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## General Education Subcommittee Minutes, April 16, 2019

Utah State University

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## GENERAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

April 16, 2019

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Champ Hall Conference Room – OM 136

**Present:** Lee Rickords, College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences (Chair)  
Christopher Scheer, Caine College of the Arts  
Thom Fronk, College of Engineering  
Harrison Kleiner, College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Claudia Radel, S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources  
Richard Mueller, College of Science  
Robert Mueller, Regional Campus  
Melanie Nelson, USU Eastern  
Kacy Lundstrom, University Libraries  
Lawrence Culver, American Institutions  
Charlie Huenemann, Humanities  
Matt Sanders, Connections  
David Brown, Quantitative Literacy/Intensive  
Ed Reeve, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost  
John Mortensen, Academic and Instructional Services  
Mykel Beorchia, University Advising  
Stephanie Hamblin, Exploratory Advising  
Kristine Miller, University Honors Program  
Erik Thalman, Registrar's Office  
Amber Summers-Graham, Secretary

**Excused:** Ryan Bosworth, Social Sciences  
Ryan Dupont, Life and Physical Sciences  
Vance Grange, Jon M. Huntsman School of Business  
Jaren Hunsaker, USUSA President  
Shelley Lindauer, Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services

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**Call to Order** – Lee Rickords

**Approval of Minutes** – [February 12, 2019](#)  
*Minutes approved as distributed.*

### **Course Approvals/Removals/Syllabi Approvals**

ECON 5500 (CI Removal) **APPROVED** ..... Robert Mueller  
*Motion to approve the removal of the CI designation made by Robert Mueller. Seconded by Richard Mueller. Designation removal approved.*

## **Business**

### **Election of General Education Chair**

*Motion to nominate Lee Rickords as chair made by Matt Sanders. Seconded by Richard Mueller. Unanimous vote in favor of Lee Rickords serving as chair of the General Education committee for 2019-2020.*

### **Committee Members for 2019-2020**

Lee Rickords asked the committee if there were any anticipated changes to the membership roster for 2019-2020. Richard Mueller and Melanie Nelson will be retiring at the end of this academic year. Their replacements have not yet been identified. Amber will follow up this summer. Lee thanked the committee for their service to the General Education subcommittee. General Education is an extremely important aspect of a student's career here at Utah State University and the work of the members is much appreciated.

### **Rubrics in determining designation decisions**

It was discovered when working with committees to choose outcomes to assess during the first assessment cycle that not all area committees have a standardized operating procedure for using their rubrics to decide whether a class gets a designation. For example, the Life and Physical Sciences sub subcommittee has a rubric posted but they also have an additional list of thirteen criteria that they use. They do not expect a course to meet all thirteen criteria, but instead they have a preponderance kind of approach. This can cause frustration to the faculty submitting proposals for designations, but also makes assessment difficult. It has to be clear on the front end how the course is meeting designation requirements and has to have levels of proficiencies that can be assessed on the backend.

It was brought up that while it is important to have something consistent throughout all of the subcommittees; some faculty thought that reviewing the designation criteria rubrics was an opportunity to create a longer and more refined list of performance outcomes to use as a mechanism for guiding the shape of curriculum. This becomes particularly helpful when the next person takes over a designated course. The way to operate that class is clearer. Perhaps this is something to be looked at across the board.

It was decided that this discussion needed to continue in the fall.

## **Information**

### **Update on assessable rubric for QL courses**

It was discovered that the Gen Ed task force is going to have a hard time assessing QL and CL courses because there are not any rubrics for those courses. At the time the GE rubrics were created, the QL and CL courses were wholly owned by the department. Students satisfy communication literacy by taking English 1010/2010. One of the functions of the rubrics is that when courses are being proposed from many different departments, there is a unifying standard. In this case, Math and Stats on the QL side and English on the communications side had a monopoly so to speak on these courses and so these rubrics were never created. It would be useful for the committee to have QL and CL rubrics. The CL rubrics will be attempted next year as the English department has a new director of composition starting in the fall.

There was discussion about the usefulness of the QL committee to have a rubric that would be formalized and institutionalized. If there were some written criteria then there would be some incentive for the departments to put additional courses forward for these designations because they would recognize that their courses might be a good fit for these designations.

Dave Brown would appreciate feedback on the rubric for the QL. Adopting a rubric might inspire some good curriculum changes that need to happen. If all of the QL courses aligned with the spirit of the rubric, it would force some content changes that could relax the pressure on some of the teachers. This speaks to the larger question of making general education courses serve as introductions/prerequisites for courses that will be coming up. This will help drive the curriculum to make General Education courses more meaningful to students. The committee asked David Brown to go back to his department with a consensus view from the General Education committee and the Provost's office that they are in support of the rubric for classes operating at the QL level.

#### **Update on General Education Course Offerings**

Lee asked John Mortenson to give the committee a quick update on the General Education course offerings that will be available this fall. John explained that the course offerings are comparable to last year. No glaring shortages as this time. A few courses may need to be retired. Specifically USU 1340. There are plenty of social science options and the course has only had 11 to 13 students enrolled in the past few semesters. There are other classes that are bursting at the seams, so perhaps resources could be shifted to take the pressure off these courses.

#### **Adjourn 9:31 am**

Next meeting will be **Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 9:30** am in Champ Hall conference room. General Education requests for this meeting are due **September 7, 2019**.