**General Education Advisory Council**

*Friday, February 16th, 2024*

10:00 pm – 11:30 pm

MINUTES

Recorded by: Jamie Votraw

Attendance:

Steve Chase, Randy Moffett, Mary Schultz, Don Ransford, Elijah Pritchett, Alex Schimel, Cara Minardi Power, Jamie Votraw, Suzanne Biedenbach, Esmaeel Samaliazad, Kenneth Belcher, Joel Reinking, Elizabeth Schott, Joyce Rollins, Ihasha Horn, Jason Calabrese, Martin McClinton, Meghan Carlson, Michael McGowan, Monica Krupinski, Myriam Mompoint, Tim Bishop, Dani Peterson, Mark Massaro, Leonard Owens, Laura Henning, Jill Hummel, Anna Ciamparella, Amy Trogan, Dolores Batiato, Alisa Callahan

1. Approval of the minutes from the last meeting (January 19th, 2024)
	1. The minutes were approved.
2. Information Items
	1. Upcoming GEAC meetings: March 22\*, April 19
		1. The March GEAC meeting will be rescheduled for March 22nd.
		2. GEAC members should be prepared to vote on the WI recommendation at the March 22nd meeting.
	2. GEAC Chair position/election
		1. Professor Peterson’s Chair position is coming to an end, so GEAC will need to vote at the next meeting on a Chair for the next term.
3. Actions Items
	* 1. Writing Intensive Open Faculty Discussion
		2. Professor Peterson shared an overview of the WI change under consideration.
		3. Dr. Schott started the conversation by explaining that if a science course (for example) wanted to become a WI course, the faculty member would need to develop a new course and get the designation approved by the curriculum committee. She noted, however, that most general education courses won’t have room to become WI.
		4. Professor Ransford explained that faculty in his department discussed what it means to be a legitimate WI course and acknowledged that if a course in their department becomes WI, all sections of that course would be required to adopt the WI designation.
		5. Dr. Pritchett also mentioned that his department discussed the issue in depth. He explained that they aren’t sure how expanding WI courses would be related to student success.
		6. Dr. McClinton explained that the WI designation derives from standards set 30-40 years ago. At that time, students were not doing enough writing, so the WI designation intends for students to graduate with writing skills, but every institution accomplishes this differently. At FSW, it is designated that WI comes from SS and HUM. While this does drive students into these classes, the goal of the WI statute is simply to get students writing. From the student’s perspective, they could develop writing skills from other academic areas. If a student wants to learn writing skills through lab reports, for instance, those faculty will need to train in writing instruction and ensure to require a certain level of rigor.
		7. Dr. Pritchett noted that all HUM courses are currently WI.
		8. Dr. Hummel commented that meeting the HUM requirement to complete the AA degree is different than what is needed to meet the WI requirement. She asked, how many writing intensive courses are required?
			1. Dr. McClinton answered that four WI courses are required, two of which are the ENC requirements.
		9. Professor Ransford explained the benefit of expanding WI courses is that it provides options for students. Students would be required to still take a HUM for their general education, but they could take a WI course in another area.
			1. Dr. Pritchett noted that all HUM courses are WI, so if a student gets their WI credit from another area and has an elective, they might be dissuaded from choosing HUM because it’s also WI.
		10. Dr. Krupinski asked how this change would contribute to student success. She explained that students already hesitate to take WI. So, if students already have writing anxiety and then that’s mixed with math anxiety, how does combining the two create more success? She also noted that there is a difference between writing for lab and writing analytically.
			1. Dr. McClinton argued that most students would probably pick HUM for WI, but if a science student wants to learn how to write labs scientifically, it’s a hard skill that they should have the option to learn.
			2. Dr. Krupinski agreed that scientific writing is a type of writing that is very valuable, but that other styles should still be a part of their general education.
		11. Dr. Hummel explained that WI courses require 4,000 words. She asked if there is room in these other courses to meet this requirement and noted that WI courses capped at 25 because of the grading load.
			1. Dr. Biedenbach agreed and added that writing instruction and learning the writing process must be a part of a WI curriculum – it’s not just about reaching 4,000 words.
			2. Dr. McClinton added for clarity that the state removed the reference to 4,000 words. He agreed, though, that the number of words alone doesn’t equate to WI. Regarding course caps, he mentioned that Chemistry Labs are capped at 25 because of safety standards, but other classes, such as Math, aren’t capped at 25 this would need to be considered from a budget standpoint.
		12. Professor Peterson informed the group that GEAC has been working on developing a WI definition/list and will have a WI toolkit down the road.
		13. Professor Owens explained that at a past institution, students in non-traditional WI classes would receive WI assignments, but received no WI instruction. He commented that FSW needs to be careful about implementing this change and put guard rails in place to prevent issues.
		14. Dr. Rollins explained that the education department offers a WI class that is required for any student looking to complete a BA in education. It is useful for them to have this field-specific option because they need to learn APA to do well in their degree program.
		15. Professor Ransford informed the group that GEAC has discussed the possibility of doing PD for new WI faculty. Faculty already teaching WI could inform/instruct PD for new faculty looking to develop a WI course.
		16. Dr. Schott commented that her faculty values writing and is always trying to improve student writing. She suggested that expanding the WI options sends a message that the whole college values writing.
		17. Dr. Pritchett noted that faculty can incorporate as much writing as they want in their courses, but the WI designation is a special designation, and unique for WI courses.
		18. Dr. Hummel noted that in her department, all faculty have been trained to teach WI as it’s their specialty. If expanding WI designation, then those faculty need training as well. She argued that there would need to be a WAC (writing across the curriculum) person facilitating the change to ensure any new writing curriculum is complete. Faculty without this specific training would need the support of a WAC person.
			1. Dr. McClinton said that the first step is to establish clear definitions of WI, agreed faculty need training, and added that we also would need assessment.
		19. Professor Moffett clarified that the requirement is 12 hours of WI, 6 hours from ENC, and another 6 hours (currently from HUM/SS). He reiterated that we are only considering opening the extra 6 hours and not changing the ENC requirement. He said we need to decide if it is best for the students to ONLY take WI courses in ENC and HUM/SS.
			1. Dr. Krupinski responded that HUM is the other 6 hours. She commented that a firm WAC person is in place and/or a robust WI PD (not just a PD Friday, but a full series that is informed by faculty who are trained in WI instruction since their graduate programs and TA jobs) is needed before changes are made. She added that we also need to be sure ESL students will be able to succeed without deep WI instruction.
		20. Professor Ransford acknowledged that GEAC is aware of the level of training that the current WI faculty go through for WI. He noted that GEAC was already concerned about the possibility of WI courses not being taught correctly as WI, which is what led to the current consideration. He added that a WAC person is something we might want to consider.
			1. Dr. Hummel explained that WI faculty must show in the syllabi how they are achieving the WI designation. There is evidence and documentation to ensure oversight that WI courses are meeting the requirement. From syllabi to department and dean checks, and VPAA oversight, there is strong oversight that the WI instruction is happening in the English department.
		21. Professor Calabrese commented that intensive writing across disciplines is very different. Many of us can’t teach the other types of intensive writing outside of our disciplines. He asked, if could students circumvent intensive HUM writing. He said we can’t assume they can accomplish these skills in other courses.
			1. Dr. Minardi Power responded that just because the writing is different across disciplines, doesn’t mean it is any more or less analytical. She asked if someone could explain the concern that WI courses in other academic disciplines wouldn’t allow for sufficient critical thinking.
			2. Dr. McClinton agreed. He said that training is critical, but analytical writing in any class is beneficial.
			3. Dr. Pritchett also agreed there is a high level of cognition in scientific writing but noted that it’s a different type of reasoning. He explained that we want to protect broad education - students often do not know why they are in school, so we want them to get a broad experience – it’s not always about specialization. R
			4. Dr. Rollins commented that most would probably take HUM for their WI requirement, but stated that some students have pre-requisites that they need to complete without overloading their credits. If they can achieve a pre-requisite and WI, it will help them.
		22. Dr. Hummel explained that ENC courses set the writing foundation, and then other classes build from that foundation. She asked, would new WI courses require ENC as a pre-requisite. If the faculty member isn’t trained in writing education, they might need students to have that foundation first.
		23. Dr. Pritchett added that from the perspective of institutional stability, there is a concern because this change would reduce the unique offering of HUM classes.
		24. Dr. Minardi Power said she is concerned about students’ skills when they graduate. Students graduate and cannot write in their discipline. She commented that should be our goal – students should have a sense of how to write in their discipline. She added that communication and literacy in America is a problem, so hopeful this change could help address this.
		25. Dr. Krupinski voiced a comment from Dr. Rollins - could we split the remaining 6 WI credits between HUM and other courses? We could consider requiring 3 WI credits in HUM and 3 WI credits in HUM or other. She added that she’s also heard that some academic advisors tell students that they don’t need HUM coursework for the workplace, so it’s important to give students a reason to take HUM.
		26. Professor Peterson summarized the discussion and thanked everyone for attending and contributing.
4. Reports/Updates from departments or committees
	* 1. Curriculum Committee (February 15 meeting); Program Change Proposal to align with the state changes, course changes, and course sequences that have been happening in CC this year. (The following is a brief summary.)
			1. Associate in Arts Degree
				1. Required General Education Courses updated to “ENC 1102 - Composition II OR ENC 2210 – Technical Communication, must complete with a "C" or better 3 credits”
				2. SLS 1515 Cornerstone and IDS 2891 CREATIVE Capstone removed the requirement for “C or better” at the January Curriculum committee meeting.
				3. IDS 2891 CREATIVE Capstone added (ENC 1101 AND ENC 2210) to the prerequisite pathways for the course.
				4. AMH 2010 History of the US to 1877 was added to the list of classes that fulfill the Civics Literacy requirement.
				5. ENC 2210 Technical Communication was added to the courses that satisfy the Writing Intensive requirement.
			2. General Education Program Guide
				1. Required General Education Courses updated to “ENC 1102 - Composition II OR ENC 2210 – Technical Communication, must complete with a "C" or better 3 credits”
				2. Other required communication general education course updated to “ENC 1102 - Composition II OR ENC 2210 – Technical Communication, must complete with a "C" or better 3 credits”
				3. AMH 2010 History of the United States added to the Social Science core, as well as Civics Literacy.
				4. SYG 1000 Principles of Sociology moved from the general education core to the “Additional Social Sciences” category, per new state rule.
				5. MGF 1130 Mathematical Thinking replaces MGF 1106 and MGF 1107 in the mathematics core for liberal arts pathways. MGF 1131 Mathematics in context added to “Additional Mathematics” category.
				6. GLY 1010C Physical Geology and OCE 1001 Introduction to Oceanography added (moved) to the Natural Sciences core.
				7. GLY 1070C Living on a Water Planet added to the “Additional Natural Sciences” category.
				8. OCB 2010 Marine Biology and OCB 2010L Marine Biology Lab were removed from the “Additional Natural Science” category due to five-year deletions by the BoT.
		2. Writing Intensive ToolKit (still in development)
			1. Professor Peterson is still working on the WI toolkit. However, after the discussion today, she noted that we might need to add more PD.
5. New Business
	1. Dr. McClinton provided an update related to changes that came from the state. First, our syllabi for core general education classes need to include the outcomes from the state, and possibly the state’s description of the course. Secondly, FSW needs to review the general education course offerings and report to the state what courses we offer and what other institutions offer the same general education courses.
	2. Professor Ransford suggested that a GEAC representative attend the upcoming HLC conference since we are transitioning from SACSCOC to HLC.
		1. Dr. McClinton said an administrator will be in attendance this year and next year will be an appropriate time for faculty to start attending.
6. The meeting concluded at 11:35 am.