

Minutes of the General Education Committee
Wednesday, April 8, 2009
Hawai'i Hall 208

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Vice Chair Scott Rowland.

Present: Lynne Higa, Susan Johnson, Mike Kirk-Kuwaye, Mike Nassir, Scott Rowland, Carolyn Stephenson

Ex officio: Ron Cambra (OVCAA), Jan Heu (A&R), David Ross (SEC)

Guests: Lisa Fujikawa (GEO), Duane Henry (GEO), Jo-Anne Nakamoto (GEO Recorder)

Absent: Tom Hilgers, George Wong

MINUTES: Minutes of the March 11, 2009 meeting were accepted and approved with the following corrections: Action/Information Item #2, Bullet 3 was reworded to: "Seems like less priority to fulfill FG requirements, and not displaying a "phobia" of FG courses." Also, Bullet 6 was corrected to read, "Drop off in fulfillment *rate* . . ."

ACTION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Focus exemption application of "Michael".
 - Student appears to have a lot of persuasive oral interaction as a salesman.
 - There appears to be a lack of feedback from his supervisor.
 - No mention of group work; lack of substance.
 - GEC questioned if this is truly an "extraordinary experience."
 - VOTE: 1 yes, 4 no, 1 abstained.

General discussion about Focus exemption:

- Is there a need to discuss hallmarks with applicants? Give them a checklist and then have them sign to acknowledge receipt of it? Refer them to a website?
 - Does a list of suggestions/concerns accompany the application?
 - Faculty should inform students that there may be possible credit for the work experience.
2. Diversification subcommittee recommendations
 - GEC voted unanimously (7 affirmative) for the following:
 - EDEF/EDEP 201 – DS
 - ASTR 380 – none (deny DP; mutually agreed upon by subcommittee and instructor)
 - SPED 201 – DH (changed from DS with consent of department)
 3. Multiple designation Focus proposal: PACE 412 – E, O, W
 - Discussion included the difficulty of doing three focus areas in a course.
 - In the future, GEO will provide GEC with subsequent correspondence between applicant and Board(s), if any.
 - It was noted that if the individual Boards approved this proposal, then the GEC has been reluctant to overturn their decisions. 'Higher stake courses' have additional scrutiny.
 - VOTE: 5 yes, 0 no, 1 abstained.
 4. FS discussion

The recent joint Foundations Board-GEC meeting to discuss the issue of FS not being taken in the first year at UHM brought about several general agreements.

 - There does not appear to be a shortage of seats available.
 - There is inconsistency in advising (e.g., Take major courses or GenEd courses first?).
 - It's possible to change the FS/FG requirements to be completed by the 2nd year.

Additional GEC discussion on FS:

- Course content falls into 2 categories: symbolic reasoning vs quantitative skills.
 - What does WASC require versus what do we want?
 - Faculty Senate seems okay with either requirement.
- Are we enforcing Catalog language? Perhaps Catalog language should be changed (add “must” in statement).
- How are transfer students to be handled?
 - Current wording covers transfers. (“Students complete the Foundations requirements during their first year at UH Manoa.”)
 - If we do give students two years to complete the FS requirement and a transfer student comes in as a junior, then FS would in effect become a “graduation” requirement.
 - Many CC transfers come in with only college algebra, which does not fulfill FS.
- Although it would be “relaxing” the requirement to give students two years (instead of one) to complete the course, the new timeline would be enforced. Students would also continue to be encouraged to complete the requirement in their first year.
- Try not to increase the workload of GEO with enforcement of FS; make things automated. (It was noted that Banner upgrades prioritize system requests; requests specific to UHM are lower on the list.)
- Request to GEO: Provide data on how many students have completed one of their two FG courses after each semester, for their first two years.
- Financial issues
 - Do we have to worry about our proposal and the budgetary uncertainty?
 - Do we talk to/write letters to budget heads to explain need/effect? Not asking for subsidy, but if cut, fulfilling intent of Gen Ed is compromised. Check with departments for items to strengthen our letter.
- There will be no resolution to the Faculty Senate this semester, but we hope to hammer out FG issues and incorporate both FS and FG recommendations into EOY report.

5. Update: class size and prioritization

Fujikawa reported that the question of increasing the maximum enrollment of writing intensive courses from 20, to possibly 22 or 24, was posed to the MWP Director.

- GEC was reminded that this rule was created by the Faculty Senate and approved by the BOR.
- There are implications for articulation; all W classes across the system are limited to 20.
- Hilgers’ response to inquiry: the average enrollment in lower division courses is approximately 30; 19 for upper division courses.
- Increase in FW course size is also being discussed. It was noted that this course max is set by the department, not by the Faculty Senate or BOR.

6. Announcements

The Council of Academic Advisors (CAA) is discussing the current proration schedule for Focus requirements in an effort to make it more equitable between within system transfer students and students who have been at Manoa the entire time.

Background: Proration schedules were created for transfer students because they can only fulfill Focus requirements within the UH system. There are currently two different schedules, for 1) within-system transfers and 2) non-system transfers. Students can take W and H courses at the CCs, and prior to S05 could also take CC courses to fulfill the E & O requirements.

Concern: The current proration system seems to favor within-system transfer students (versus those who complete their entire degree at Manoa). The CAA plans to present a formal proposal to the GEC if the draft proposal is passed at the upcoming 4/21 meeting.

WRAP UP: Fujikawa to email proration information to GEC.

Next meeting: to be announced.

Meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Submitted by Jo-Anne Nakamoto, Recorder.