

GEACC Minutes

Thursday, February 22, 2018

Chairperson: Jason Seabury Vice Chairperson: Jeff Damiano

Attendees: Jason Seabury, Jeff Damiano, Lisa Anderson, Ed Clancy, Jeff Damiano, Karla Ekquist-Lechner, Jaime Hammond, Gil Harel, Beth-Ann Scott, Erin Strauts^[LA1], Yvette Tucker

Guests: Ron Picard, Carlos Plaza, Kevin Ramer, Anna Zyta^[LA2], Anne Mattrella

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Jason Seabury.

1. Review of last meeting minutes.

Karla moved to approve minutes as amended. Beth-Ann seconded. All in favor.

2. Foreign Language in Gen Ed – Anne Mattrella

Anne suggested placing foreign language in social phenomena or aesthetic dimensions. Ron suggested that Anne meet with Gil to see where the arts can reinvigorate language. Gil said that music can be incorporated into language, especially Spanish, Italian and German. Jason recommended looking at Spanish Art and Music as areas to emphasize in order to spend enough time in the course with aesthetic components. Jason said that we could start with the aesthetic competency and then potentially look at social phenomena.

3. General Studies Advising Recommendations – Ron Picard

- A. Brief Announcement: Letter from NEASC on 5-year report Interim report states NEASC is requesting an assessment of all general education competencies in AY2019. Ron stated GEACC should be using TaskStream and collecting artifacts as much as possible because TaskStream is seen as the national gold standard for assessment.

At Deans' Council last week, it was noted that FIRC is going to be making recommendations for the entire college system for Gen Ed. FIRC may be recommending only 21-24 credits for Gen Ed. requirements. NEASC was told TAP transfer tickets will require 30-31 credits for an associate's degree. FIRC

said that was only for someone going on for a bachelor's degree. Ron expressed concern over equity and recommended starting with 30 credits.

B. New Recommendation Pathways- Ron Picard

Result of poor retention rates - 71.5 percent average retention from fall to spring last year overall and general studies was 6 percent. Complete College America Retention Program was used as a guide. This program suggests providing students with a focus or reason for being in school to increase retention. If students come in undecided the goal is to give them an exploratory Metamajor. 5 Meta majors were created: STEM, Pre-Business, Health Professions, Arts and Humanities and Behavioral and Social Sciences. This is to limit students' choices as much as possible so that they do not become overwhelmed with options. Identification of Cohorts will be used as a recruiting tool.

In the Admissions dept., the student will list General Education as a first major and will be asked to list a second major. Students will be assigned Cohort based on their secondary major.

Faculty was very concerned that if students signed on for one metamajor and decided to move to another metamajor they would lose credit and have to take something else. General Ed. requirements will be maintained. Meta Majors will be used as an advising tool. Meta Majors pathway to go through CEAC and should be available for advising in March.

This includes a 2-3 FYE credits focused on the particular discipline area. Those have not been developed yet. Do not advise students to take an FYE that does not exist. Mitch's faculty would like the Intro to Business course to serve as their FYE.

Ron stated that any course being used as FYE should meet both course and FYE requirements. Once FYE approves it can also go to Gen. Ed. for approval.

Post Ron's discussion above he asked for feedback/support from the committee:

Ed went on record stating that he suspected that all of the pathways would be a variation of the current advising program but they are different. Ron said pathways are sequenced and Gen. Ed requirements are the same. Ed stated it going to be a nightmare for the registrar dept. Yvette stated that the pathways sequence is not done by semester and may be confusing. Ron explained the reason that it was not done by semester is that most students are part time. Courses are sequenced. If students are taking two courses a semester they take the first two courses.

Yvette questioned besides the meta majors how this is different from what is currently being used. Ron replied, if a student takes something that is not on the pathway advising sheet it will still count if it is as a general studies requirement.

Ed stated 23 credits are wide open and that someone can finish with 23 credits of Health Physical Education and in the worst-case scenario this can be very unbalanced.

Jason stated that the pathways are for advising purposes and would not need to be programmed into Degree Works. Ron agreed. Jason questioned if we are requiring a 3 credit FYE for students in general studies, are we requiring a 3 credit FYE for all students across the college? Ron replied that is a financial issue. Jason restated general studies students need to take an additional course but students who have declared a major do not. Ron confirmed.

Jason asked if this pathway is only for Naugatuck Valley. Ron stated Guided Pathways Initiative is asking for all colleges to do this. Ron said other pathways may look different.

Jason asked what the literature says supporting using Meta Majors as opposed to forcing a student to pick a major that is not general studies. Jason questioned what would happen if we got rid of general studies and had students pick a major. Ron stated that there is a good chance of credits being wasted if a student picks a specific program and changes to another specific program. Jason stated either way the student would be wasting credits, going in with general education credits or picking

the wrong major. Ron said the pathways provide a road map to move into a focused degree program without losing any credits.

Yvette asked what are the retention rates on guided pathways according to the research. Ron stated the retention rate are incredibly high at colleges like Mericopa Community College in Arizona. Community College Research Center at Columbia and Complete College of America promote this and it is a standard for retention.

Yvette asked Ron to revise format of the pathways so that it is like the general studies advising sheet. Ron agreed to revise. Jason stated that having the core requirement first would help students and faculty. Jason thinks this is better than general studies and it gives the student some focus.

4. Discussion on Gen Ed post- Consolidation/Update from FIRC

There will be a system wide general education subcommittee formed soon and that subcommittee will determine a system wide Gen. Ed. There will be a representative from this college. The discussion at FIRC was about a decrease in general education requirements. The committee will start with Gateway 21-24 Credit General Education requirements. All of the TAP requirements are present and clustered at the end. Aesthetic or Historical or Oral or Scientific Reasoning can be used. The rationale is that it gives programs more freedom and reduces the need for exemptions.

Ron, Beth Ann, Yvette, Jason stated the more credits required the better in order to give students a well-rounded and meaningful education.

Yvette asked what "Math 109 or above" is equivalent to here. Jason said the idea is to have intermediate algebra as the requirement. Intermediate algebra will be embedded in higher level Math courses per the Math committee. The Math Issues Committee will be reviewing this. The committee will discuss requiring a higher-level Math.

Ron suggested asking the committee:

1. Do they think with the new general education requirements produce well rounded students?
2. Will the student be prepared if they transfer to a 4-year degree?
3. Will the students have the skills that they need to hold down a job and sound like a college educated person?

Jason stated that Ron's questions call for an oral communication requirement. Ron continued that using 30 credits would make each program look to see if

they

are imbedding Gen. Ed. into their programs. Ron noted that Information

Literacy

and Continuing Learning are missing and that Information Literacy is the most important Gen. Ed. competency of the 21st Century (Russian Facebook).

Jaime stated that the Information Literacy has 2 competencies imbedded in it, critical analysis and logical thinking. Jaime advocated for library involvement with courses in that competency area.

Ed stated that the trend for removing courses from competencies is concerning

and

wonders why these courses were ok before and not now. Students with different catalogue terms may be asking this question and it will be difficult to rationalize. Ron and Jaime said the classes have not been assessed. Beth Ann said the courses were mapped prior.

Jason asked the committee what number of general education credits would work,

21, 24, 27, or 30 credits. Beth Ann, Jeff, and the general consensus of this committee was that we felt increasingly better as the credits go up.

5. CEAC- Psychology 203 Proposal Returned

Jason gave CEAC the rationale for sending it back. We were talking about not including things in Gen. Ed. that have pre reqs in Gen. Ed. in the same competency because they have already met the competency.

CEAC noted:

- A. If a student has taken a course that would be given credit as a PSY 203

Elsewhere to get credit here they would need a waiver now because it is not on our Gen. Ed. list.

- B. The advising pathway for Behavioral and Social Sciences has a choice of taking another social phenomenon class.

Email from Larry pointed out that it is not listed as a social phenomenon class it is listed as a program elective, Anthropology, Psychology or Sociology so technically we are not taking a second item from our Gen. Ed. list. We are taking an item from our Gen. Ed. list and then any other of those particular prefixes.

Jason asked, "Do we want to put the new course in or go back and take the other courses out?" Beth suggested another look at the courses because a lot of the competencies are too heavy. Jason suggested going through list and looking at each item and mapping so there is no overcrowding.

Jaime suggested approving Christine's class based on the consolidation committee work. Christine is going to be responsible for assessing her own work.

Motion to re-table Psychology 203 proposal by Jeff. Second by Gil. All in favor.

- 6. Baseline Guidelines for Assessments by this Committee:

- A. We have not followed up on our assessment findings.

- B. We have not established policies we require for assessment. What type of assessment should we be using? Should we require use of Task Stream? Should we require teams of graders or is multiple choice assessment good enough? How many artifacts are required to have a significant sample? How long should we be collecting?

All of these questions need answers and this committee should determine guidelines. Jason will send an email list of questions to the committee members and requested that members think about it for more discussion at the next meeting.

Everyone enjoyed the back-ground music and the meeting was adjourned by Jason at 3:53 p.m. Respectfully submitted by Lisa Anderson