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GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

April 20, 2021
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present:

- *Lee Rickords, College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences (Chair)
- *Christopher Scheer, Caine College of the Arts
- *Greg Podgorski, College of Science
- *Matt Sanders, Connections
- *Dory Rosenberg, University Libraries
- *Charlie Huenemann, Humanities
- *Ryan Bosworth, Social Sciences
- *Toni Gibbons, Registrar's Office
- *Mykel Beorchia, University Advising
- *Kristine Miller, University Honors Program
- *John Mortensen, Academic and Instructional Services
- *Thom Fronk, College of Engineering
- *Daniel Coster, Quantitative Literacy/Intensive
- *Harrison Kleiner, College of Humanities and Social Science
- *Lawrence Culver, American Institutions
- *Claudia Radel, S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources
- *Paul Barr, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost
- Michelle Smith, Secretary

Excused:

- David Wall, Creative Arts
- Shelley Lindauer, Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services
- Sami Ahmed, USUSA President
- Ryan Dupont, Life and Physical Sciences
- Robert Mueller, Statewide Campuses/Communications Intensive
- Steve Nelson, USU Eastern
- Daniel Holland, Jon M. Huntsman School of Business

Call to Order – Lee Rickords

Approval of Minutes – March 17, 2021

Motion to approve the date minutes made by Ryan Bosworth

Seconded by Christopher Scheer

Approved unanimously by voting members

Course Approvals/Removals/Syllabi Approvals <https://usu.curriculog.com/>

SOC 3430 (DSS)Ryan Bosworth
Recomended by Ryan Bosworth
Secoded by Greg Podgorski
Approved unanimously by voting members

Business

General Education Assessment Report Feedback Harrison Kleiner

Harrison explained his homework to committees about providing feedback. He heard from BAI and BHU committees via email.

Feedback provided will be used for developing professional support in the fall.

Lee asked about the comment Lawrence mentioned from a faculty member who was critical of the report. Did the faculty member realize the assessment report was necessary for accreditation?

Lawrence explained the criticism was that the university doesn't put enough resources and funds into developing useful assessments and that only a few courses should be assessed. There should also be compensation for faculty who provide feedback.

Harrison said that he appreciates the feedback and comments. It seems that some faculty don't realize the need for assessments. Some faculty may not realize the assessment of education is part of their job. It would be nice if faculty would see the assessment as a way to evaluate their teaching and find room for improvement. Not everyone has that attitude.

Lee explained his question is from the viewpoint that there is a misconception from some faculty that they can do whatever they want and there isn't a requirement from accreditation or need to show improvement in teaching and learning.

Harrison said that there is an information campaign that needs to be done with faculty so there is accountability for student learning. Demonstrating that accountability is a requirement that has increased over the last decade and will only increase more in the future. USU will be required to look at demographics and equity gaps and how to address them. He is hopeful faculty will be interested in identifying challenges in equity and find ways to improve. The assessment of student learning will remain part of education. The comment that students and faculty should be compensated indicates that faculty don't see that it is part of their job.

Lee said that USHE will have more emphasis on assessment and faculty understanding their role in assessment.

Kristine said that there are two ways to look at assessment and one is to look at how learning outcomes are affecting student learning in their class. The other way is to look at the university's job of assessing the outcomes. Kristine says that faculty aren't the ones solely at fault. They use assessments to figure out how to realign or change their courses. Administration has the job of interpreting and helping faculty use outcomes.

Harrison said he is not faulting faculty. It is faculty's job to assess outcomes, and administration's job to look at outcomes and develop professional development for faculty to improve outcomes.

Kris said professional development should end up looking at how faculty approach teaching the outcomes. Faculty teaching courses with a particular rubric outcome should look at what they have in common and talk to each other about how they are teaching it.

Harrison said that faculty needed basic training in assessment. His problem was that 90% of BHU faculty said that student had master at the start of the class according to the report. It means that faculty aren't looking at approaching the assessment with a measure of how to rate student success.

Kristine said that faculty should be trained to look at ways to develop common assignments to help students progress to achieve rubric outcomes.

Charlie pointed out that the report showed that BHU's 90% proficiency rate at the start of the semester had dropped to 85% by the end of the term.

Lawrence said that raises the question on how faculty well faculty are being prepared to design exercises, when they should be assigned, and how students complete their assignments. He received informal feedback that it would be great to see examples of what this might look like. Successful examples might help faculty have more confidence to know what to do.

Nominations/Election of General Education Subcommittee ChairLee Rickords

Lee explained it is a requirement to nominate and vote on committee chairs.

Harrison nominated Lee Rickords.

Matt made a motion to re-appoint Lee Rickords as chair. Seconded by Thom.

Voting was unanimous by voting members.

Paul expressed his thanks for Lee serving as chair for another year.

Lee also thanked those on the committee for all the work they are doing and have done.

Lee also said that committee members will be assumed to continue serving next year. If they are not serving, please let Michelle Smith know.

Gen Ed Appeals to Excuse Depth Requirements and Minors Harrison Kleiner

Harrison said that he gets Gen Ed appeals asking to be excused from a depth requirement. Their justification is that they are a History major with a Biology second major. The advisor asked that the depth science requirement be excused. For this case it's easy to excuse the requirement. However, if it was a minor, it would be more difficult to waive the requirement. He would like to develop some major/minor combinations where some depth requirements might be waived and wanted feedback from the committee.

Charlie said that he is inclined to agree with Harrison that a minor would be a reason to waive a requirement. If a student has a major or minor in a field, the student has had more exposure and that addresses the purpose of a depth course.

Christopher asked how many minors are made up of depth classes. If a minor contains mostly depth classes, the waiver is a moot point, such as with Music classes.

Harrison said that one way to address it is to use the list of depth courses as alternatives for how to plan a minor. A minor is typically six classes. Surely six classes adds up to a depth course.

Lee said that the point of a minor is to get depth and breadth in another discipline.

Mykel said that logistically with the advising community, there are 90 advisors and they don't have programming in DegreeWorks or reports to tell who has which minor to exempt. Is this going to be a rule or exception and whose responsibility will it be to initiate the question – advisor or student?

Toni said that they could program DegreeWorks to automatically waive requirements and it could be part of the catalog. It would be another year before it could be programmed into the catalog.

John pointed out that the old catalog said that there was a way to waive breadth requirements. (He read the wording in the catalog.) There are exceptions for breadth that could be addressed by advisors, could there be exceptions for depth?

Harrison said that Mykel's question addresses equity – did an advisor or student realize how to ask for an exception? Coding exceptions in the catalog would be the best way to address it. He will work with vice provosts and then work on the issue with Toni and John for the fall of 2022.

Adjourned at 8:59 a.m.