

General Education Council
Minutes 10/17/2005

Present: P. Cox, R. Cole, L. Fuller, G. Graham, D. Parsons

1. Announcements/Reports

Pam Cox was welcomed as the Business rep for a 3-year term.

No Humanities rep has been elected, as yet.

Cole distributed the letter from Provost Salins that rolled the date by which campuses must submit Strengthened Assessment Plans from November, 2005 to February, 2006.

2. GLS100 Global Cities was considered for inclusion in the Humanities category. These had come before the Council and there was general support at that time, but members wanted to see actual syllabi to get a sense of the humanities components. The Council reviewed syllabi for Paris, Rome, London, and Moscow versions of the course.

The course was approved 4-0-0.

3. The request that Music majors be exempt from “baseline” Computer & Information Literacy was considered. This request was premised on them being required to take MUS 206 Introduction to MIDI and MUS 113 Introduction to Music Literature and History.

Conditional approval was given, 4-0-0.

The Music department needs to clarify why the catalog does not show that majors are required to take these courses. Some members of the Council believe that these changes to the major were discussed and approved at Faculty Assembly.

The Council will also ask that the Music department consider adding the words “Research skills” to the course outline for MUS 113. Specifically,

a) SECTION III. COURSE DESCRIPTION the last sentence should be recast to read: “Research skills, writing styles and documentation appropriate to the field of music will be introduced.

b) SECTION VI. COURSE OBJECTIVES H. should be recast to read: “Research, discuss and write about music in an organized and intelligent manner...”

4. MUS 382 Recording Technology I for inclusion in the Writing Plan, Level 2 was discussed. While the memo and class assignment from Dan Wood give a sense of the thrust of the course, the working syllabus is too sparse to get a full appreciation for the course objectives. The Music department will be asked to forward a copy of the UCC Course Outline for MUS 382.

5. THT 359 Costumes & Culture for II—C&C and HD-GIGA was discussed. This is a resubmission and the department has implemented the suggested originally made by the Council.

The course was approved 4-0-0.

6. The Council reviewed BIO 289 Computer Applications in Biology for inclusion in the forthcoming category of Computer and Information Literacy.

The course was approved 4-0-0, effective fall, 2006.

7. POL 303 Ancient & Medieval Political Thought was discussed for inclusion in the Western Heritage category. The course aligns with System learning outcomes, and matches the content of others approved courses in this area.

Because one voting member left to teach a class, there was discussion about how many people constituted a quorum. It was generally believed that that 4 of the 6 voting members needed to be present. But on the chance that only 3 of 6 were need a vote took place. The course was approved 3-0-0, pending clarification from chairs of PPC & FA regarding what constitutes a quorum on a Faculty Assembly Council.

[Directors note: Joan Carroll and Susan Camp ruled that 4 of 6 members must be present to have a vote. Hence, this item will be re-introduced at a subsequent Council meeting.]

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 10/21/2005

Present: P. Cox, R. Cole, C. Hirsch, R. Mandel

1. No quorum was attained.
2. Mandel overviewed GenEd assessment requirements from SUNY System Administration and our campus plans.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 10/26/2005

Present: P. Cox, R. Cole, L. Fuller, C. Hirsch, R. Mandel, D. Parsons

1. Minutes from 10/17/05 were approved 4-0-0.

2. Announcements/Reports

Cole will check into possibly using the Critical Thinking ACT exam to replace the “blue book” waiver exam we currently offer.

3. POL 303 Ancient & Medieval Political Thought was reintroduced for deliberation because a quorum was lost at the previous Council meeting.

The course was approved for inclusion in the Western Heritage category, 4-0-0.

4. Writing/Oral Comm Plan additions BIO 460 Conservation Biology and ZOO 370 Comparative Anatomy seem appropriate for “Level 2.” However, course proposals are need for each to demonstrate that the writing components have been covered in the list of learning objectives.

5. BIO 207 Understanding Evolution for KF Natural Sciences was provisionally approved 4-0-0.

The course proposal needs to contain a learning outcomes statement to the effect that “students will be made aware of the methods scientist use to study evolution.”

6. The Council reviewed BIO 289 Computer Applications in Biology for inclusion in the forthcoming category of Computer and Information Literacy.

The course was provisionally approved 4-0-0, effective fall, 2006.

The course proposal needs to contain a learning outcomes statement to the effect that “students will become familiar with library electronic databases.”

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 10/31/2005

Present: R. Cole, G. Graham, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons

1. General discussion about allowing double-dips across GenEd categories. In question are HIS202, HIS203, MUS117, PBJ463, WST300, PHY303.

Points made included contrasting opinions on depth/ breadth versus economy for students. Some questioned the burden on students in 3-2 programs who cannot take advantage of double dips.

Cole will pull number of actual students enroll in these courses. He will also talk with chairs/directors in majors where this might have greatest impact.

Item was tabled.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 10/31/2005

Present: R. Cole, G. Graham, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons

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Cole will pull number of actual students enroll in these courses. He will also talk with chairs/directors in majors where this might have greatest impact.

Item was tabled.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 11/30/2005

Present: R. Cole, P. Cox, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons

1. Mandel presented the Council with the options available for Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment of Critical Thinking, Writing, and Mathematics. She also shared the views of faculty from these areas with whom she had consulted prior to developing the Plan that must be submitted to System Administration in February, 2006.

The Council endorsed using “a rubric and standards determined by discipline-based panels of faculty” for Critical Thinking and Writing. The Council, through subsequent email communication, endorsed using a “Nationally-Normed Exam” for Mathematics.

Mandel will present this plan to Faculty Assembly for approval prior to filing the report with System Administration.

2. The Council voted to move forward with a proposal to “infuse” Critical Thinking. The proposal to be presented at Faculty Assembly will read:

**SUNY Oswego General Education Council
Recommendation for
INFUSION OF CRITICAL THINKING
Effective AY 2007-2008**

Wherein students will:

Learning Outcome #1 - identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own or others' work;

Learning Outcome #2 - develop well-reasoned arguments.

- I. Redistribution of the General Education Competency of “Critical Thinking.”
 - A. The General Education category currently named “Critical Thinking” shall be dissolved and a discrete collection of “critical thinking” courses shall no longer be maintained by the General Education Council.
 - B. Major programs of study will “infuse” “Critical Thinking” in their curricula.
 - C. Major programs of study will identify Student Learning Outcomes associated with “Critical Thinking.”
 1. Department/Program statements for “Critical Thinking” learning outcomes will include the SUNY-GER Learning Outcomes — *Students will: - identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own or others' work; - develop well-reasoned arguments.*
 2. Departments/Programs of study are encouraged to establish “Critical Thinking” requirements that exceed SUNY-GER minimums.
 - D. Major programs of study will assess Student Learning Outcomes associated with “Critical Thinking.”
 1. Department/Program assessment plans will incorporate the SUNY System Administration rubric for evaluating students’ abilities to meet “Critical Thinking” learning outcomes.
 2. Assessment data for “Critical Thinking” shall be aggregated and submitted to SUNY System Administration in a timely manner.
 - E. Articulated transfer students will continue to receive “infusion” status for “Critical Thinking.”
3. There was discussion about the interpretation of the “85” score on Regents. Is Oswego’s policy to be understood that students are exempt from additional Foreign Language if they scored 85 on the Regents exam AND studies for another year of the same language? Or, is a “decent” score on the Regents exam plus an additional year of study adequate?

Cole will sample some incoming folders to get a sense of how the students break down.

4. Discussion focused on the request that TESOL students be granted an exemption for Human Diversity—Tolerance & Intolerance in the U.S.

The exemption was approved 4-0-0.

No quorum on 11/11/05 or 11/21/05

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 02/13/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, P. Cox, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes of 11/30-2005 were approved

2. Announcements:

Leigh Bacher was welcomed as the one-semester sabbatical replacement for Graham.

Georgina Whittingham was welcomed—she had teaching conflicts with the fall meetings, which had already been scheduled by the time Faculty Assembly elected her.

Chris LaLonde will take over as the Director of General Education, beginning Fall 2006. This is a three-year appointment.

2. The Council discussed the Add/Drop options that faculty can place on the courses they teach. It was agreed that General Education courses should be open for adding and dropping without instructor permission during the regular campus Add/Drop periods.

Cole will work with the Registrar to have policy effected and to notify instructors.

3. The UCC course outline for MUS 382 Recording Technology was submitted to the Council for consideration as part of the department's Writing Plan, in Category II. This submission was in response to the Council's previous deliberations on this matter. The minutes from 10/17/2005 read

MUS 382 Recording Technology I for inclusion in the Writing Plan, Level 2 was discussed. While the memo and class assignment from Dan Wood give a sense of the thrust of the course, the working syllabus is too sparse to get a full appreciation for the course objectives. The Music department will be asked to forward a copy of the UCC Course Outline for MUS 382.

The UCC course outline, like the previous materials, is very skeletal in nature. Furthermore, there is no clear specification for the writing components required in the course, or the percentage value writing holds in grade calculations.

Writing assignments for Category II should be developmental in nature, generate feedback from the evaluator, and allow for rewriting. For this course to be added to the Writing Plan, the UCC course outline needs to codify the nature and extent of the writing activities.

As an aside, the memo from Dan Wood implies that the major writing project in his course is a “final written assignment.” An 8-10 page paper turned in at the conclusion of the course does not allow students to *develop* their writing.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 02/21/2006

Present: L. Bacher, D. Bozak, R. Cole, P. Cox, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes of 2/13/2006 were approved
2. CHI 201/202, FRE 201/202, JPN 201/202, SPA 201/202 were reviewed for inclusion in the Humanities category. The courses had been “de-listed” effective fall 2006, in response to System Administrations concerns that there was a lack of “humanities” focus.

The revised course syllabi were approved for inclusion as GenEd Humanities, pending receipt from the MLL department of new course outlines in the standard UCC Proposal format, including a bibliography. Upon receipt of the outlines, the registrar will be notified of our decision, and the category designation will become effective. The revised outlines should also be submitted to UCC for their approval (including GER201/202).

3. ANT 335 Experimental Archaeology was reviewed for II—ENS. While there was enthusiasm for the potential this course holds in terms of Intellectual Issues, there remain a few concerns.

A. The prerequisite for 9 Social & Behavioral Sciences hours is too much. Consider reducing this to 6 hours, which is the minimal amount students will have after completing their Knowledge Foundations portion of General Education. Also, consider including, “or permission of instructor” to accommodate transfer students.

B. In the Course Description there is no indication of the types of learning activities the students will engage in, nor is there a statement about teaching methods. Consider adding these items, thereby demonstrating that the course meets the guidelines of an Intellectual Issues course in terms of active learning.

C. The Course Description lays out seven segments or topics for the course, but it is unclear what issue(s) undergirds, or organizes the course. The guidelines state that an Intellectual Issues course “will entail rigorous, multidisciplinary explorations of important themes, issues, or questions... in the Natural Sciences... engage[ing] students as active learners in the arguments, debates, and controversies that emerge when different perspectives are brought to bear on complex issues.” Consider how the Course Description can be recast to make more evident the organizing “issues” that drive ANT 335.

4. There was discussion regarding waiver exams for the new “Computer & Information Literacy” category. Cole will check into the ETS exam. He will also invite Rameen Mohammadi (CS) & Karen Shockey (Library) to a future meeting to discuss this.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 02/28/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. The Council was alerted that in reporting out to Faculty Assembly its decision to limit the “Add” option on GenEd courses, concerns were raised and a request was made to bring this to a full vote of the FA.
2. There was a general discussion about the history of Writing Across the Curriculum, its present status, assessment, and its future direction. It was agreed that the formation of a Task Force would be requested of Faculty Assembly. It was agreed that Cole & Mandel would work on a document to submit to the FA (see below).

Request to Create a Writing Across the Curriculum Task Force

The General Education Council calls upon the Faculty Assembly to request the creation of a Writing Across the Curriculum Task Force whose charge shall be to

- A) Examine the need for the re-formation a Writing Across the Curriculum Committee
- B) If, upon determination that such a Committee is needed,
 1. Define the mission of the Committee
 2. Define the membership of the Committee
 3. Charge the Committee with reviewing
 - a. the existing Writing Across the Curriculum guidelines
 - b. assessment procedures for Writing Plans in the majors

- c. faculty development
 - d. the need for a Writing Center
 - e. the staffing of a Writing Specialist
 - f. other related Writing Across the Curriculum issues, as appropriate
4. Establish a timetable for the Committee to complete its work

C) Complete its work and cease to exist by December, 2006

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 03/20/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, P. Cox, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes of 2/21/2006 were approved 6-0-0
2. Minutes of 2/28/2006 were approved 6-0-0
3. Announcements/Reports
 - a. Faculty Assembly members' resistance to allowing a change in open web registration for all GenEd courses was reported. The GenEd Council's request that all such courses be designated "Option 1" was tabled by Faculty Assembly until a discussion of the existing "Add" policy could be reviewed. Meanwhile, Cole will speak with Andy Westfall to determine how many GenEd courses typically require permission of instructor.
 - b. A GenEd retreat will be scheduled for April or May. Cole will solicit availability from Council members.
4. Parsons was elected chair of the Council for the remainder of the academic year.
5. Cole shared information regarding the ETS Information and Communication Technology Literacy exam. The cognitive and technical skills the exam measures are good ones. There is some question about the usefulness of the exam as a "waiver" instrument, and/or an assessment tool for Oswego's "baseline" GenEd requirement. Rameen Muhammadi (Computer Science) and Karen Shockey (Penfield Library) will be asked to share their opinions on the exam when they meet with the Council.

There is a period from April 5-May 5, 2006 during which the administration of the exam will be free to institutions. Cole will check into how we could take advantage of this.

6. The revised outline for MUS 323 Women and Music was reviewed for continued inclusion in the Music Department's Writing Plan at Level 2. This was approved 6-0-0.

7. The revised outline for MUS 323 Women and Music was reviewed for inclusion in Intellectual Issues – Self and Society. The course was approved 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 03/20/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, P. Cox, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

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Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 03/29/2006

Present: L. Bacher, D. Bozak, R. Cole, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes of 3/20/2006 were approved 5-0-0

2. Announcements/Reports

Faculty Assembly approved the request to create a Task for examining the need for a WAC Committee. The GenEd Council's request to infuse critical thinking was introduced. Preliminary discussion took place and a full debate and vote is scheduled for April 10th.

3. Cole provided more information regarding the ETS Information and Communication Technology Literacy exam. From April 5-May 5, 2006 the pilot administration of the exam is free to institutions. Only the "Core Academic Assessment" portion is being given. This is the exam that is appropriate for students in High School, Community College, or Freshmen and Sophomores at a 4-year school. In other words, this is what we have students take, if we were to grant a waiver of CSC101, or to assess students after taking CSC101. ETS requires a minimum of 100 students to take the test, and it must be proctored for its 75-minute duration.

While the offer of a free period for the exam is attractive, the mechanics of rounding up 100 students, providing computer locations for them, and proctoring the exam seems too daunting. The difficulties of using existing CSC101 students for the exam were echoed by Rameen Muhammadi from the Computer Sciences department.

4. Guests Rameen Muhammadi from Computer Science and Jim Nichols from Penfield Library (Karen Shockey from Penfield Library could not attend) provided their views on developing a

waiver “waiver” instrument for Oswego’s “baseline” Computer and Information Literacy GenEd requirement.

The essence of the problem is that the computer literacy exam we have traditionally used for granting waivers does not measure information management skills. Natalie Sturr from Penfield Library provides a brief lecture (15-30 minutes) prior to administering an ICT test. The possibility of having students sit through this lecture and then take both the computer skills test and the ICT exam was discussed. There is concern on the Council that true information management skills, which require at least 1 credit hour worth of work to acquire, cannot be developed in a brief lecture immediately after which an exam is administered.

The most concrete suggestion was to explore the development of a 1-credit “Hybrid” course in information management/information literacy. Students who passed the computer exam would subsequently enroll for the 1-credit quarter course. Passing the course would grant them a waiver (and have the bonus of adding an hour toward their graduation requirements). The course, offered at, say a 200 level, would be modeled after the existing 1-credit “GST 300 Library Research Techniques.” The new course would be open to any student, not limited to students seeking a GenEd waiver.

Perhaps the course could be designated “GST 200 Introduction to Library Research Techniques,” and the existing course could be renamed “GST 300 Advanced Library Research Techniques.”

Cole will continue discussions with the library folks about the feasibility of such a course, and he will explore securing development money for the course.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 03/29/2006

Present: L. Bacher, D. Bozak, R. Cole, C. Hirsch, L. Fuller, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

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Perhaps the course could be designated “GST 200 Introduction to Library Research Techniques,” and the existing course could be renamed “GST 300 Advanced Library Research Techniques.”

Cole will continue discussions with the library folks about the feasibility of such a course, and he will explore securing development money for the course.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council

Minutes 04/17/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, L. Fuller, C. Hirsch, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes from 3/29/06 were approved 5-0-0
2. Discussion of how Faculty Assembly will constitute a Writing Across the Curriculum Task Force was discussed.
3. Cole and Mandel will meet in early May with the library folks to explore the possibility of a 1-credit Information Literacy course.
4. There was some brief brainstorming of Program 2011 & Beyond. Cole asked that ideas be forwarded to him for compilation.
5. Music 320 Music in the Renaissance was considered for approval as Intellectual Issues—Cultures & Civilizations.

It was not clear what the “issues” in the course were. For example, “What is Humanism” or “What is Nationalism & Internationalism” two topics from the course outline don’t appear to be contested, at least the their presentation to the students.

The course was not approved, 5-0-0.

Cole will work the department to help them think about ways to reshape the course. The department’s representative will also be invited to attend an upcoming Council meeting, if they wish to further discuss the course.

6. MUS 329 Music & Politics was approved for Intellectual Issues—Cultures & Civilizations.
7. The request to allow MUS 329 Music & Politics to continue as a Level II writing course was tabled pending further clarification from the department as to the extent and nature of the writing requirements of the class.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 04/25/2006

Present: L. Bacher, D. Bozak, R. Cole, L. Fuller, C. Hirsch, G. Whittingham

1. Announcements/Reports

Faculty Assembly made no progress on the request to infuse critical thinking.
The agenda for the upcoming retreat was distributed.

2. ART 380 Intro to Museum Studies was denied by system Administration for approval as a Humanities courses because it appears too applied in nature. It was agreed not to ask for arbitration of this decision.

3. An exemption for Computer and Information Literacy Information has been given to BA and BFA Art and Graphic Design majors. These students must complete ART207, which was reviewed for the extent to which it meets all three learning outcomes. 4-0-0.

4. Background information was provided regarding the efforts of the chair of the Communication Studies department to develop an oral communication lab. There was Council support for the concept and the director was approved to write a generic letter of endorsement.

5. Cole said he was willing to write letters detailing Council members' levels of service to place in their portfolio. If interested, members should contact him.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole

General Education Council
Minutes 05/10/2006

Present: L. Bacher, R. Cole, L. Fuller, C. Hirsch, R. Mandel, D. Parsons, G. Whittingham

1. Minutes from the 4/25/06 meeting were approved 4-0-0

2. Announcements/Reports

a. Cole reported that he and Mandel met with the library folks. They've offered to

schedule workshops in the fall of 2006 for the information literacy component of the waiver exam. Students who pass the computer literacy exam would then take a workshop and have to pass an accompanying test in order to get a category waiver.

This stop-gap measure will allow the GenEd Council to spend more time considering the ETS exam as a waiver instrument. It will also give the library staff time to think about developing a 1-credit Introduction to Library Skills course.

- b. Cole distributed a letter from a student describing her/his experiences with an Intellectual Issues course. The document should be considered as one artifact among many in discussing the future of this GenEd category.
- c. Cole passed out information regarding the length of time left in each term on the Council. After Academic Year 2005-2006 these two GenEd Council terms will expire:

School of Education -- Dennis Parsons (2003-2006)
A&S Fine Arts/Library -- Christine Hirsch (2003-2006)

Terms expiring after AY 2006-2007 are:
A&S Natural Sciences -- Lawrence Fuller (2004-2007)
A&S Social Sciences -- Glenn Graham (2004-2007)

Terms expiring after AY 2007-2008 are:
A&S Humanities -- Georgina Whittingham (2005-2008)
School of Business -- Pamela Cox (2005-2008)

- d. Bacher reported that she has been charged with convening the WAC Task Force.
 - e. Fuller, Hirsch, & Parsons reported that Faculty Assembly had moved deliberations on the Critical Thinking Infusion proposal to the fall of 2006 because the Assembly had pressing business that needed to be completed.
3. MUS 320 Music in the Renaissance for Humanities was reviewed and approved for inclusion in the category of Humanities.
4. Academic Policies Council as that the GenEd Council examine including MAT 158 & MAT 258 for GenEd Math. Cole distributed descriptions of these courses, along with the Board of Trustees' learning outcomes for the Math category.

Because of time limits, there was little discussion of this matter. The issues will be taken up in the fall, and the Math department will be invited to consult on the item.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Cole