

General Education Council

2015-2016 Academic Year

Minutes for the meeting on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, in ELL 205 at 3:30 P.M.

Members in attendance: J. Mike, S. Drzyzga, S. Bergsten, A. Predecki, C. Sipes, D. Girard, D. Kalist, S. Burg, J. Hamblin, M. Lucia, K. Shirk, C. Botteron, C. Bertram, K. Lorenz, B. Wentz, M. Bratina, B. Meyer, J. Clements, H. Liu, K. Moll, K. Sypniewski

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:36pm.

2. Approve the Minutes of the previous meeting

- a. Attachment A: Minutes from the meeting on Nov. 24, 2015

Motion (Bergsten) to approve the minutes. No corrections were given. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Summary of recent events [2015 Annual Meeting of the MSCHE]

Dr. Drzyzga spent a couple days in Washington, DC at the 2015 annual meeting of Middle States. He reported that Middle States is voting on changing their current 5-year cycle to an 8-year cycle. The results of the vote have not yet been reported.

If the new system is approved, the University will need to generate annual reports to Middle States. Only changes from the previous year need to be reported. Larger reviews are performed at the 4- and 8-year marks. Any areas of non-compliance result in (expensive) follow-up reports and team visits.

Dr. Drzyzga also attended a workshop related to General Education while in Washington. He reported that, according to Middle States, “[Gen Ed programs must be] 1. Mission centered, 2. Focused on student learning, 3. Exhibit continuous improvement, and 4. Foster Innovation.” Last year, 11% of institutions required follow-up related to their Gen Ed program after completing self-studies last year, up from 4% ten years ago.

Middle States will be giving a progress report on twelve universities who are currently working on revising their program to fit the new guidelines. Shippensburg will be up for review in 2018-19.

4. Old Business

- a. Report from our GEC representative at the UCC (Dr. Beverley Wallace)

Dr. Wallace was not present, so the official UCC report was not given.

The math department has submitted several UCC proposals related to the creation of a Data Science minor. This minor would be for students in non-Math majors to gain technical and statistical skills to apply to their major field, with a focus on non-STEM majors. The Gen Ed change would be to reduce MAT 117 to three credits, and create MAT 217, a four-credit class that would include the major

topics from MAT 117 and also prepare students who are more math-capable for the Data Science minor. Both MAT 117 and MAT 217 would be Category A courses.

b. Reports from our Standing Committees

i. Budget (Dr. Ben Meyer)

A grant proposal from Dr. David Godshalk was received and will be reviewed soon. The remaining Gen Ed grants budget is still substantial, and the Budget Committee is considering different ways to solicit additional proposals.

ii. Assessment (Dr. Dudley Girard)

1. Attachment B: Minutes from its meeting on Nov. 11, 2015; amended
2. Attachment C: Minutes from its meeting on Dec. 3, 2015

Dr. Girard was not present at the time this item came up for discussion. The Assessment Committee met to address concerns about some unclear statements in the previous meeting's minutes. Attachment C presents the minutes of that meeting, including a clarification about those minutes.

These minutes will be revisited at the February 2016 GEC meeting.

iii. Program (Dr. Sherri Bergsten)

1. Attachment D: Executive Summary of the Open Faculty Forum
2. Attachment E: Minutes from its meeting on Nov. 17, 2015
3. Attachment F: Minutes from its meeting on Dec. 1, 2015
4. Attachment G: Minutes from its retreat on Jan. 13, 2016
5. Attachment H: UCC proposed new Subject Code Policy (#Policy_1_2015)

The Program Committee met several times in the past couple of months. Much of that time was spent trying to rethink Gen Ed approaches based on the new information from Middle States, feedback from faculty forums, and a desire to make the program easier to understand. Changes to the draft program are still being discussed.

Attachment H represents a UCC proposal that has been withdrawn and no longer needs to be discussed.

Attachment D was presented at the previous GEC meeting. The idea is that this document would be distributed to the entire faculty.

Motion (from the committee) to release Attachment D to the university faculty via the GEC website and faculty-wide email.

Discussion: Dr. Steve Berg stated that he doesn't feel that the summary accurately reflects the discussion at the forums. He felt that much of the discussion reflected fears about retrenchment, and that this is not strongly represented in the summary. Additional issues raised by Dr. Berg related to

assessment and whether the Middle States assessment requirements require a full revision of the program. He also wondered about the results of the online survey.

Regarding retrenchment, Dr. Drzyzga reported that he and Dr. Jim Mike requested a letter from Provost Lyman and President Harpster stating that Gen Ed reform would not result in retrenchment. Both Provost Lyman and President Harpster stated that such a letter would be produced. Dr. Lyman was invited to speak at GEC and stated that she would come to the February meeting.

Dr. Kirk Moll indicated that, in his opinion, the document as presented reads more like the Program Committee's *response* to the faculty forums, rather than a summary. The Program Committee intends to release the raw data from the online faculty survey, because they didn't feel able to briefly summarize more than 40 pages of responses.

Motion (Hamblin). Amend motion to rename Attachment D from "Summary of" to "GEC Program Committee Response to," and simultaneously release the raw online forum data.

Motion (Lorenz). Amend the amendment to additionally release the notes taken at the face-to-face faculty forums with names redacted. (This document was distributed to GEC at its October 2015 meeting.) Motion passed.

Motion (Hamblin). Amend the amendment to [appropriately] change *all* references of "summary" to "response" (rather than just the title). Motion passed.

The amendment (which was amended twice) passed.

The motion is now: To release Attachment D (revised to appropriately change *all* references of "summary" to "response") to the university faculty via the GEC website and faculty-wide email, to simultaneously release the raw online forum data, and to additionally release the notes taken at the face-to-face faculty forums with names redacted.

The motion passed.

- c. Reports from our ad hoc Committees
 - i. First Year Experience (Dr. Allison Predecki)
This committee has not yet met.
 - ii. Amendment Committee (Dr. James Hamblin)
This committee has not yet met.
- 5. New Business
No new business.
- 6. Announcements

Meeting dates for the remainder of the semester:

- **Tuesday 2/23**
- **Thursday 3/24**
- **Tuesday 4/19**

Dr. Lorenz announced that his 190 special topics course is running this semester and has 50 students.

7. Call to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.