

MINUTES

General Education Council, 3:30 PM February 28, 2017, ELL 205

- I. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Scott Drzyzga at 3:37 pm in ELL 205. Attendance at the meeting included: J. Mike, S. Drzyzga, M. Moilanen, S. Bergsten, T. Frielle, D. Girard, D. Kalist, E. Galioto, A. Feeney, D. Birsch, M. Ramsey, J. Hamblin, R. Lesman, M. Hartman, M. Lucia, K. Shirk, M. Greenberg, C. Bertram, K. Lorenz, and A. James, B. Oberman, D. Hwang, J. Carbo, B. Meyer, J. Clements, B. Ward, K. Moll, and S. Burg,
- II. Dr. Clements motioned, seconded by Dr. Hamblin, to approve the January 31, 2017 minutes. A few typos were corrected, but otherwise no amendments or corrections were noted, and the motion passed unanimously.
- III. Old Business
 - a. Dr. Drzyzga wanted GEC to know that the students from Multicultural Student Affairs who talked last month followed up with a written proposal. Both Dr. Drzyzga and Dr. Mike had met in person with the group to continue the conversation. The group is focused on developing a required course, but conversations will continue to determine if cultural impacts might be better achieved if initiatives are made across the curriculum.
 - b. Dr. Drzyzga discussed what can happen (not necessarily what will happen) if the university fails to comply with the new Middle States standards for assessing student learning in all programs at the program level (not the course level).
 - i. For examples, he compiled a list of twenty-two 4-year universities that were flagged by Middle States in 2016, many of which were flagged for failing to assess student learning in general education at the program level (he did not include for-profit or small religious institutions on the list, which would've made the list longer). Accreditation actions can include progress reports, monitoring reports and follow-up visits (and subsequent progress reports); and warnings (which require all of the above): each is an expensive step on the path toward risking accreditation.
 - ii. Shippensburg is the only PASSHE institution that has not overhauled its general education program during the 21st century (last time, in 1985). The student body has changed, financial risks have changed, and our general education curriculum is an old program; expensive for students to complete, too.
 - iii. Dr. Drzyzga reminded the council of the broad and ongoing attempt to crackdown on accreditors for "barking" but rarely "biting." He referenced a related article that published in the WSJ, the Heritage Foundation's "blueprint" for reforming what they describe as an "ossified accreditation system," and the "Accreditation Reform and Enhanced Accountability Act of 2016," which is a senate bill (SB3380) that was introduced by Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Middle States' new standards and its recent spate of accreditation actions are responses to this crackdown.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Report from standing committees:
 - i. Program
 1. Dr. Bergsten reported that the program committee's first order of business was to review a UCC proposal "Great Discoveries of Archeology" and that they

recommend the course fulfills Category E. All were in favor and the motion passed. The program committee also noted that two courses, Intro to Ethnic Studies and Intro to Latino Studies, which are both Category E, are not new courses but will be offered through Distance Education. The program committee had no concerns.

2. A motion was made by Dr. Berg, seconded by Dr. Moll, to interrupt the program committee and process a few quick proposals before continuing with feedback on the program reform. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ii. Budget

1. Dr. Meyer reported that they had two grant proposals, which they motioned for GEC to recommend that the Provost support. After the two grants \$6900 remains in budget. All were in favor and the motion passed.

iii. Entry Year Experience

1. The entry year experience committee motioned to have their proposal moved to the assessment and program committees. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

iv. Program

1. The program committee has conducted campus-wide forums and received feedback from a few department chairs, but wanted to go around the room and allow each department the opportunity to provide critical feedback. Some of the concerns that were raised by departments included: uncertainty of tags, who creates tags, who oversees tags, academic freedom, writing and literature not being required, the social sciences not be adequately represented, resources, class sizes, inclusion of first year experience, and the definition and concept of diversity. Additionally departments suggested that financial, mind/body, and technical competency should be considered. Several raised the issue that the change is policy driven and we need to consider labor issues. Many departments support the proposal. The library is fully on board and feels they can contribute to the program. The student representative suggested students were in favor of the proposal change. Please send any additional departmental concerns to the program committee.

v. Assessment

1. No report.

vi. Dr. Moll reported that UCC did have a strong discussion on class size and labor issues when discussing the reform.

- b. Dr. Drzyzga reminded people that elections for GEC positions will be held in April. The window for nominating people will open at the March meeting. Dr. Burg, as APSCUF rep, will handle the elections.

V. Dr. Ramsey motioned, seconded by Dr. Birsch, to adjourn. The meeting concluded at 5:10 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Alison E. Feeney