MINUTES

General Education Committee Meeting
Second Meeting/Academic Year 2022-2023
Virtual on Teams
12:30 – 3:00 p.m., Thursday, November 17, 2022

<u>Voting Members Present</u>: J. E. Strid (BC); M. Myles (BC); Yipeng Lieu (CBUS – fall only); S. Takai (CEET); M. Cooke (CHHS); S. Sharp (CLAS); D. Brown (CLAS); C. Abreu (CLAS); J-C Wang (CVPA); A. Zaker (Student – CBUS); S. Estes (Academic Advising).

<u>Voting Members Absent</u>: A. Schatteman, Chair (Baccalaureate Council); S. DeSpain (CEDU).

<u>Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members Present</u>: O. Ghrayeb (Senior Vice Provost); C. Zack (Accreditation, Assessment & Evaluation); C. McFarland McKee (CC/CE).

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members Absent: J. Rhode (Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation)

I.   Meeting Call to Order by Chair

After confirming a quorum present, the meeting was called to order by Acting Chair, Shane Sharp at 12:37 p.m.

II.   Adoption of Agenda

Strid moved to adopt agenda, seconded by Estes. Motion to adopt was **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

III. Approval of Minutes from 2022.10.20

Estes moved to adopt agenda, seconded by Strid. Motion to adopt was **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV.   Announcements

Sharp announced that Linda Saborio, NIU Faculty Advisory Council Representative to IBHE, is seeking feedback on two questions, one of which is particularly relevant to the GEC. "Does early college credit impact NIU's general education program, i.e., lost revenue, programs being closed, etc.?" Sharp noted there is another part of the question, but this is the part that he feels is very relevant for GEC. He further explained that he thought the idea behind the question is that a lot of students are coming in who have early college credit, so they don't have to take a lot of the Gen Eds. Institutions therefore lose out on revenue and a lot of programs get closed because many depend on general education course enrollment. Sharp suggested that we don't know the answer to that at this point, but we might be tasked with providing some data for this question.

Ghrayeb concurred that we may need to do some institutional research to help answer that question. He noted that he is not sure how many credits are impacted at NIU through dual credit, AP credit, or whatever else may be considered early credits, or what the trend line has been. Ghrayeb observed that Greg Barker in Institutional Research and Analytics can help with answering that question.

Sharp suggested that maybe this can be added to a GEC agenda next semester to prepare a memo to send to Linda Saborio regarding that question.

McFarland McKee announced that we are still looking for two undergraduate students to serve on the GEC.

Sharp announced that he would like to re-arrange the agenda and move to some of the items in the Old Business Section of the agenda before addressing the curricular submissions for GEC.

V. Old Business

A. The curriculum coordinator shared that the General Education syllabus statement that GEC passed on 03.24.2022 has been approved by the Baccalaureate Council in the November 10, 2022, meeting. Minor revisions were made to the language so that it will now read as follows:

General Education Syllabus Statement

As part of the general education requirements, this course fulfills three credit hours in the Knowledge Domain of (_____) towards the minimum of 21 hours across the three domains.

For more information on General Education Requirements, please see your advisor or review the "General Education Requirements" for the appropriate undergraduate catalog.

Ghrayeb noted that he did not think this statement was a major issue that would rise to a level that would require referring it to the Faculty Senate, but he will confer with Chad McEvoy. Ghrayeb explained that the Curriculum Coordinator would draft a memo and would collaborate with the Registration and Records to develop a communication plan for the new syllabus statement.

B. Regarding this agenda item - discussion on next steps regarding 300/400 level courses and PRQ/CRQ courses to follow up discussion from the October 20, 2022, meeting - the decision was made to move forward with communicating the new General Education Framework to the departments and let that process happen first. Once that information is received, GEC can then address the issue of PRQ/CRQ courses. Ghrayeb noted that it was his understanding from the last meeting that the concerns of GEC were not so much about the 300/400 level Gen Ed courses, but whether the courses have a PRQ and whether they are open to all majors.

Liu shared that he had a discussion with department advisors, and concern was

expressed about any possibility of eliminating 300/400 level courses from the General Education course list. Liu asked how many 300/400 level courses are on the GE course list, and if GEC will evaluate those courses on a case-by-case basis.

Ghrayeb concurred that we should not decide to eliminate all 300/400 level courses and that it is sometimes good to have those courses as long as they are accessible to all majors. Similar to the courses that require PRQs, we need to evaluate those on a case-by-case basis, Ghrayeb noted.

Sharp noted that all the Honors courses that GEC has approved as Gen Ed courses are 300-level.

C. The GEC-recommended new General Education Framework was approved by the BC at its November 11, 2021, meeting, but has not yet been incorporated into the catalog. Discuss developing a plan and process to communicate these changes to the General Education Framework, including if an assessment subcommittee is needed, and when the catalog should be updated. Ghrayeb noted that the three pathways of sustainability, social justice, and health and wellness pathways will remain, per the recommendations. He further reminded the membership that the recommendations also addressed improving those three pathways.

Ghrayeb clarified that the framework refers to the outcomes for each knowledge domain, and that has been approved. We need to do two things – we need to communicate that new framework to the departments and give them a timeline to work on their courses. In parallel to that, we need to reflect the change in the catalog language, and we need a plan for that. Ghrayeb suggested that maybe we can form a working group of Alicia Schatteman, Jason Rhode, Carrie Zack, Ghrayeb, and McFarland McKee to come up with a timeline and a plan to start executing because this is something that needs to be done for HLC accreditation.

Sharp asked about the goal of the timeline. Ghrayeb explained that during the summer we captured all general education courses in each of the three knowledge domains, and we organized those courses in different categories in terms of frequency of offering. We don't target the entire list, so to be reasonable, we will start with the courses that are being offered on a regular basis first. For the departments offering those courses, Ghrayeb stated that we will communicate with them to explain the new framework, and we will give them options.

Option one, their course still fits within the original knowledge domain they claimed when they submitted the course, and if that is the case, they need to acknowledge that this course still supports the two learning outcomes aligned with that knowledge domain. Option two, the department can inform us that their course now belongs to a different knowledge domain and then they need to acknowledge the learning outcomes for that knowledge domain. Option three, the department may say that given the new framework, a course may no longer belong as a general education course. Ghrayeb noted that he does not expect that, but it is an option.

Ghrayeb explained that this is the discussion that the GEC needs to have – how much time we need to give the departments to finish that assignment. Departments will be submitting or responding back to the request for re-assessing

their general education courses, and GEC will need to review those submissions and decide if they make sense or if the department is not addressing the GEC request. The courses may not need review as new courses, but they will still need to be reviewed. How long should we give them? If we are communicating the framework to them in the spring, should we give them one academic year, or two academic years? The GEC will need to decide that.

Ghrayeb commented that we do not need to collect syllabi and sample assignments demonstrating the outcomes of the domain, as that is the Phase Two of this process that the assessment office will work on. All we need in Phase One is for departments to acknowledge that their course is still good for that knowledge domain and to affirm that the course supports the two learning outcomes. We have a template for Phase One that departments can use.

In Phase Two, once we have the assessment plan and the schedule for assessment, then if a course is chosen in a given semester to be assessed, then the departments have to demonstrate that the students are attaining the two outcomes they have said the course supports.

Sharp commented that we could probably collect the information in Phase One by the end of next semester. He noted that he wanted to move to discussing these items before considering any approval of curricular items in the agenda because he questioned if GEC wants to move to approve any new general education courses that are using the old template and framework, or if a moratorium should be placed on any new course approvals until this communication is sent out.

VI. Recommendations to BC for Catalog, Policy, or Website Changes

A. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Ghrayeb suggested that GEC not hold up the following College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' new ENVS 200 course GE application until the Committee is ready to launch the new General Education Framework. Instead, he suggested that we work with the Department of Environmental Studies, explain the new framework to them, have them acknowledge the learning outcomes for nature and technology, and have them map the course to the required outcome and secondary outcome.

CLAS 08 (AY 2022-2023)
- CLAS22.23.08.30 / New Course ENVS 200 Introduction to Sustainability. *Syllabus & nonduplication statements available in Teams folder*.
- New GE Application/New Course. *Complete application available in Teams folder*.
  - Reference 17774274 – ENVS 200 – Introduction to Sustainability.
  - Knowledge Domain: Nature and Technology.
  - AcademicsPLUS Pathway: Sustainability.
  - *New Course Request*

B. College of Education

Ghrayeb and Sharp indicated that we should do the same for the College of

Education GE application for EPFE 302, working with the Department to address the learning outcomes and have them map the course to the required outcome and a secondary outcome.

New GE & Pathways Application/Existing Course
- Reference 17652679– EPFE 302 – Advocacy, Justice and Leadership in a Diverse Society.
  - Knowledge Domain: Society and Culture
  - AcademicsPLUS Pathway: N/A

Sharp called for a motion to table the two submissions for General Education consideration and have the curriculum coordinator contact the respective departments to re-submit the courses using the new framework. Estes moved to table; Cooke seconded. **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. General

McFarland McKee presented *p*roposed changes to the NIU website (not catalog) regarding General Education to reduce and redirect contacts unrelated to Curriculum Coordinator/Catalog Editor area of responsibility. The proposed changes are identified in Section A. Strid moved approval of the proposed changes to the website, seconded by Estes. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. New Business – None.

VIII. Next meeting of GEC

Sharp announced that the next meeting of the GEC will be December 15. 2022, on Teams, and unless there are any objections, the GEC will continue to meet virtually on Teams.

IX. Adjournment

With the conclusion of business on the agenda, Sharp called for a motion to adjourn. Estes moved to adjourn, seconded by Strid. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol McFarland McKee
Curriculum Coordinator/Catalog Editor

AGENDA

General Education Committee Meeting
Second Meeting/Academic Year 2022-2023
Virtual on Teams
12:30 – 3:00 p.m., Thursday, November 17, 2022

I. **Meeting Call to Order by Chair, Alicia Schatteman**

II. **Adoption of Agenda**

III. **Approval of Minutes from 2022.10.20**

IV. **Announcements**

V. **Recommendations to BC for Catalog, Policy, or Website Changes**

   A. *General*

   From Curriculum Coordinator/Catalog Editor
   - Proposed changes to the NIU website (not catalog) regarding General Education to reduce and redirect contacts unrelated to Curriculum Coordinator/Catalog Editor area of responsibility.

   B. *College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*

   CLAS 08 (AY 2022-2023)
   - CLAS22.23.08.30 / New Course ENVS 200 Introduction to Sustainability. *Syllabus & nonduplication statements available in Teams folder.*
   - New GE Application/New Course. *Complete application available in Teams folder.*
        - Reference 17774274 – ENVS 200 – Introduction to Sustainability.
        - Knowledge Domain: Nature and Technology.
        - AcademicsPLUS Pathway: Sustainability.
        - *New Course Request*

   C. *College of Education*

   New GE & Pathways Application/Existing Course
   - Reference 17652679– EPFE 302 – Advocacy, Justice and Leadership in a Diverse Society.
        - Knowledge Domain: Society and Culture
        - AcademicsPLUS Pathway: N/A

VI. **Old Business**

   A. Update on syllabus statement (that GEC passed on 03.24.2022) from BC

meeting of November 10, 2022. *Revised approved language has been uploaded to the Teams folder.*

B. Discussion on next steps regarding 300/400 level courses and PRQ/CRQ courses. Follow up discussion from October 20, 2022, meeting.

C. The GEC-recommended new General Education Framework was approved by the BC at its November 11, 2021, meeting, but has not yet been incorporated into the catalog. Discuss developing a plan and process to communicate these changes to the General Education Framework, including if an assessment subcommittee is needed, and when the catalog should be updated.

VII.   New Business

VIII. Next meeting of GEC will be December 15, 2022, on Teams.

IX.   Adjournment

GENERAL

UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

<u>Website Change</u>   <u>Website Link</u>

General Education
As you work toward your bachelor's degree at NIU, you'll complete general education requirements in addition to your major requirements. General education courses will give you a solid foundation for your future studies and career.

You'll complete 33 credit hours of general education courses in <u>Foundational Studies</u> and <u>Knowledge Domains</u>. You can "double count" up to six credit hours approved for both your major and general education.

At NIU, you can customize your general education to match your interests by following an <u>AcademicsPLUS pathway</u>. From personalizing your classes in your first semester to earning a notation on your transcript when you graduate, pathways give you the opportunity to enhance your learning—and be recognized for it.

==If you are a current NIU student with questions about general education requirements, please contact your academic advisor. For prospective students with questions about NIU's general education program, please email <u>admissions@niu.edu</u> or call 815-753-0446.==

NIU faculty and staff members can find information about general education assessment and adding or removing courses from pathways and Knowledge Domains in <u>Forms and Resources</u>.

~~Contact Us~~

~~Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies~~
~~generaleducation@niu.edu~~
~~815-753-8381~~

~~Carol McFarland McKee~~
~~Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator~~
~~Williston Hall 301~~
~~815-753-0126~~
~~cmcfarlandmckee@niu.edu~~

Rationale: The curriculum coordinator/catalog editor receives a handful of emails each month from students with questions that are not relevant to the duties of the curriculum coordinator/catalog

editor. Examples of some of the emails include: How do I change my major? If I come in as a transfer student with an AA, how many credits am I required to take in order to complete the Bachelor's degree? If I specialize in a Learning Pathway, what are the specific requirements for that? Are all general education requirements courses offered online? How do I test for my GED at NIU? These questions are best answered by an academic advisor or admissions counselor and will likely be answered more quickly. Adding a statement to this effect to the website may help redirect both prospective and current students to a better resource. Removing the "Contact Us" information will reduce or eliminate both external and internal emails of this nature from being sent to the wrong contact person. Contact information will still be available for faculty and staff by clicking on the [Forms and Resources](#) link on the website page.

General Education Syllabus Statement

As part of the general education requirements, this course fulfills three credit hours in the Knowledge Domain of (_____) towards the minimum of 21 hours across the three domains.

For more information on General Education Requirements, please see your advisor or review the "General Education Requirements" for the appropriate [undergraduate catalog.](#)

Suggested change by CC/CE: The use of the hyperlink to the General Education Requirements page may be problematic if faculty members forget to update the link. It may be better to use this statement instead:

The hyperlink provided in the proposed revision is a generic link to the current catalog page on the Registration and Records website, and will not require faculty members to change the link in their syllabus.