Minutes  
General Education Requirements Committee  
Tuesday, 7 April 2020  
Zoom - https://isu.zoom.us/j/686795927  
2:30-4:30 p.m.


1. Announcements --

2. Minutes – vote via email

3. Program Review & Assessment updates – Ann Hackert  
   Ann discussed working with those in colleges/programs who were responsible for accreditation. She reported that things were moving forward.

4. Objective 8 Working Group update – Spencer Jardine

5. Academic Affairs update – Cindy Hill  
   • Cindy was at another meeting and will report next time.
   
   • It was reported that the General Education Summit is still being planned. If you wish the ISU State Representatives to promote your ideas regarding changes to Gen Ed State Policy, do so soon.
   
   • A list of ISU State Representatives for Gen Ed. is available on the GERC web site under Members and ISU Representatives.

6. Upcoming GERC due dates:  
   a. April 1, 2020 – Objective Review Committee (ORC) Reports due

7. Unfinished Business  
   a. Faculty Survey re: gen ed program and assessment (progress report)  
      Spencer will email Jim Stoutenborough regarding the survey. Due to the current increase in workload as faculty move their courses to online, it was agreed by all to postpone the survey to Fall 2020.

   b. Reports from Objective 5 and 6
      
      1) **Objective 5 committee:** Shannon reported that the group hopes the report will be submitted within the week.

      **Objective 6 committee:** Jim reported on Objective 6. They are working on the report. He is hopeful they will have it in two weeks. He believes they can complete it through email and it will not require another meeting to complete.

   c. Review of annual Assessment Reporting (attachment: spreadsheet)  
      
      **Objective 5:** Spencer Jardine and Shannon Kobs Nawotniak  
      It was reported that Physics is redesigning their plan.

      BIOL 1100: inconsistency in assessing all formats each year. No annual reports submitted for 2018. They desire to assess the course using course grades. How do we help faculty
understand why this doesn't work? Grades include attendance and other factors that are not related to student learning outcomes. Example mentioned of a potential employer would be more concerned with what a student actually learned that will help them do the job than with the grade.

CHEM 1101: they seem to have incomplete results from their dual enrollment sections. See row 11.

CHEM 1111: sections from Idaho Falls didn't submit their assessment materials, but all Pocatello sections did. Additional training and information was given to the faculty teaching all sections. Assessment results were discussed in department meetings.

CHEM 1112: outcome number one has a low percentage but all others are greater than 98%.

GEOL 1100: sounds like they are doing well.

It was noted that Geoscience seemed to lack clarity on what should be included in the assessment. A comment was made that this finding was common in many areas.

There was discussion regarding the benefit of these 5-Year reviews because each department/course is able to see how others are approaching the assessment. They can learn from each other.

During the discussion, Ann H. restated that course grades are not sufficient for a quality assessment. While grades are part of the equation, it requires evaluating outcomes that may not be reflected in grades.

Objectives 6 and 7: Tayo Omotowa and Jim Skidmore

Jim said that some things in the annual reports were not easy to interpret. One department did not report any numbers. The lack of clarity in the annual reports make it difficult to interpret.

Jim mentioned that one of the issues is setting the standard. He stated that no one knows what “satisfactory performance” stands for. It could be barely meeting expectations or it could mean mastery.

Tao discussed Objective 7. Some of the data was confusing. An example was given that in some courses student achievement on outcomes ranged from 20% to 80%.

Jim stated it may not reflect student performance. Perhaps different courses interpret the same outcome differently.

Economics reports: they do not report numbers. They look at multiple choice exams. There was some discussion in our meeting about University guidance. The committee is interested to know if there is any guidance for satisfactory completion of student learning outcomes. Is there a certain number or percentage that departments should achieve? Are these naturally going to be different and varied among departments? What is satisfactory?

Objectives 8 and 9: Shu-Yuan Lin, Matt Wilson

Matt Wilson discussed Objective 8. He stated that one issue was that Library used only indirect measures. Spencer agreed with that statement. Jennifer stated that indirect measures
were used in both English assessments.

Shu-Yan discussed the need to determine the value of a syllabi review.

Matt Wilson also discussed Objective 9. He stated that there were low success rates: only 20 – 30% meeting expectations. He also stated they did not seem to have a plan to respond to the low rates. He had a question about a particular course that had a “Flag” on the report.

Ann H. said that when we find issues, she will contact Departments to see if she can do a “wellness check” to help them and possibly recommend actions that will provide more information and decrease workload demands.

Shu-Yan identified a course with 100% Meets Expectations. This is also a problem. It is unlikely that success is 100%.

She also noted that CSD 2210 included 3 years of data in the annual report. It was not clear why they combined the data over 3 years.

Reach out to ask CSD 2256 if they want help with their assessment plan. Let them know Ann can help.

The annual report for CMLT 2208 looks like it has not been submitted in the last 3 years.

**General observations:**

There was discussion about the annual assessment reports received from departments teaching courses for objectives 7, 8, and 9.

We can send an email to departments next fall, letting them know about the assessment process and how they can receive help from the University.

We can identify assessment plans that need help and ask Ann to support those departments that may need some extra help. Perhaps we can ask departments that have created exemplary plans to share those plans or discuss and talk with other departments.

Help people understand the purpose of assessment. Ann can offer a one-hour wellness check with individuals or departments.

We can ask Ann to attend the chairs’ meetings and also the deans’ meetings to promote assessment.

Going forward we can email departments that are going to submit their five-year reports, so they can understand what they need to do to prepare for that report. We can also email or contact departments who finished their five-year departmental assessment review report and point them to Ann who is willing to help them.

d. Office of Assessment and Gen Ed Committee relationships and ideas

There was considerable discussion led by Ann regarding how she can provide more institutional support. DeWayne mentioned that he felt many did not fully understand the purpose of this assessment, making it difficult to have a well-designed plan.
There was a discussion on how to identify programs that need additional assistance, who should receive notices, and through what channels. No decision was made. There were a lot of ideas and discussion.

Ann reported that the next NWCCU Accreditation site visit will be in Summer 2021. Ann will provide more information in a future meeting.

e. Next Steps – where should GERC go from here? NWCCU accreditation review is next year…

8. Committee membership: expiring terms and replacements

Brief discussion.

9. Adjourn - Next meeting April 28th.

Approved by GERC: April 28, 2020
Accepted by UCC: April 29, 2020 via email vote
Accepted by Faculty Senate: May 6, 2020 via email vote
Accepted by Academic Affairs: May 6, 2020