

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**248<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**Thursday, March 28, 2019**

**MINUTES**  
Approved

Present: R. Caughron (EDU/KNPE/BC), D. Gorman (LAS/ENGL/BC), L. Hedin (EDU/SEED/BC), E. Klonoski (Ex-officio, Associate Vice Provost), B. Montgomery (HHS/FCNS), M. Pickett (Academic Advising Center), M. Quinlan (VPA/ART), D. Smith (Catalog Editor), R. Subramony (Accreditation, Assessment, and Evaluation)

Guests: Tawanda Gipson and Carrie Zack (Accreditation, Assessment, and Evaluation)

The meeting was called to order by GEC Chair Montgomery.

I. Adoption of Agenda. Due to lack of quorum, there was no motion to adopt the agenda.

II. Announcements.

- A. University Writing Project (UWP)—Tawanda Gipson and Carrie Zack, Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation. See also online report at: [https://www.niu.edu/effectiveness/\\_files/uwp-report-2017-2018.pdf](https://www.niu.edu/effectiveness/_files/uwp-report-2017-2018.pdf), which includes all the results referred to in this report. Gipson made the presentation. For a number of years Accreditation, Assessment, and Evaluation has been doing the UWP. She presented a PowerPoint on the UWP. Gipson shared the latest results and included past trends. The UWP is for upperclassmen and the project represents all six colleges. The rubric used includes criteria based on AAC&U criteria. Gipson provided an overview on the procedures as well as the results. She talked about how project can be useful and presented take-aways.

Caughron asked what is the rigor of the freshman English courses and how many students test out of freshman English. He expressed concern that maybe NIU students aren't being prepared well enough in writing at the freshman level. Pickett said most students are taking two semesters of freshman English at NIU, but it is not required they take the courses at NIU. Caughron added the UWP is important because employers are looking for graduates to have writing skills. Discussion followed regarding how to improve writing instruction across colleges and programs. It was noted the University Writing Center is a good resource for students.

Caughron asked about the projection for five years from now in terms of quality of writing. Gipson responded they have already seen an improvement and that trend should continue. Hedin suggested the UWP be continued to be promoted to increase sample size. The criterion were discussed and sample rubrics were passed around. Subramony asked where else data can be shared to make the project more beneficial? Caughron suggested it be shared at the college curriculum level. Quinlan suggested an assembly where the results could be presented. The GEC then discussed the future of the project and if there were any redundancies with other university assessments. Committee members were encouraged to send any suggestions or comments to [assess@niu.edu](mailto:assess@niu.edu).

III. Old Business

- A. Pathways Coordinators. Klonoski gave a budget update and reported the university is searching for efficiencies to save money. He said the GEC could look at the Pathways and evaluate if they are accomplishing what the GEC expected them to. Caughron reported on the students in his class; they want online general education courses. Also, most of the students weren't intentional in their course selections. It often came down to what fit in their schedules the best. Klonoski said he will provide the GEC with research on students who are intentional with their course selections.

Montgomery reported the new coordinator for the Origins and Influences Pathway is Gipson Cima from the School of Theatre and Dance. She also presented the latest draft of the Pathways oversight plan and noted revisions. Enrollment numbers in Pathways courses were discussed as was how to better market the Pathways. Caughron reiterated his suggestion of posters for each Pathway to be placed in strategic locations. Smith showed the language she has added in the catalog that informs users that a course is part of a Pathway. The committee brainstormed what data they need to make informed decisions moving forward, such as the courses in a Pathway, instructor type, mode of delivery, enrollment, prerequisites, and frequency of offerings.

- B. Pathways Oversight Plan. See above discussion.
- C. Marketing Pathways to on-campus students. See above discussion.

IV. New Business

- A. Students who have completed a Pathways Focus. The GEC discussed the spreadsheet provided by Montgomery.

- V. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m. by acclamation.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 18, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator