

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE GENERAL EDUCATION**

Minutes of 28 April 2011

Members present: Roberta Allen, Marcia Fetters, John Geiser, Edwin Martini, Mustafa Mughazy and David Reinhold. **Member absent:** Raja Aravamathan.
Liaisons present: Margaret Hamilton and Kevin Knutson. **Also present:** Janice Anderson, Faculty Senate Office.

Procedural Items

*Acceptance of the Agenda
Approval of Minutes from 14 April 2011*

Martini moved and Mughazy seconded to accept the agenda. Motion carried.
It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes from 14 April. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks

Fetters thanked members for their work on the committee. The terms of both Roberta Allen and Mustafa Mughazy have ended. Neither will be returning as Allen is retiring and Mughazy going on sabbatical.

Continuing and New Business

*Continue Review of General Education Courses for Re-Approval in Area IV,
Other Cultures and Civilizations, and Area V, Social and Behavioral Sciences*

Members finalized re-approval status of the remaining courses. After reviewing the materials submitted for courses seeking re-approval, members commented that departments should be reminded that course delivery must adhere to the catalog description of the course. Faculty wishing to change the course content or redesign a course may do so through the curriculum review process, otherwise the course content has to reflect what is in the course catalog.

Members agreed that departments and the Registrar's Office be informed that all decisions reached on course re-approvals would become effective during the 2012-13 academic year. As the WMU University and General Education Requirements listing is published in March, it would be confusing to try to implement changes to that listing after the fact. In addition, the timeline would provide departments and opportunity to process courses that were not re-approved through the curriculum review process should they wish the courses to be considered for general education. It was moved and seconded to adhere to that timeline. Motion carried.

2011-12 COGE Re-Approval of General Education Courses in

*AREA VI, Natural Science with Laboratory; AREA VII, Natural Science
and Technology: Applications and Implications and AREA VIII;
and Health and Well-Being*

Notification to departments with courses up for 2011-12 re-approval in Areas VI, VII, and VIII, has been delayed. Fetters will work with the Faculty Senate Office to completion that. COGE agreed that instead of requiring a curriculum review form for each course, departments will be asked to answer three questions:

1. How often has the course been taught during the last 5 years? (Include enrollment data and the employment status of the instructor of record.)
2. How does the course address the general education learning outcomes as defined in the General Education Policy?
3. How does the course address the learning outcomes of its distribution area?

COGE Membership and Meeting Schedule for 2011-12

The COGE meeting schedule will be set over the summer and nominations for new membership recruited.

*Chair of COGE Invited to Attend Tuesday, 10 May, Undergraduate Studies
Council.*

Fetters sought input from committee members on the topics she has been invited to discuss at the upcoming USC meeting. Those three topics and the suggestions for each follow:

- (1) Curriculum implications of the "sustainability initiative."

Three options were considered:

1. create an general education area for sustainability
2. replace Distribution Area VI with sustainability
3. incorporate sustainability into Area VII which already has sustainability built into it.

Each option would require a more specific definition of sustainability and specific outcomes and each course proposed for these areas would need to include a specific assessment strategy associated with the sustainability outcomes.

Members felt that "experts" must be defined as someone with a terminal degree in the field, and should not merely be a faculty member with an interest in the sustainability.

- (2) The role of COGE in the "reconceptualization" of general education.

Revisions to general education should be developed in keeping with the academic strategic plan. COGE has discussed removal of Proficiency 4, Enhance or Develop Proficiency, for years. This may be the time to eliminate that requirement from

general education.

(3) Assessment of general education and baccalaureate-writing.

The time commitment and potential conflict of interest would require a committee larger than COGE. That committee would need assessment guidance as many distribution areas have suggestions but no clear outcomes to assess.

Baccalaureate-writing would also be difficult and time consuming to assess and very much open to judgment based on individuals. With wide range of faculty teaching these courses the ability to verify assessment across sections and courses is difficult.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Janice Anderson
Faculty Senate Office