General Education Curriculum Committee
April 9, 2015
3124 WSW 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Present: Shan Parker, Jie Li, Cathy Miller, Cameron McLeman, Kai McLeman (ex officio baby), Elizabeth Collardey, Kyle Manley, Barbara Hollie

Shan called the meeting to order at 2:15pm.

1. Review of February 26, 2015 minutes and March 12, 2015 minutes (see GECC web site). Minutes were approved.

2. Provost Request
   Discussion was held regarding the issue of GS designation for study abroad courses that was forwarded by the provost from the Student Concerns Forum. Members decided that. If a course is not designed for Global Studies, it won’t necessarily address GS criteria and GELO outcomes.

   The committee agreed that the following response is accurate and appropriate:
   Study abroad courses are going to vary. The academic unit is responsible for submitting courses for GE designation. i.e., not all study abroad courses have been reviewed by GECC.

   Shan will draft the committee’s response and email it to members before formally submitting it to the provost.


4. Update from Chris Waters on HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation Improvement Project on Persistence and Completion.

   Chris discussed two major topics: 1-The Academy of Persistence and Completion and 2-HLC Accreditation. Members of UM-Flint’s Academy team (faculty, staff, and administrators) attended a Roundtable with 24 other schools in the Academy’s cohort. The team worked on designing their concept of why they wanted to be in the Academy. They were encouraged to focus and so the team chose to tune in on a part of the freshmen cohort (the “academic middle”) which is just above “conditional admits” and up to 3.14/3.16 high school GPA, about 50% of freshmen. In the team’s process of gathering data, they realized that the chancellor had initiated Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) as a new and separate process. The team realized that there was overlap in the 2 initiatives. As a result, the team is now the “Retention Committee” as a subgroup of the SEM process. This committee is developing a model that is associated with the budget and based on achieving a goal of a desired mix of students as well as what is needed to achieve that goal. Previous approaches have addressed just growth alone. This committee is considering specific and diverse characteristics of students. Chris has finished UM-Flint’s responses to HLC’s questions on progress.
Regarding HLC Accreditation, refer to the handout on Criteria for Accreditation distributed by Chris. UM-Flint is in a 10-year cycle during which several tasks must be accomplished:

- UM-Flint must participate in a quality initiative (the Academy work, now the Retention Committee)
- Write an assurance argument which replaces the self-study. The aim of this is to create a living document that can be adapted and adjusted throughout the evolution of the institution. UM-Flint is in its 5th year of the cycle, we missed the 4th year review. We will be required to submit a 10th year review. This report will need to be drafted in the next couple of years.
- This assurance argument is limited to 35,000 words however evidence (pdf files) can be attached in appendices.

Chris stated that GECC can be pivotal in helping to respond to the questions, in particular, Criteria Four of the handout. Criterion 4B is the core component of HLC concern.

GECC discussion:

- There’s a lot of data in TK20 that hasn’t been used; we need to do much more.
- We need to provide evidence of “closing the loop” on assessment.
- Inconsistent findings presented at the GE Forum could be due to lack of inter-rater reliability. Other universities have “assessment days” to increase participation and inter-rater reliability.
- Who is responsible for analyzing and acting on assessment data? At UM-Flint, there is no one.
- Faculty who teach GE courses bear responsibility for engaging in GE assessment.
- Who is charged with making sure GE assessment is done? Chairs?
- What are the consequences for not meeting accreditation requirements?
- GECC’s charge (i.e, lack of authority) comes from the Faculty Code.
- Can GECC make recommendations? If so, to whom? Everyone. Thus, creating a record/history of attempts to strengthen assessment participation. Shan stated this becomes an additional strategy for GECC future planning.
- Can GECC develop more “rules” or requirements: “If a unit wants a GE designation, then these are the rules.” We could change our protocols for approving GE designations, too. This could have the effect of reducing the unwieldy number of GE courses.
- There needs to be a shift from pure academic freedom to a balance with cooperation on assessment.
- Can we find out how other institutions are improving assessment?
- How can we remove GE designations?
- Now that we are evaluating the GE program, now is the optimal time to say, we are making these recommendations; these are the desired changes.
- We need to have more meaningful data.
- If we consider GE as a program like other academic programs, why can’t we ask of GE what we ask of all programs (an annual program review)? [Be careful, we have to consider workload.]
5. Matters Arising.
   - Our next meeting is the last meeting. We need to discuss/decide who will serve as chair of GECC. Shan will be on sabbatical next year.
   - There are some courses that GECC approved for Fall 2015 that did not meet the deadline for being listed in the catalog. They will have to be re-submitted and approved on SIS. This should be an expedited process since GECC already approved these courses.

Shan adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.

Next and Last GECC meeting: Thursday, April 23, 2015, 2:00-3:30pm, WSW building #3124, PHHS Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted by your “There’s a light at the end of the tunnel” note taker.
Elizabeth K. Collardey