GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
237th Meeting
Thursday, April 27, 2017

MINUTES
Approved

Present: B. Hunt (EDU/ETRA/BC), E. Klonoski (Ex-officio, Acting Associate Vice Provost), J. Kot (LAS/FL&L/BC), B. Montgomery (HHS/FCNS), M. Pickett (Advisors), A. Polansky (LAS/MATH/STAT), M. Quinlan (VPA/ART), D. Smith (Catalog Editor), R. Subramony (Office of Assessment Services), Z. Wang (EET/ISYE), L. Zhou (BUS/FINA)

The meeting was called to order by GEC Chair Zhou.

I. Adoption of Agenda. Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Kot, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA FOR THE APRIL 27, 2017, GEC MEETING. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes. The March 23, 2017, minutes were approved electronically.

III. Announcements. None.

IV. Old Business

A. Assessment Plan. Zhou reported that he and Klonoski have been meeting with departments and have been getting a lot of feedback on the assessment process. Klonoski said he has been meeting chairs about what the GEC is needing for assessment data and those meetings have been productive. Klonoski gave some background on former attempts to collect assessment data for the Higher Learning Commissions (HLC) and those attempts were not as well received. Those experiences informed the current process. Past attempts were onerous and did not close the assessment loop. This time, it is hoped that the submission process will be much easier and that data will be sent back to departments to close the assessment loop. There are still chairs who remember the way the GEC tried to collect assessment data in the past, so by meeting with them now, Klonoski has been able to discuss how submitting data should be easier. He has been able to work with areas for which the standard rubrics don’t quite fit and to help them understand how they can submit the assessment tools they already use but align them with how the GEC needs to have the date submitted. The meetings have been productive explaining the new program and what the GEC is trying to do with assessment. Kot noted that in the past assessment data were provided in percentages. Will the new data collected be able to pull out the percentages, e.g., 5% of students are exceeding expectations. Klonoski replied that this data can be provided. Zhou said that he is cautiously optimistic about the process. He is hearing that using Blackboard is not that hard. He would also like there to be a dedicated location for submitting data. It was suggested that a GEC e-mail address be set up and monitored by at least the GEC chair and maybe the graduate assistant who will be working with the data. Montgomery asked if instructors are revising the rubrics and uploading them in Blackboard are they also being collected and how would the recipient of the data know which SLO was being assessed. Klonoski replied that...
customized rubrics would be collected, but IT would have to answer the question about how to tell what SLO a customized rubric was assessing. Subramony said the GA will work on a system for processing and evaluating data and checking for which SLOs are being assessed. Montgomery suggested that a button could be added for instructors to state whether or not a particular rubric was assessing the SLOs. Polansky asked if a department is doing something nonstandard would they have to send an explanation of what the data mean. Klonoski replied that would be preferable, but those departments could also be contacted if need be. It was also clarified that each section of a course should sample a minimum of 10 students versus assessing just 10 students out of all the students enrolled in a specific course. Klonoski added that doing assessment and completing the rubrics should be part of the training for graduate teaching assistants. A discussion followed regarding who owns the assessment data once it has been submitted. Subramony noted that the organization that is requesting the data should be the steward of the data, so in this case it would be the GEC. For the physical location of data, it would be housed with the vice provost since that person oversees the general education program. It was also noted that the GEC needs to send the data back to the departments for their information. Klonoski added that the GEC will be looking at the data across all the courses to see if all the SLOs are being addressed. It was suggested that there be reports provided to departments on a semester or annual basis. Subramony noted that these are the kind of questions that Matuszewich and Montgomery were asked at the University Assessment Panel (UAP) meeting, i.e., how will the data be used and who will get the information. Kot agreed that more information needs to be sent to instructors and departments than simply your course is fine or that it needs work.

Montgomery reported on the UAP meeting. She received some contradictory feedback and it seemed that some members understood the plan better than others. There was a suggestion to look at the old plan and to seek out that data to fill in the gaps from when data weren’t being collected. Klonoski felt that would not be productive since it’s better to keep moving forward with the new assessment plan. The University Writing Project was noted as a resource for assessment data and it was agreed that data could be mined for information on meeting any writing objectives. Subramony said there is a template the UAP uses that helps programs walk through what needs to be considered. The members of the UAP are faculty peers and they can only give advice based on their experiences. Subramony said there are things that could be done to make the GEC assessment plan more meaningful such as further defining the mission statement. She will provide the GEC with the UAP’s feedback.

Kot asked how will data be sent back to instructors. It was suggested it be sent to department chairs, but there was some concern that they might see this as one more task they need to do. A report on general education assessment data could be sent to instructors every semester. Doing it every semester would better provide instructors with information they might need to improve their courses. Quinlan agreed that by providing a report every semester will make the process become more familiar. Kot asked about the timeline of the Pathways minor. She suggested that would be a good vehicle for getting student feedback on whether or not they like having courses grouped together in the Pathways. Klonoski replied that he will have a proposal to present to the GEC in early fall then will be presenting it to other interested groups such as the Faculty Senate and college curriculum committees. Kot added that seeing the response of students about Pathways may motivate faculty to keep courses in the Pathways. Klonoski said that he will work with IT staff in May and should have feedback after that.

Zhou said that notifications should go out to the instructors teaching general education courses this summer and fall at the start of those terms. It was determined that GEC members don’t have to be involved since they already approved the memo.
A discussion followed regarding the deadline for submitting data and Klonoski said that the end of this semester is preferable, but will take data at any time. Committee members expressed interest in seeing the results and how many instructors participated.

Klonoski reported that he sent a spreadsheet to the advising group that shows Pathways courses crosslisted with writing infused and human diversity courses. It is hoped that they shared this with the rest of their colleges’ advisors. A discussion followed regarding students seeing their advisors. It was noted that many programs do not require students see their advisors before registering for classes although it’s highly recommended. The degree progress reports do track if students are working towards a Pathway, but it was noted that students don’t always understand how to read these without an advisor’s input.

B. Pathways Coordinators. Klonoski reported that the stipend for the coordinators is being processed, however there is one coordinator who has not been able to attend any meetings and has not provided a report on his Pathway. Klonoski had a conversation with the coordinator and asked him for a status report on the Pathway to be submitted by May 1. A discussion followed regarding whether or not the GEC could remove a coordinator and if there is someone else who could take over this Pathway and can the payment be stopped. Klonoski said the GEC may need to make a decision for the Pathway. As for the pay, how that is handled is ultimately up to the vice provost since the pay is coming out of her budget. Klonoski reported that the other Pathways are in various states of thriving. Klonoski will be at orientation this summer talking about the Pathways.

C. Pathways Minor. Klonoski said that he will work on answering the questions that were raised in past meetings and submit a proposal to the GEC in the fall. Once the GEC approves, then he will present to various groups around campus to garner support across campus.

V. New Business. There was no new business.

VI. Adjournment. Quinlan made a motion, seconded by Kot, TO ADJOURN. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 28, 2017.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator