEAC to have all departments, schools, and campuses represented.
		1. Bill is no longer able to represent SoBT, so we need a new representative. Professor Peterson will start by contacting the dean.
		2. We also need a rep from Dr. Schott’s school SoPAS
3. Action Items
	1. Committee Charges: Dr. McClinton and Dr. Bilsky want committees to review and evaluate the committee charges. Professor Ransford said GEAC is effectively doing them but notes the accreditation body status is not yet certain.
		1. Dr. Schott explained that FSW is the first of 28 to receive approval to seek another accreditation body, and it is recommended that FSW look at options now before the SACSCOC 5-year review. Dr. Harris explained that we have to look now, but it’s about an 18-month process, so in Fall 2024, we’ll probably be with SACSOC but in the process of moving. FSW is awaiting approval from HLC.
		2. Professor Ransford recommends that faculty learn more about the requirements of a potential new accreditor. Dr. Schott agreed and suggested we send GEAC members to the next meeting. Professor Moffett suggested we make an official request to the administration to send GEAC representation to future accreditation meetings. Rebecca shared that the HLC annual conference is in April 2024. Professor Ransford asked that we determine what training is available before we ask. Professor Peterson will draft a request letter to be reviewed at the next meeting.
	2. Committee Goals for Academic Year 2023-2024
		1. IDEAs:
			1. Review courses with a Gen Ed. designation – do we want so many courses to be listed as Gen. Ed? Professor Moffett mentions that designating courses as Gen. Ed. (or not) while waiting for state decisions is risky. We may benefit from waiting and avoiding redundant work.
			2. Simple syllabus – With easy access, there is opportunity to track CLOs – Do we have an institutional idea about what it means to be a CLO? Should we be tracking CLOs in conjunction with LAC? Dr. Pritchett noted that CLOs are very important, but that they may be in flux with state-level changes upcoming.
			3. Checklists – Professor Ransford suggests that GEAC focus on the checklists. Dr. Bishop agreed.
			4. Professional Development – Dr. Harris pointed out that this moment of flux might make a good PD moment, with a focus on how to write CLOs, etc. Professor Votraw added that there could be trainings on writing CLOs, MLOs, using Blooms Taxonomy, and object-assessment alignment for Gen. Ed. course – not just as an element of the course development process, but as a part of carefully reviewing older courses. Professor Ransford agreed and noted that GEAC should look at how FSW faculty teach their objectives for course quality, but also to make sure our students are getting the best experience throughout their degree program. Professor Peterson added that it might be useful to look at variations in course objectives or inconsistencies across course modalities as well. Professor Ransford suggested we examine whether students are getting effectively taught all Gen. Ed. competencies from Cornerstone to Capstone. Professor Votraw recommended using the pathways course recommendations as a starting place for broader competency exposure. Looking at the series of coursework suggested to students by advisors may provide insight into the typical competency exposure of an FSW student.
	3. GEAC Meeting time
		1. GEAC aims to have college-wide department and academic committee representation. This meeting time conflicts with all other standing committees. Professor Peterson asked if the committee time should be moved to accommodate better representation. Many members agreed that GEAC shouldn’t overlap with LAC, and Professor Ransford noted that the GEAC documentation also mentions that other committees should be involved.
	4. Campus Representation
		1. Professor Peterson emphasized that all FSW campuses are represented.
	5. Communication
		1. Professor Peterson requested that committee members work to ensure a good flow of communication between the committee and outside departments.
		2. Dr. Bishop pointed out that Dr. McClinton likes it when standing committees share their agendas faculty-wide. He emphasized the importance of also bringing information back to the committee.
		3. Professor Ransford would like the board of trustees also to send their agenda/minutes to keep faculty informed of their activity. Dr. Schott offered to raise that point in the next dean’s meeting. Dr. Bishop also said he would suggest this idea from a faculty senate perspective.
	6. Professor Peterson will send the committee a draft summary of “what we do” for review.
4. Reports:
	1. Professor Ransford: OBOC is now OTOC. It’s not a standing committee now, but Dr. Chase and Dr. Harris are going to continue to support it as an ad-hoc committee.
	2. Professor Moffett: Curriculum committee – a new streamlined process is in place for course development changes.

1. Final Motion
	1. Professor Peterson motioned to adjourn, and the committee approved.
	2. The meeting ended at 3:30 pm.