GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
200th Meeting
Thursday, September 20, 2012

MINUTES
Approved

Present: A. Birberick (Ex-officio, Vice Provost), D. Chakraborty (LAS/PHYS), B. Coller (EET/MEE), E. Klonoski (VPA/MUSC), M. Kolb (Ex-officio, General Education Coordinator), L. Lundstrum (BUS/FINA), W. Luo (LAS/GEOG), S. Morris (Ex-officio, Assessment Services), D. Smith (Catalog Editor), J. Umoren (HHS/FCNS), C. Vander Schee (EDU/LEPF/UCC), K. Wiemer (LAS/PSYC/UCC)

I. Adoption of Agenda

A. The meeting was called to order by Kolb in the absence of GEC chair Gorman. Coller made a motion, seconded by Luo, to APPROVE THE AGENDA. Motion passed unanimously. Introductions were made.

II. Announcements

A. Electronic approval of minutes from April 19 and April 26, 2012
B. UCC meeting schedule, 2012-13
C. GEC membership
D. GEC bylaws
E. GEC Annual Report 2011-12

III. General Education Coordinator’s Report

A. Kolb reported that he started in the position on July 1, 2012, and highlighted some of his activities to date. He attended an AAC&U conference. He has worked on updating the General Education website and discussed some of the changes he has made with the GEC. He asked GEC members to let him know if they have any thoughts on other changes that should be made to the website. Kolb asked the GEC if the committee’s working rules should be included. It was decided that since that document still has some blanks, that the GEC could discuss the working rules at the next meeting to clean up the document. Then it can be posted on the website. It was also suggested that the review cycle be posted so departments can see when their courses are next up for resubmission. It was also decided that a link to the approved GEC minutes (posted on the University Council’s website) be included.

IV. Old Business

A. Assessment Plan. Smith explained that this is a recurring item on the agenda and has been for a number of years to address the need to collect overall assessment data on the general program for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).
   1. University Assessment Panel (UAP). Morris reported that the UAP will review the
General Education Status Report at the September 21 UAP meeting. Birberick and Kolb are planning to attend to answer any questions. The UAP will provide feedback on the report and the GEC should receive an update at the next GEC meeting. Morris added that this is in preparation for the HLC visit in March of 2014 and reminded the GEC that the general education program was flagged in 2004 as being inadequate. So any evidence that the general education program is being evaluated will be helpful. She also stated that if the GEC is reconsidering requiring more frequent assessment data, that request should come sooner rather than later; there are still about two years to collect as much data as possible. She added that any attempt to collect data, even if there’s pushback, will be looked at positively by the HLC. Birberick suggested that GEC members read the document so they are familiar with it. The GEC will need to address any comments by the UAP to show that they are being responsive.

2. Assessment of goals B, C, and D. The GEC needs to continue to look at how to assess these goals. Many suggestions for doing this are included in the General Education Status Report.

B. Resubmissions.
   1. Sciences and Math Courses. Smith reported that the memos went out to departments with these courses this summer, with a deadline of October 14, 2012. She has already received one resubmission.
   2. Social Sciences Follow-up. Smith reported that Gorman is planning to follow-up with the departments that need to provide the GEC with additional information or data.

C. Revisions to Bylaws and APPM.
   1. Bylaws. It was explained that the revisions deal with the duties of the GEC, giving them more authority over the general education program. Revisions are to make it explicit that the GEC can remove courses from the general education program when required data aren’t provided on a timely basis. It is also important for HLC’s purposes that there is a level of accountability when assessment isn’t being done for general education courses. It was discussed that in the past there have been issues with lack of compliance with requests for data. There was further discussion, including suggestions for additional revisions. Smith will provide a new copy for the GEC at the next meeting.
   2. APPM. Smith explained that a section was moved from the end of the section on General Education and moved towards the beginning. And a step was added to parallel the revisions being made to the bylaws to give the GEC more authority with general education courses. Discussion followed and more revisions were made and a final copy will be prepared for the next meeting.

V. New Business

A. Rewording Humanities and Arts Section. Smith explained that with the addition of two courses from the College of Education to the Humanities and Arts, the requirements for fulfilling the hours in Humanities and Arts needs to be revised. Coller made a motion, seconded by Chakraborty, to APPROVE THE REVISIONS TO THIS SECTION OF THE CATALOG (see Appendix A). Motion passed unanimously.

B. Vibe. Smith explained that a new system has been set up for reviewing documents in the curricular approval process. This system, Vibe, can be accessed with Novell login identification. It is the hope to also use this for the GEC to share documents. In the next week or so, Smith will add all GEC members to Vibe and will upload a couple of documents for review. Vibe not only lets GEC members access documents, but they can comment on them.
as well. GEC members were encouraged to use Vibe to review those documents before the next meeting. A short presentation on using Vibe can be made available to the GEC if need be.

C. Meeting Time. The GEC discussed changing the meeting time. It was noted that there have been issues with getting quorum for meetings and would shortening the meeting time to (from 3:00 to 2:00) or changing the time to later in the afternoon make it easier for GEC members to attend the meeting. The GEC decided to leave the meeting times at 12:30 to 3:00.

D. General Education Revison, Moving Forward, Timeline. Kolb reported that since he has taken the position of General Education Coordinator, he has spent a lot of time thinking of the best way to move forward with general education revisions. He would like to create a Vision Committee or Task Force, charged by Provost Alden, to move forward with reviewing the general education program. The committee or task force would include members from all areas of the university community, faculty, students, staff, and administrators. Members of the GEC would definitely be involved. Chakraborty suggested that the committee or task force look at how NIU is doing with regard to general education when compared to peer institutions. Kolb responded that he attended the AAC&U conference this past summer and plans to attend a general education meeting in the spring, so he hopes to get ideas of what the general programs are like at other universities. Klonoski noted that any review of the general education program needs to take into consideration transfer students. He added that when he went to an AAC&U workshop he learned that institutions are looking at general education and transfers from all kinds of perspectives. A lot of universities are moving to general education programs that span all four years, ensuring a quality general education experience for all students, including transfers. Morris suggested that something the GEC should consider doing immediately is requiring that basic student learning outcomes that map to general education be included on every syllabus. Kolb stated that the timeline is for fall 2012 semester to form the committee, develop a mission statement, and get shared governance feedback to the mission statement. Coller made a motion, seconded by Chakraborty, THAT THE GEC CREATE A VISION COMMITTEE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION REVIEW. Klonoski suggested that Greg Long, because of all the work he did on the Baccalaureate Review Task Force, be included. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.

The next meeting will be October 18, 2012, Altgeld 225.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator
Appendix A

University Graduation Requirements

General Education Requirements
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Distributive Studies Area Requirements and Course Descriptions
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Humanities and the Arts (9-12)

Students must earn from 9 to 12 semester hours in the humanities and the arts area with at least one course taken in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and at least one course taken in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, with no more than 6 semester hours taken in any one department. Students may not take all Humanities and Arts courses (9-12 semester hours) from the same college.

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Distributive Studies Area Course Descriptions

Humanities and the Arts (9-12)

The designators ANTH, COMS, ENGL, FLCL, FLER, FLIT, FLRU, HIST, and PHIL are for courses in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Courses with designators beginning with FL are credited in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

The designators ARTH, MUSC, THEA, and TH-D are for courses in the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Courses with designators beginning with TH are credited in the School of Theatre and Dance.

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General Education Course Titles

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Humanities and the Arts (9-12)

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Courses from the College of Education

EPFE 321 – History of American Education (3)
EPFE 410 – Philosophy of Education (3)

Courses from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences