

General Education Council Minutes

2014-2015 Academic Year

Tuesday, January 27, 2015, in ELL 205 at 3:30 P.M.

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Drzyzga at 3:35pm. Members in attendance were Drs. J. Mike, M. Moilanen, S. Bergsten, A. Predecki, D. Girard, B. Finucane, L. Cella, W. Kingsley, J. Hamblin, L. Bryant, R. Lesman, M. Lucia, K. Shirk, C. Botteron, A. Seibert, K. Lorenz, B. Wentz, B. Henson, B. Meyer, J. Clements, K. Johnson, and K. Moll.

Dr. Drzyzga announced that Dr. Hamblin will be filling in as secretary while Dr. Feeney is on sabbatical.

2. Approve the Minutes of the previous meeting

a. Attachment A: Minutes from the meeting on Nov. 25, 2014

Motion to approve (Moilanen). No corrections were given. Motion passed.

3. Old Business

a. Report on the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (Dr. Scott Drzyzga)

i. Attachment B: MSCHE [New] Standards for Accreditation and Requirement of Affiliation, 13th Edition

Dr. Drzyzga reported that he traveled to this meeting with several other members of the campus community including Dr. Tracy Schoolcraft (Associate Provost), Sara Grove, Jose Ricardo, Gretchen Pierce and Brian Wentz. Drzyzga gave some highlights of what he learned at the meeting, including the fact that there is no longer a separate General Education standard. The number of standards has been reduced from 14 to 8, and Gen Ed has been folded into the Assessment standard, which is much more highly emphasized. Some members discussed how, in the past, Middle States was content for institutions to simply be making efforts on assessment, but that it now seems that the requirements are much higher. Drzyzga's full report is attached as Appendix A.

There was a great deal of discussion on item 2c of Drzyzga's report, which gives a minimum list for what a Gen Ed curriculum should include. Members discussed the meaning of "information literacy" and the implications of humanities, arts, and social sciences not being explicitly listed. Several members argued that Ship should not remove or lessen the importance of these subjects in the Gen Ed program.

b. Report from our GEC representative at the UCC (Dr. Kate Shirk)

Dr. Shirk reported that UCC met on 12/2/14, and their next meeting will be next week. There were two history proposals for HIS 105 and HIS 106 that passed UCC (14-90, 14-91). CHN 202 was not considered for GEC; it was discussed as a possible 190 Gen Ed but that did not happen. Dr. Shirk expects no Gen Ed activity at the next UCC meeting.

Dr. Botteron requested that Dr. Shirk ask UCC when they will put up a blank template for course proposals.

c. Reports from our Standing Committees

i. Budget (Dr. Joseph Beck)

Dr. Beck was not present, no report was given.

ii. Assessment (Dr. Dudley Girard)

Dr. Girard reported that the Assessment Committee is looking more into TracDat. They are trying to coordinate with other people who are using it currently to get a sense of how we can use it. The committee is also working on skills assessment (standardized testing); specifically looking for proctors, who is paying for it, etc.

iii. Program (Dr. Sherri Bergsten)

1. Attachment C: Minutes from the meeting on Nov. 18, 2014.

2. Attachment D: Minutes from the meeting on Dec. 02, 2014

Dr. Bergsten reported that the focus of the Program Committee has been to work on learning objectives and rubrics that would be consistent across Gen Ed. The committee has a format that they really like, with a set of 3 learning objectives and 5 levels of achievement. They are currently trying to set up example rubrics for several topics (tags). The committee is close to providing those to GEC, and anticipates having something at the February GEC meeting. The Program Committee intends to meet with interested departments to revise/review these rubrics.

Dr. Drzyzga mentioned that last semester there was discussion of having open meetings on campus related to the proposed program revision. Dr. Bergsten replied that this is still planned.

Related to Dr. Drzyzga's earlier report, one member asked if technological competency is planned to be part of proposed Gen Ed program. Dr. Bergsten reported that it has been discussed, but that it is not part of the current proposal draft. In the ensuing discussion, members mentioned that the "information literacy" from the MSCHE standards could include this technological component. Several members also discussed how technology is already being used broadly across several different Gen Ed courses and categories.

iv. Ad-hoc EYE committee (Dr. Kirk Moll)

Dr. Moll reported that many of the EYE Committee's previous ideas are not feasible in the current economic environment. The committee is now looking at how EYE can be better articulated/embedded into existing classes (WIFYS, World History, HCS 100) or activities (residence life, other "features" of the university). The committee will be meeting regularly with stakeholders to discuss options. Assessment will be a central part of whatever experience is developed, and work will have to be done to determine how assessment of these EYE objectives fit into the overall Gen Ed (tag) assessment. PC and EYE committees will have to work together on this

Dr. Drzyzga mentioned that the EYE Committee has an opportunity to bridge the gap between academic programs and non-academic learning activities

4. New Business

Dr. Drzyzga announced last time that \$1750 had been reallocated from the budget so that two GEC members could travel to a conference in Kansas City. He reports that the Provost has agreed to cover the difference in cost.

5. Announcements

- a. Free public screening of the film *DamNation*. Thursday, January 29, 2015 @ 7PM in the Orndorf Theater (in the CUB). Co-sponsored by the Geography-Earth Science [Student] Organization.**

6. Call to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35pm.

Appendix A: Drzyzga's Report from MSCHE 2014 Annual Meeting

The following is the contents of a report given by Dr. Scott Drzyzga to GEC on Tuesday, January 27, 2015.

1. Higher Ed in general, and Middle States in particular, is responding to exogenous forces that are clamoring for greater accountability in Higher Ed.
2. According to the new standards, "an accredited institution possesses or demonstrates [among other things] "
 - a. "...student learning experiences that are designed, delivered and assessed by faculty ... who are rigorous and effective in: teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service."
 - b. "organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals ... define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for evaluating whether [or not] students are achieving those goals."
 - c. [it offers] "a general education curriculum that ... at least ..." (i.e., a minimum list and not a complete checklist)...
 - i. Oral communication
 - ii. Written communication
 - iii. Scientific and quantitative reasoning
 - iv. Critical analysis and reasoning
 - v. Technological competency
 - vi. Information literacy
 - vii. Study of values, ethics and diverse perspectives
3. The GenEd Program is (ought to be) the signature program at each institution. By extension, GenEd program assessment ought to be the signature assessment effort at each institution.
4. MSCHE is prompting institutions to develop GenEd program assessment into a cultural norm. The culture can be identified by two defining characteristics:
 - a. The institution is having a continuous conversation about its GenEd Program
 - b. The institution is taking action to redress weaknesses in its GenEd program.
5. MSCHE is not concerned with particular strengths or particular weaknesses [at SHIP]. MSCHE is most interested in the integrity of the process by which [SHIP] identifies strengths and weaknesses, and redresses weaknesses in its General Education Program.