

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE GENERAL EDUCATION
Minutes of 28 October 2010**

Members present: Roberta Allen, Raja Aravamathan, Marcia Feters, John Geiser, David Reinhold, and Edwin Martini. **Member absent:** Mustafa Mughazy. **Liaisons present:** Margaret Hamilton and Kerrie Jo Harvey (for Kevin Knutson). **Guest:** Bruce Ferrin, Chair, Undergraduate Studies Council. **Also present:** Janice Anderson, Faculty Senate Office.

Procedural Items

COGE Chair Marcia Feters called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed Bruce Ferrin to the meeting.

*Acceptance of the Agenda
Approval of Minutes from 14 October*

It was moved and seconded to accept the agenda as amended to include reopening discussion on LANG 4040 East and West Literary Relations [CAS 677]. Motion carried. Approval of the 14 October minutes was moved and seconded. Motion carried.

USC and COGE - Bruce Ferrin

Ferrin came to discuss two of the charges his council had received from the Senate's Executive Board:

1. Request assessment of general education and baccalaureate-level writing requirement from the Committee to Oversee General Education.
2. Consider and make recommendations in reference to the role of the Committee to Oversee General Education in the "reconceptualization" of general education.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the order in which the charges should be addressed and what was meant by "reconceptualization." Reinhold said the assessment of general education was a target area for the Higher Learning Commission and noted that review of general education was taking place at universities all over the country. He mentioned a series of conferences on general education scheduled in Minnesota that might be useful for someone on the committee to attend in the future. As an outcome of discussion, it was agreed to:

- Form a joint subcommittee with members from the USC, COGE and the University Assessment Steering Committee (UASC).
- Review materials from an earlier 1990 review of general education.
- Springboard from the learning objectives in the University's academic affairs strategic plan to make sure general education is in compliance so

- students are taught the required concepts.
- Engage general education faculty in the process

Reinhold suggested working on both charges simultaneously could be advantageous as assessing available data might shed light on reconceptualization efforts. The question of who should take ownership of assessment from the faculty perspective was raised. He recalled the lack of attention to assessment as previously discussed by COGE after its re-approval of Areas II, Humanities, and III, The United States: Cultures and Issues, was completed last year. Feters commented she envisioned a larger role for COGE in conjunction with the academic affairs strategic plan and the University Assessment Steering Committee.

Action Item

Curriculum Proposal from the Department of Foreign Languages

- LANG 4040 East and West Literary Relations [CAS 677] – New three hour course requesting approval in Area II, Humanities, and baccalaureate-level writing proficiency.

This proposal was tabled at the 22 September meeting. The department submitted a revised syllabus and upon its review, approval of LANG 4040 was moved and seconded. Motion carried.

As follow up to the earlier conversation on assessment, members suggested adding a neutral statement to the approval letter notifying the department of COGE's decision. It was agreed the following statement should be in all future approval letters sent from COGE... "The committee encourages the assessment of learning outcomes in further shaping this new course."

Continuing Business

COGE Reapproval of General Education Courses in Areas IV, Other Cultures and Civilizations, and Area V, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Feters provided a course proposal evaluation form that she asked members to review for approval, along with the subcommittees and designation of courses for review, at the next meeting on Thursday, 11 November.

She reported 92 courses were up for COGE re-approval and the committee would move forward with review and approval of those. Some of the courses were removed at the request of their departments as either they would no longer be offered or not offered as general education courses.

Other

Reinhold mentioned that COGE would be receiving a lot of curriculum proposals from Comparative Religion to review for general education, as the department is overhauling its program. He suggested one whole meeting might be needed dedicated to review of those pending proposals.

Discussion of the spring meeting schedule will be discussed at the November meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Janice Anderson
Faculty Senate Office