GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
211th Meeting
Thursday, February 20, 2014

MINUTES
Approved

Present: A. Birberick (Ex-Officio, Vice Provost), C. Campbell (EDU/CAHE/UCC), B. Coller (EET/MEE), D. Gorman (LAS/ENGL), J. Johnson (EDU/SEED), E. Klonoski (VPA/MUSC), M. Kolb (Ex-officio, Acting Associate Vice Provost), S. McDonald (Student/LAS/BIOS), C. Parker (Ex-Officio, Director, Office of Assessment Services), D. Smith (Catalog Editor), J. Umoren (HHS/FCNS)

The meeting was called to order by GEC chair Umoren.

I. Adoption of Agenda
Gorman made a motion, seconded by Coller, to APPROVE THE AGENDA. Smith reported that item D.1. should be removed. Motion passed unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

II. Approval of Minutes
Gorman made a motion, seconded by Johnson, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 16, 2014, MEETING. Gorman had some corrections. Motion passed unanimously to approve the minutes with corrections.

III. Announcements
There were no announcements.

IV. Old Business

A. PLUS Task Force. Kolb reported on the documents that will go in the ready room for the Higher Learning Commission site visit team. He specifically noted the General Education Assessment Report and the two-page executive summary. Kolb reported that the General Education Symposium held on January 29 went very well. There were about 150 in attendance for the beginning of the symposium and to hear the keynote speaker, with about 70 participating in the round table workshops that followed the keynote speaker. Kolb said that five key value areas were presented one at a time, and attendees were to respond to how a revised general education program could address those five areas. Kolb then presented some of the results from the workshops. The current task of the PLUS Task Force is model building. Once models are developed, they will be doing a series of focus groups and workshops. They already have about 15 scheduled with student groups. McDonald said she could help with identifying some student groups. Kolb also reported that the IBHE is providing a grant of $60,000 to support the task force’s work, including running the focus groups and reaching out to the community colleges.

B. 2013 General Education Assessment Plan. Kolb encouraged the GEC to consider the recommendations in his assessment plan report. Umoren asked if GEC members have reviewed the report that Kolb prepared last year. Kolb said that two of the recommendations have been
done so far. The evaluation rubric was revised and areas that are already doing assessment (e.g., Assessment Services, OSEEL, and Honors) that general education data could be retrieved from have been identified.

C. Humanities and Arts Catalog Language. A memo was sent to the College of Education asking if they would like to present a change to the catalog language to address their courses that are now available for general education credit in the Humanities and Arts area. Campbell said she will follow-up with College of Education Associate Dean Fox. Johnson said he shared this issue with Fox as well.

D. Follow-up for courses not yet approved. Some of these were left over from last spring and Gorman said he would go back through his records and update those contacts.

1. HIST 381 and HIST 382. Gorman pointed out that for HIST 381 there was nothing attached. What they gave the GEC was not sufficient. Klonoski pointed out that even if a rubric and assignments were attached, they still aren’t providing data. The GEC discussed that data was provided for HIST 382. For 381, Umoren will ask them to provide the attachments. A brief discussion followed regarding what goals are being assessed. Klonoski made a motion, seconded by Gorman, THAT IF HISTORY IS NOT ASSESSING GOAL B.1, THEY NEED TO REMOVE IT FROM THEIR RESUBMISSION. IF THEY ARE ASSESSING GOAL B.1, THEY NEED TO PROVIDE THOSE DATA. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Core Competencies Resubmissions

1. Alternatives to MATH 101. Umoren reported that she sent a memo to the chair of the Department of Mathematical Sciences, then followed-up with a phone call. They will provide the resubmissions for the rest of the MATH general education courses by June. The GEC then agreed to review all of the MATH resubmissions at one time.

2. COMS 100 evaluation. Kolb contacted the department with a follow-up and there will be an update at the next GEC meeting.

3. Subcommittee assignments.

   a) Subcommittee A, ENGL 103, ENGL 104, ENGL 105. Coller said that he thought the assessment was great; all of the pieces were there. There was one problem, they said they are assessing goals a.i. and a.iii. But a.iii. is math (students perform basic computations, display facility with use of formal and quantitative reasoning analysis and problem solving, and interpret mathematical models and statistical information), and they didn’t assess math. It was suggested that they could be asked if they’d like to delete goal a.iii from their resubmission. Otherwise it’s an exemplary report. Gorman felt sure that they meant a.iv. (Students are able to access and use various information resources). It was clarified that they did assess for a.iv. Coller made a motion, seconded by Klonoski, TO APPROVE THE RESUBMISSIONS FOR ENGL 103, ENGL 104, ENGL 105, BUT THEY NEED TO CHANGE GOAL A.III. TO GOAL A.IV. Motion passed unanimously.

   b) Subcommittee B, MATH 101, MATH 110, MATH 155, MATH 201, MATH 206, MATH 210, MATH 211, MATH 229. This report will be postponed to the fall. The department has until June, 2014, to submit the resubmissions for MATH 110, MATH 155, MATH 201, MATH 206, MATH 210, MATH 211, MATH 229.

   c) Subcommittee C, STAT 208, STAT 301, STAT 350, ISYE 335. Umoren reported that the subcommittee approves of the resubmissions for the statistics courses. For ISYE 335, they did not have details on how they are using their assessment data. However, they are
changing their assessment tool. It was discussed that this may be how they are improving their course based on assessment data. Umornen said they didn’t say anything about revising the course. Johnson said that they didn’t differentiate the different goals. Klonoski said that they could be sent a note that reminds them for future resubmission to document how they are changing the course based on assessment data. Umornen reported that they said they are assessing goals a.iii. and b.iv. and Johnson said that they report different data for those two goals, but it’s not clear how they’re assessing the course.

Coller offered to talk to the department and maybe they can provide any missing data by the end of the semester. They also need to be told not to list every general education goal. It was then reported that the resubmissions for the statistics courses had good examples of rubrics. Subcommittee members felt that these resubmission were acceptable. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Gorman, TO ACCEPT THE RESUBMISSIONS FOR STAT 208, STAT 301, STAT 350. **Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **UBUS 223.** A memo was received from the College of Business requesting that UBS 223 be removed from the general education program (it is an alternate to MATH 101 for the math core competency). Coller made a motion, seconded by Gorman, TO REMOVE UBUS 223 FROM THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AS REQUESTED BY THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **New Business**

A. **Subcommittee to review PLUS recommendations.** Umornen reminded the GEC that Thu had asked that there be a GEC subcommittee to review the PLUS Task Force recommendations. A brief discussion followed. Klonoski suggested that the subcommittee not include any members of the task force. Committee members agreed that those who are not already members of the task force will be involved in reviewing the task force’s proposals when they are ready.

B. **Higher Learning Commission Visit and Report.** Birberick announced that the site visit team is asking for the GEC’s participation and have requested a meeting with them on March 4, 11:00-11:50, HSC Heritage Room. This meeting with the members of the HLC site visit team will also include members of the PLUS Task Force. Birberick asked GEC members to let her know if they will be able to attend so that she can forward the names to the site visit team. She emphasized how important it is that members of the GEC are able to meet with the site visit team. She also passed around copies of NIU’s mission and asked GEC members to be familiar with what it says. Committee members were reminded that the HLC self-study is on NIU’s website and they were asked to at least read the executive summary and the sections that address general education and teaching and learning. Committee members should also be familiar with Kolb’s report from last year and the 2007 report. It is important that they know that NIU has taken steps to address assessment of general education; that there are better assessment tools, the program speaks to the mission of the university (i.e, teaching and learning, and excellence and engagement), etc. Birberick said she is looking forward to hearing from them regarding the progress NIU has made. She added that GEC members should be candid with them about issues and how NIU is moving forward. There was discussion regarding what the site team will want to know and what GEC members should discuss with them. Gorman asked what happens after the visit. Birberick said that as she understands it, before they even depart, they do two really intensive days of meeting with people. There are 11 members of the site visit team and they spread out all over campus and meet with many different groups and different constituents, talk to them, gather information, look at self-study, look at resources. Then they develop some preliminary findings, which they may or may not share with certain individuals that last day. Then after the site visit, they write a report; they have a certain time frame to deliver the report to the university with their findings. Birberick
added that the findings can be a range of things. Gorman asked if there will be things the GEC will have to do and Birberick said that is one of the possibilities, that they may ask for additional information while they’re on campus or after. McDonald asked if they would be meeting with students and Birberick said that they would. McDonald asked how the students were selected and Birberick noted that a variety of student groups are involved (e.g., Student Association, Alumni Association, graduate students). There will be a representative sample of students who will meet with the site team. It was reiterated that GEC members should talk about the fact that the committee has been working on assessment of the program, but admittedly assessment has not been as thorough as it should be. Coller agreed that the GEC has been doing assessment and working on closing the loops, looking at more direct methods, etc., and that this could be emphasized with the site team.

VI. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded, to ADJOURN. The motion passed by acclamation. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting will be March 27, 2014, Altgeld 225.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator