GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
206th Meeting
Thursday, April 18, 2013

MINUTES
Approved

Present: A. Birberick (Ex-officio, Vice Provost), D. Chakraborty (LAS/PHYS), B. Coller (EET/MEE), D. Gorman (LAS/ENG), M. Kolb (Ex-officio, General Education Coordinator), W. Luo (LAS/GEOG), S. Morris (Ex-officio, Assessment Services), J. Umoren (HHS/FCNS), C. Vander Schee (EDU/LEPF/UCC), K. Wiemer (LAS/PSYCH/UCC)

I. Adoption of the Agenda

Coller made a motion, seconded by Wiemer, to APPROVE THE AGENDA. Minor changes to the order of the agenda were proposed. Motion passed unanimously to approve the agenda with minor changes.

II. Announcements

A. Minutes for the March 28, 2013 meeting were approved electronically through Vibe.

III. Old Business

A. Submissions: Gorman received revised and additional documents for ARTH courses and POLS courses. He reviewed them as requested by the GEC and approved the courses. There are 4-5 Physics courses that remain for approval. Gorman is waiting to hear back from the Physics Department regarding these courses. Depending upon the materials the department sends, Gorman will approve, per the request of the GEC, these courses.

B. General Education Re-Visioning Task Force will meet on Friday, April 19. This will be the last meeting of this semester. The committee will be reviewing drafts of surveys that will be sent to faculty and to students in the fall.

C. Humanities and Fine Arts Language Issue. Vander Schee and Wiemer, who are the University Coordinating Council representatives to the GEC, reported on a recent UCC action. At its April 4, 2013 meeting, the Undergraduate Coordinating Council (UCC) voted not to accept the portion of the GEC minutes related to the catalog framing language for the Humanities and Fine Arts section. In this portion of the GEC minutes, the GEC had made the decision not to take any action at this time on the framing language issue. The UCC is asking that the GEC reconsider their decision and recommends that the GEC adopt the original catalog language. Birberick confirmed that this was the request from the UCC.
Vander Schee and Weimer briefed the GEC on the discussion that took place at the UCC meeting. The GEC took up, in its own discussion, issues that had been raised in letters by Assoc. Dean S. Doederlein (LA&S) and Dean R. Holly (V&PA) as well as at the UCC meeting. There was concern among the GEC members that the College of Education was not being given a voice in the discussion. The GEC also expressed concern about not wanting to disadvantage any one college and that if it were to return to the original framing language, the College of Education would be put at a disadvantage. It was pointed out that the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences teaches 90% of the general education courses. The 6-year catalog issue was also addressed; it was noted that this is not a true concern because students can change catalogs as well as request exceptions/substitutions. It was also pointed out that a distinction could be made between humanities (encompassing both LA&S and CoED) and the fine arts (VP&A). The GEC expressed concern that the original language implied that the humanities is the purview of only one college. In the 21st century, it is important to reflect a broader definition and to consider how curricula and canons have evolved. There was concern about territorialism in course offerings and the negative effects this might have for students and for the revision of the general education program.

The GEC considered four options: (1) Reinstating the original framing language; (2) Offering new framing language; (3) Upholding its original decision and notifying the UCC to that effect; and (4) Tabling the issue until the fall. After further discussion, Gorman made a motion, seconded by Coller, TO REINSTATE THE ORIGINAL CATALOG FRAMING LANGUAGE AND RECONSIDER THE ISSUE NEXT YEAR. IN ADDITION, THE GEC WILL ISSUE A STATEMENT OF CONCERN. Vote: 3 in favor; 1 opposed; 2 abstain. The motion passed.

IV. Report from General Education Coordinator
Kolb gave a quick update on the task force. At the meeting on Friday, the committee will finish up some tasks, look at a set of directives, and review the surveys.

V. New Business
Weimer moved, seconded by Gorman, to rollover the election of a GEC chair to the first meeting of fall 2013. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment:
The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Anne L. Birberick, Vice Provost