

General Education Committee  
March 7, 2013  
10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Mason Hall, D1

**Attending:** Janette Muir (Chair), Dominique Banville, Rick Diecchio, Kelly Dunne, Kim Eby, Doug Eyman, Marcy Glover, Stephanie Hazel, Mack Holt, Frank Allen Philpot, Hugh Sockett, Cliff Sutton, Mark Uhen, Carol Urban, Aaron Yohai

**Out:** Becky Ericson, Peter Winant

#### **Debrief of General Education conference in Boston**

Janette thanked the team (Stephanie Hazel, Doug Eyman and Kelly Dunne) for their work at the conference. Themes from the conference: where the numbers are; where does assessment happen; theme based gen ed; and sharing more of what we do with the university community. A more detailed debrief will occur at a future meeting.

#### **General Education at Mason – Final discussion of overall learning outcomes - APPROVED**

Janette asked the committee if there were any comments on the most recent version of the overall learning outcomes proposal. After a brief discussion, the proposal was approved.

#### **Arts Learning Outcomes – Revision and Discussion - APPROVED**

Doug and Peter worked on a revision of the learning outcomes for this category after having reviewed multiple proposals over the past year that the subcommittee felt were problematic or were not quite clear enough from their perspective. It was decided to rewrite the learning outcomes to place stronger emphasis on what was critical for an Arts course to cover in order to assist faculty authors with writing stronger proposals. There was also a renumbering of the outcomes.

#### **Social and Behavioral Sciences Outcomes – Revision and Discussion - APPROVED**

In addition, Mack and Hugh worked on revising the learning outcomes for the Social and Behavioral Sciences category to make them more concise. The final outcome reduced the outcomes from five to three and makes all three requirements mandatory. There is concern that #1 may be difficult in large courses – if an issue the committee will work with faculty to address.

#### **Proposal for Review**

##### **GCH 465 – SYNTHESIS - APPROVED**

At one time, all CHHS synthesis courses had been organized into one course, with sections for specific majors. Over the past few years they have “unbundled” the courses into separate synthesis offerings for each major. The foundation of each course is the same; just the content is tailored specifically to each major. The students take the learning in their discipline and apply it outside of their major as part of their coursework. There was discussion about whether or not a capstone course was automatically approved as synthesis. While it is not automatic, this course is identical to multiple other offerings that have already been approved; this is merely procedural to be consistent.

##### **EVPP 480 – SYNTHESIS - APPROVED**

While there was no subcommittee recommendation – all had read the proposal and approved.

##### **FAVS 300 – GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING – RETURNED**

While this is an interesting course, the subcommittee felt that the focus was too narrow to qualify as a global understanding course. The proposal did not map well to the learning outcomes. The proposal will be returned to the author.

After discussing this course, the subcommittee has decided to examine and possibly revise the learning outcomes to insure that future proposals match the learning outcomes more clearly.

### **BENG PROPOSAL**

The subcommittee had great difficulty in reviewing the proposal. They are uncertain as to what, specifically, they are being asked to waive. Bioengineering majors have new requirements (from their accrediting body) that they must take more than one course in the Social and Behavioral Sciences category. The subcommittee cannot determine from the proposal: what they are being asked to waive; why they are being asked for BIOL 311 to count, especially when their other science courses the students must take; can they take out ECON 103. Is this a double major? If so, the catalog is very clear that students are responsible for the requirements in both majors and therefore an exception cannot be made. How many students would need this exception? Marcy was asked to craft a response and send to the committee, before sending to the author.