Minutes
General Education Requirements Committee
Tuesday, November 30th, 2021
Zoom link: https://isu.zoom.us/j/84945656992
2:30-4:30 p.m.
GERC’s website: www.isu.edu/gerc/

Attendance: Jennifer Attebery, Erika Fulton, Joanne Tokle, Shu-Yuan Lin, Cathy Gray, DeWayne Derryberry, Ben Crosby; Matt Wilson
Ex-officio: Margaret Johnson, Abbey Hadlich, Joann Trimmer, Carmen Febles (UCC), Catherine Read
Excused: Ann Hackert, Sacha Johnson
Guest: none

1. Announcements –
   • No revised Physics assessment plans will be submitted this fall, probably coming in Spring.
   • A blanket call will be going out to faculty to revisit their assessment plans. Departments’ practices have drifted away from their assessment plans; also need to align with new SBOE outcomes.
   • GERC needs to decide whether to change the assessment reporting form to ask for tiered reporting of student mastery of competencies rather than binary “meets/does not meet.”

2. Council approved the Minutes for November 9, 2021

3. Updates and Information:
   a. Faculty Feedback regarding Gen Ed Program – a couple of faculty responses were posted
   b. Program Review & Assessment updates – Ann Hackert: no report
   c. Academic Affairs update – Margaret Johnson
      Nothing in addition to Provost’s recent Town Hall. Working on sabbatical requests. No update yet on Provost search or possible start date for new Provost.
   d. UCC update – Carmen Febles
      UCC met just before Thanksgiving Break, and Executive Committee met and discussed Biology Proposal #30, which was remanded back to Biology to reconsider and to collect impacts from departments offering the alternative lab courses that students would likely take. Carmen will check with the Biology Chair to find out whether they would be willing to hold off a year on this proposal.
   e. Catherine following up with Patty Sanchez from OSBE whether proposed GEM Rubrics will be/are mandated for use by institutions. SBOE Policy III.N.2.b: “Establish shared rubrics that guide course/general education program assessment;” – this did not change in the revised policy approved by SBOE in October 2021. OSBE’s answer will affect how departments will need to revise their Assessment Plans this Fall/early Spring in accordance with the newly approved revisions to GEM Objective Competencies.
      Matt Wilson reported that GERC’s Executive Committee has decided not to ask departments to incorporate SBOE Rubrics at this time, since those Rubrics are not finalized yet, and it is still an open question whether the Rubrics will be mandated or not. GERC will be considering whether to require tiered reporting of student learning when departments submit their annual assessment reports.

4 Unfinished Business:
   a. Revisions to Process for Selecting ISU’s State Gen Ed Discipline Group Reps
      ACTION: Motion to approve the revised process. Motion passed. This document will be forwarded to UCC for their acceptance, then on to Faculty Senate and Associate Deans/Academic Affairs for acceptance.
b. UCC Proposal #30 from Biology to remove BIOL 1100L lab only from the catalog. Requires GERC approval to approve removing the lab from the Gen Ed program.

Discussion. Analysis of Math requirements for all existing labs: several of the courses have MATH 1108 as pre-requisites. Math Dept. does not want non-STEM students taking MATH 1108 anyway, so suggests changing that prerequisite to simply require Objective 3 have been met. This point of view is also supported by Complete College of America.

Regarding this proposal, a few years ago Biology was mandated to offer BIOL 2227/2228, which is taking the resources that had been devoted to BIOL 1100/1100L. This is a staffing and resource problem for the department. There are other Objective 5 lab options for non-science majors; will impact those other courses since they will need to absorb the students that would have otherwise taken BIOL 1100L.

Once a course is dropped from the catalog, it is hard to reinstate it later. It is not an unusual practice to keep a course on the books but not teach it while assessing the actual impact of its absence. GEOL 1101/1101L is a case in point; the department has not offered it for a few years now, as the department has been evaluating the impact of its absence. GERC members were generally supportive of keeping the course on the books if Biology were to choose to hold off on eliminating this lab for another year or two.

Discussion also raised the issue of the university not adequately supporting departments offering large-enrollment service courses in the Gen Ed program that benefit other programs by not ensuring those departments receive the necessary funding and resources to continually offer those courses.

**ACTION:** Motion and seconded to endorse Biology’s proposal to remove the BIOL 1100L lab from the catalog. Discussion. Vote: 4 in favor and 3 opposed, motion passed.

c. UCC Proposal #70 from GERC to update the Gen Ed Program section of the catalog with new Gen Ed courses and GEM Outcomes.

The new Gen Ed courses PHIL 2260 and SOWK 1101 were added, and GEM Competencies were updated to match revised SBOE Policy III.N. BIOL 1100L was removed from Objective 5 in accordance with GERC’s motion approved above, contingent upon approval of Proposal #30.

**ACTION:** Motion and seconded to approve Proposal #70 with the corrections and use of lower case Roman numerals for all Objective competencies instead of bullet points to align with SBOE and GERC usage. Motion passed unanimously, proposal was approved.

d. SOWK 1101 Assessment Plan - GERC has approved the course for Objective 6; Plan has been revised and is ready for consideration.

Discussion. Still some doubt that a final exam grade is sufficiently reflective of student achievement of each outcome. Plan needs a rubric showing how the exams will be used to evaluate student performance separate from the grade. Also, need to show how the loop will be closed when an inadequacy is identified and a solution is implemented: what process will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of that solution and over what timeframe. Need to better differentiate grading from assessment. Students’ ability to do well on a test is not really reflective of how well they have mastered the material.

GERC’s consensus was that all departments need to pay more attention to reviewing their assessment process and outcome results, and ensure they are taking actions to close the loop.

**ACTION:** Motion to remand with the request for the department to add an assessment schedule and not to conflate grading with assessment. Seconded. Motion passed.

Next meeting is December 14 to finish off the remaining items for this semester.
e. **PHIL 2260 Assessment Plan** - GERC has **approved the course** for Objective 7; **Plan** awaiting revisions

5. **New Business:**

a. Gen Ed Assessment Training Manual – Ann Hackert and Matt Wilson – **not received yet**

b. Revised Physics Assessment Plans – **have not been received yet**

c. Potential revisions to Qualtrics survey: GERC had concerns that annual assessment reporting is binary (S/U) whereas many dept. rubrics in their assessment plans are multi-tiered
   - Binary does not show progress in student learning, whereas 3- or 4-tier reporting does
   - Departments will need to revisit their Assessment Plans this year
   - Any changes to report questions will create a new spreadsheet, not add to existing cumulative spreadsheet Vince currently provides to GERC

   **Draft** SBOE Rubrics for reference: all have **3-tiered** levels:
   - **Objective 1 Rubrics**: Entry-Level, Meets, Exceeds
   - **Objective 2 Rubrics**: Entry-Level, Meets, Exceeds
   - **Objective 3 Rubrics**: Does Not Meet, Partially Meets, Meets
   - **Objective 4 Rubrics**: Entry-Level, Meets, Exceeds
   - **Objective 5 Rubrics**: Entry-Level, Meets, Exceeds
   - **Objective 6 Rubrics**: Entry-Level, Meets, Exceeds

d. **Gen Ed Program Feedback from Faculty**

   Reminder to Obj. 9 departments that 5-Year Reports are due Jan 18, need to select their ORC reps

6. **Placeholders for Unfinished Business for future agendas:**

a. Assessment Plan Audit and Reporting Compilations
b. Objective 8 outcome changes – early Spring 2022 after faculty feedback is received
c. Objective 8 Working Group update – Spencer Jardine
d. Pilot assessment project
e. Revisit **Annual Assessment Report Questions** in Qualtrics
f. Consider revising **GERC’s purpose statement** on the website, which may require updating the Bylaws and UCC/Faculty Senate approval.
g. **Bylaws Revisions** – create State GEM Discipline Group as new standing subcommittee of GERC
h. Consider developing a Strategic Plan for GERC

7. **Adjourn: 4:33 p.m.**

Approved by GERC: December 14, 2021
Accepted by UCC: December 14, 2021
Accepted by Faculty Senate: December 15, 2021 via email vote
Accepted by Academic Affairs: December 22, 2021