

General Studies Council Minutes
September 6, 2018 – 3:30 p.m.
Warner Hall, Warner Conference Room
***** Approved via email *****

Present: Julie Agard, Sylvia Asay, Debbie Bridges, Greg Brown, Derrick Burbul, Joel Cardenas, Scott Darveau, Tim Farrell, Beth Hinga, Katherine Kime, Miechelle McKelvey, Kristi Milks, Kim Schipporeit, Sri Seshadri, Rebecca Umland, Beth Wiersma, Ron Wirtz, Mark Ellis

Absent: Karl Borden, Amy Rundstrom

Guests: Dr. Charlie Bicak, Jacob Rosdail

I. Call to Order:

Debbie Bridges called the meeting to order.

1. Approve Agenda:

Brown/Darveau moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

2. Minutes from the April 26, 2018 meeting were approved via email.

II. Old Business (Open Items):

1. Course Proposals (Review for Final Approval):

a. HIST 388/JMC 388: Crafting the Historical Documentary (Instructor: Jeff Wells, Jacob Rosdail; Department: History, Communication):

b. HIST 112: The Religions of the World (Instructor: James Rohrer, Department: History) – Humanities Distribution:

Darveau/Burbul moved to approve the above courses for final approval. Motion carried.

III. New Business:

1. Course Proposals (New): Nothing submitted:

Moratorium on new course proposals for 2018-19 AY (approved at 4/26/18 GSC meeting).

2. Assessment and GS Program:

a. Initial Results from Spring 2018 Distribution Course Assessment (Aesthetics, Humanities and Social Sciences).

The results were presented to the Council for review with discussion to occur at the October meeting. One department continues to not complete the assessment process.

b. Syllabi Review Results Summary and Feedback (Spring 2018) to Faculty.

Bridges presented and discussed the syllabi review summary with the Council. Currently, 54% of the syllabi are consistent with the GS policy/guidelines. One department continues to not follow policy.

As a reminder, the Council mentioned the GS statement needs to be on the syllabus. The Council also discussed whether or not links should be used on syllabi.

c. Update on Syllabi Collection/Review Fall 2018.

The course syllabi being reviewed this fall are available on Canvas for the Council to review.

The review process for syllabi being reviewed in the fall 2018 will be completed by November. Once each group has completed the review process of their assigned syllabi a summary of their findings will be submitted to Bridges.

d. Update on Fall 2018 Distribution Course Assessment (Natural Sciences, A&Q Thought, Wellness).

Faculty and Chairs have been notified on which courses are being assessed. A reminder will be sent to them regarding their assessment as well as information on how the assessment should be completed.

e. Update on GS Website.

The website is currently being revised.

3. Review/Revision of General Studies Program:

a. Plans for 2018/19 Academic Year/Campus Forums Debrief:

The Council will be working on changing the GS program. The Council will need to follow the governance documents to determine if structural or foundational changes will be made. If structural changes are made they will need to be completed by December.

b. GS Information Survey Results:

The survey was sent to the faculty list and 154 responses were received. Bridges discussed the results with the Council. Survey questions included identifying key content areas and number of hours that would be included in an ideal GS program. Survey responses indicate the top 10 content areas are: written communication, critical thinking, oral communication, humanities, natural sciences, quantitative/analytical skills, social sciences, global perspectives, aesthetics, and information literacy. Survey responses indicate that an ideal GS program would be 30 – 34 hours. Some discussion ensued regarding whether or not last year's activities / conversations influenced the survey responses.

Given Dr. Bicap's charge to the GSC, options for the upcoming APR and review/revision process were discussed: 1) Request a deferral of the APR until after the revised GS program is in place; 2) Conduct a traditional APR; and 3) Have the external reviewer for the APR as a consultant in the discussion of GS revisions. Discussions regarding timing and logistics ensued; it was noted that option 2 or 3 will be difficult to achieve given the timeline the GSC has been given.

Bridges asked the Council to identify the resources that would be most useful in the discussions on revising the GS program and how to go about making the changes:

What's right about the current program?
What issues do we know we need to fix?
Do we need an outside consultant?

Suggestions made to the Council:

- 1) Look at the current GS program and fix the issues that are known before making radical

changes.

- 2) Look at the GS program philosophy and see if alternative philosophies need to be looked at.
- 3) Review the results of Roundtable I from the previous GS program change.

Bridges suggested the Council review all that was done last year by the Council and if a member of the Council has a suggestion or a proposal as to how to change the GS program, submit the proposal to Bridges and she will post it on Canvas for review. Discussion will follow at the October meeting.

The Council is requesting two things from Dr. Charlie Bicak:

- 1) Make a formal written statement to campus that if the Council comes up with a GS program of 36 or more credit hours that he will support the Council's decision.
- 2) Data from the transfer student situation that indicates the GS program is a real problem for transfer students.

4. College Merger and General Studies Council:

Currently, the governance document is not in compliance due to the college merger between the College of Natural and Social Sciences and the College of Fine Arts and Humanities. How does the merger effect the members of the GS Council representatives?

IV. Other:

a. Special Guest: Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs:

Dr. Bicak recapped the charge he gave to the GS Council last year regarding evaluating the current program (e.g., quality of academic program, alignment with mission) and considering the size (hours) of the program, as well as recapping the progress the Council made last year. Bicak complemented the Council on their work and progress last year.

Dr. Bicak discussed with the Council the possibility of hiring an outside consultant to assist in the APR process as well as changing the GS program by taking a hybrid approach.

Dr. Bicak mentioned to the Council that one great challenge is being chosen as a representative of your college on the GS Council but at the same time to be true to what you believe the GS program should look like.

Two questions were asked by the Council:

- 1) What charges were given to the colleges last year (white papers) and were they the same charges that were given to the Council? Dr. Bicak indicated the charges given to both groups were the same.
- 2) Do you think the 45 hours in the GS program will affect enrollment? Dr. Bicak indicated he believed the 45 hours has an impact on enrollment and that there is some evidence to support this belief.

V. Adjournment:

Wiersma/ Brown moved to adjourn at 5:10 p.m. Motion carried.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, October 4, 2018, at 3:30 p.m., Warner Conference Room.