

General Education Council
October 26, 2009
PAC 493
Minutes

I. Approval of Minutes from the October 12, 2009 meeting.

Peter Shapinsky motioned to approve the minutes, Lan Dong seconded his motion. All were in favor, minutes approved.

II. Approval of Courses

A. ENG 371: Creative Writing: Poetry – Humanities or VCP - kicked back for clarification

The instructor is requesting approval for either a Humanities or Visual, Creative, and Performing Arts category. Based on the criteria and the syllabus, the Council has recommended this course fit best in the VCP category rather than Humanities. The instructor will be contacted to clarify the category.

The question for GeCo is whether they want it as a 300 or 200 level course. This course needs to be a 3 hour lower division course.

B. SOA 304: Human Evolution: Biological and Cultural – Social and Behavioral Science- Approved.

C. LIS 431: ECCE: The Beatles – Global Awareness – kicked back

It is not clear that the readings deal with global impact. The syllabus needs to clearly show how this course falls into the Global Awareness criteria.

D. LIS 432: ECCE: Expatriate Paris – Global Awareness – kicked back

This course needs to be reformulated and create measurable learning outcomes in order to get Gen Ed status. It was suggested that in order to be more accessible and recognizable, put it into the standard UIS syllabus template as she reworks the syllabus. This course has great content but it is not understandable from a student's perspective. Also the grades need to be posted in Gradebook.

E. ASP 102: Stars & Galaxies – Physical Science without Lab - approved

F. WGS 334: ECCE: Masculinities – U.S. Communities – table until next meeting to allow time to report on comparative societies retreat.

III. Report from Comparative Societies Retreat

The Geco members that attended the retreat commented on the discussion regarding Comparative Societies courses and the challenges with scheduling and teaching them.

They talked about how many sections should be offered and what the cap should be in each class. There are second year students taking Comparative Societies sessions because they fill up too fast in the first year. The problem is there are not enough instructors that want to teach these courses because it takes away from their passionate topics.

There is wide support to offer a separate baccalaureate skills course and a Comparative Societies course. In order to make these courses more attractive to teach, it was suggested to allow instructors to teach their passion and integrate baccalaureate skills into their topic, and by offering a freshman seminar course in the first or second semester would attract those who are committed to teaching core courses in their major and they would not have to find a way to integrate baccalaureate skills into their courses. UNI 101 needs to teach baccalaureate skills.

Option 1: Introduce baccalaureate skills into comparative societies courses.

Option 2: Offer one comparative societies course in order to take the pressure off that we do not have enough sections.

Option 3: There was considerable debate regarding course caps for comparative societies courses ranging from 20 – 35.

As Gen Ed Council we need to add a first year seminar and a training component for instructors to learn how to do teach these skills well, allowing extra compensation for taking up summer time.

The University of Minnesota Morris has a model for the freshman seminar. Since it is a Diversity model we could be open to as many disciplines as possible. If however, we make it completely open to any disciplines we will have to deal with issues of IAI compatibility. There are few comparative societies' courses that get approved by IAI because of their Interdisciplinarity. The criteria are restrictive which have admissions implications. One of the problems is that it discourages transfer students because they would need a lot of hours overall in Gen Ed requirements.

Freshmen must have these skills. UNI 101 as constructed is doing a very inadequate job of preparing freshmen to be a college student. If it is an academic course we need to put it somewhere and Gen Ed is the most appropriate place.

Option 1: Move freshman seminar to Gen Ed making it a requirement and reducing Comparative Societies courses.

Option 2: Reduce the number of Gen Ed hours required. Drop the ECCE elective, reduce ECCE course hours to 10. We need to see who will be most affected by the drop, for example Clinical Science Lab and TEP. It was suggested that we not add additional diversity on a freshmen level. Baccalaureate skills, Global Awareness and Comparative Societies are enough for them at this level.

This is the first reading of this discussion. Information will be sent out for Geco to review and the discussion will be brought back to the table next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Ply