GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
202nd Meeting
Thursday, November 15, 2012

MINUTES
Approved

Present: D. Chakraborty (LAS/PHYS), B. Coller (EET/MEE), D. Gorman (LAS/ENGL), E. Klonoski (VPA/MUSC), M. Kolb (Ex-officio, General Education Coordinator), 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. Wiemer made a motion, seconded by Coller, to APPROVE THE AGENDA. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Announcements

A. Minutes for the October 18, 2012, were approved electronically through Vibe. Discussion followed on how to better use Vibe. Birberick reminded GEC members that Vibe started this semester as a way to expedite the curricular approval process. Smith also noted that GEC members had in the past asked for a way to post materials electronically, so once Vibe was introduced for the curriculum committees it made sense to also try it for posting GEC materials. Since this is still a new process, it was agreed to keep working with it and send any suggestions for improving the use of Vibe to Smith. Gorman added that he would like to introduce a consent agenda for future GEC meetings to take care of any business not requiring discussion.

III. General Education Coordinator’s Report

A. Kolb reported that collection of assessment data is moving forward and he has now met with all of the college deans. He will add comments as other agenda items are discussed.

IV. Old Business

A. Assessment Plan.
   1. University Assessment Panel. Kolb reported on the progress of the response to the University Assessment Panel. He has obtained some rubrics for areas such as USOAR, URAP, Honors, TLCs, etc., and will be evaluating those to see if they address any of the general education goals. He is also working on a database of the resubmissions for all of the general education courses. Discussion followed regarding whether or not the entire resubmissions needed to be provided. Morris noted that having the actual resubmission is not as important as having assessment data.
   2. Assessment of Goals B, C, and D. The rubrics collected for a variety of NIU programs (see above) will be evaluated to see if they apply to these general education goals. Kolb
noted that he and Gorman will discuss how to delegate the work. Birberick added that she also has a report that David Changnon worked on that may address some of the goals.

B. Resubmissions.
   1. Subcommittees. Gorman suggested that for meetings in the future that a consent agenda could be developed to expedite the approval of the resubmissions. Klonoski noted that in the past subcommittees have been asked to report that: 1) the resubmission is acceptable, 2) the resubmission is unacceptable and include the reason(s) why, or 3) the subcommittee is unclear how to proceed with the resubmission and needs feedback from the GEC. Gorman agreed this would be a good way to proceed with the resubmissions and subcommittees. He added that the new submissions for general education credit need to be a priority for this meeting and he will prepare a consent agenda for the January meeting to address the resubmissions.

C. Submissions.
   1. CLCE 100. Committee members were reminded that this submission needed a copy of the syllabus and the appendices that are referred to in the submission. They were also asked to be more specific regarding the general education goals to be addressed. Smith will follow-up with the department to collect those materials.
   2. ARTH courses (eight new submissions). Chakraborty and Luo were assigned these submissions as part of the subcommittee work. Chakraborty reported that the submissions are all structured similarly and there is a lot of information for each one. There are data provided on student learning outcomes; all of these topics were taught previously under different courses. It was clarified that the School of Art deleted a number of their art history courses last year, including many that were in the general education program, and that all eight of the new submissions are for new courses. Chakraborty noted that under diverse learning styles, they only address disabilities. Birberick asked if the APPM recommendations for a 300-level course in the general education program were addressed. Gorman responded that according to the course descriptions and syllabi these courses are meeting those recommendations. Discussion followed regarding what the GEC should expect regarding diverse learning styles. It should be more than simply stating on the syllabus that there is the Disability Resource Center. It was also noted that addressing diverse learning styles does not mean addressing disabilities; these are two different issues. It was noted that the submissions address disabilities but not diverse learning styles. It was also discussed that the general education submission forms are not clear on what is expected regarding these different issues and that examples for both should be added to the website and a link to the website should be added to the form. Coller made a motion, seconded by Chakraborty, TO APPROVE ALL OF THE ART HISTORY SUBMISSIONS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION CREDIT (ARTH 310, ARTH 320, ARTH 330, ARTH 340, ARTH 350, ARTH 360, ARTH 370, ARTH 380) PENDING THE ISSUE OF DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES IS ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Working Rules. Kolb reported that he worked on updating the Working Rules and filled in some of the areas where more information was needed. The timing of resubmissions and responses was discussed as well as changes to the Working Rules that are in line with proposed changes to the GEC bylaws. It was also discussed how a course could get back into the General Education program if it was removed by the GEC. It was clarified that this is an internal document to help inform GEC members what their responsibilities are.

E. General Education Revision. Kolb reported that the letter from Provost Alden is ready to be mailed to potential Task Force members. He has been in contact with the colleges and their
Student Advisory Committees and the Student Association to solicit student membership. There was a question on the timeline and Birberick responded that the letters will go out after Thanksgiving. Kolb added that he hopes that the task force will begin meeting first thing next year. Vander Schee asked if they will be aligning General Education goals with the new baccalaureate goals and Kolb confirmed that is one of the charges. He added that they will begin by working on a mission statement. Once the task force has concluded their work, they will vet the results through the various curriculum and college committees. Ultimately, Kolb hopes to have any revised goals in place in three years, if not sooner. They are asking task force members to commit to three semesters.

V. New Business

A. Submissions for General Education Credit.
   1. POLS 210. Coller noted that they need to be specific about which parts of Goal A the course will address. It was suggested that the department be asked to specify two goals that are most appropriate, possibly the goals that could most easily provide the best assessment data. Birberick added that the submission is thoughtfully put together and Morris said that the rubric is good. There was discussion again about the difference between accessibility and addressing diverse learning styles. This submission addresses the former only. There was also some discussion about creating a template for a general education submission. Wiemer made a motion, seconded by Luo, TO APPROVE THE SUBMISSION FOR POLS 210 PENDING CLARIFICATION OF WHICH SUBGOALS ARE TO BE ASSESSED. Motion passed unanimously.

2. ARTE 109. Birberick noted that the submission seems to address everything the GEC asks for. Coller observed that their reason for offering the course for general education credit is based on the fact that the course was taught in Georgia. Morris asked if there is a limit on the number of general education courses that can be offered by one department (there is not). Discussion followed regarding how they will be assessing the goals and addressing accessibility. Coller made a motion, seconded by Wiemer, TO RETURN THE SUBMISSION FOR ARTE 109 TO THE SCHOOL OF ART AND ASK THEM TO BE MORE SPECIFIC WITH WHICH GOALS ARE TO BE ADDRESSED, PROVIDE A BETTER RATIONALE FOR OFFERING THIS COURSE AS A GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE AT NIU, AND EXPLAIN HOW DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES WILL BE ADDRESSED. Wiemer suggested that an example be provided the school so they have a better sense of what the GEC is asking for. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Course Revisions. Minor course revisions for FCNS 201, FCNS 406, BIOS 103, BIOS 105, CHEM 210, CHEM 211, CHEM 212, and CHEM 213 were noted. In addition, BIOS 104 is to be deleted as a course by the department. Klonoski made a motion, seconded Coller, TO APPROVE THE COURSE REVISIONS AND DELETION. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

The next meeting will be January 17, 2013, Altgeld 225.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator