

**General Studies Council Minutes
December 5, 2019 – 3:30 p.m.
Warner Hall, Warner Conference Room
*** Approved via email *****

Present: Sylvia Asay, Joan Blauwkamp, Debbie Bridges, Greg Brown, Joel Cardenas, Scott Darveau, Jeremy Dillon, Mark Ellis, Aaron Estes, Tim Farrell, Michelle Fleig-Palmer, Kristi Milks, Erin Pearson, Sri Seshadri, Rebecca Umland, Jeff Wells, Ron Wirtz

Absent: Julie Agard, Beth Hinga, Doug Tillman

Guests: Ryan Teten, Kim Schipporeit

I. Call to Order:

Bridges called the meeting to order.

1. Approve Agenda:

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

2. Minutes from the November 7, 2019 meeting were approved via email.

II. Old Business (Open Items):

1. Course Proposals (Review for Final Approval):

III. New Business:

1. Course Proposals (New): Nothing submitted:

Moratorium on new course proposals continued for 2019-20 AY (approved at 9/5/19 GSC meeting). If a department feels a new course is needed then justification will need to be provided as to why it needs to be included in the current General Studies Program.

2. Assessment and GS Program:

a. List of Portal Courses to be Assessed in Spring 2020:

Portal courses (all courses numbered 188) are scheduled to be assessed in Spring 2020. The list of Portals to be assessed are: BIOL 188, CSP 188, CYBR 188, FAMS 188, HIST 188, MKT 188, MUS 188, PE 188, PHIL 188 and TE 188. Bridges will notify instructors about the assessment.

Brown/Darveau moved to approve the list of courses. Motion carried.

3. Review/Revision of General Studies Program:

a. Reports/Updates from Working Groups:

Group 1 – Blauwkamp stated their group focused on the structure of the program and the learning outcomes. The HLC requirements were used as a guide when looking at the structure of the program. One goal was to make room in the General Studies program for electives.

Blauwkamp discussed the dispositional requirements in the proposed program (Loper 9 & 10). Courses that meet one of these learning objectives may also meet a broad-knowledge objective, which would allow students to have more choices.

Group 2 – Dillon stated their group did their best to stick to the charge and look at only program level outcomes. Dillon stated it was difficult to look at program outcomes when we don't have a program. The group began by addressing the question: What should a UNK graduate look like? They then used a two-pronged approach. First they edited the existing UNK GS program level outcomes, reducing them from 6 to 5. They then examined UNL's ACE program, and a proposal from the UNK College of Education, which was based on ACE. The group took the 10 ACE / COE outcomes and condensed them into 7 "distribution areas," all of which satisfy various GS program level outcomes. The goal was to make a program that is more compatible with ACE and to facilitate students' ability to transfer into UNK.

The group also recommended eliminating the Portal and Capstone courses. They suggested that the various Departments' capstone courses, undergraduate research projects, etc., could be assessed to demonstrate that GS program level outcomes have been achieved and carried to the higher levels – we do not need a specific GS Capstone course.

Brown had a concern about the departmental outcomes because in his department there is no way to have a departmental capstone course due to 5 different academic programs within the department.

Umland likes the groups program as it is not overly busy.

Group 3 – Darveau indicated their group focused on: What should a graduate from UNK look like? What skills do they need? The group pulled ideas from UNK, UNL and Wayne State. They recommend eliminating the Articulate the Relevance learning outcome completely and they looked at new ways to deliver the program (6 hour blocks, grouping courses by themes, etc.)

The group worried about the incentives for departments to improve student learning? For example, full-time faculty teaching GS courses, co-teaching, and/or incorporating new ideas such as themes. We need to capture the students' attention and engage them more in the GS program. Themed courses would be geared toward incoming freshmen.

Blauwkamp distributed a handout of the combined proposals.

Loper 1: would be a First-year seminar which would be unique and would be waived for transfer students who come in at sophomore standing. The first-year seminar would provide flexibility to allow departments to propose a number of different, creative ideas. Discussion focused on how to determine eligibility for waivers. Estes and Pearson indicated that it would be possible to use a combination of credit-hours completed (e.g., 18 hours) and admissions status. This combination would distinguish between students transferring from another college or university and students coming in with equivalent hours but as first time freshmen.

Wells is concerned themes may bog down the Council in discussions and the process of approving a new GS program. Themes can be discussed at a later date. Darveau expressed concern that if themes are not designed now they will never happen. Other comments indicated that themes seem to capture the spirit of Dr. Bickel's comment on "revolutionary program changes."

Bridges mentioned it would not hurt to ask the campus to give their opinions on themes. Providing a unique opportunity to students is a good thing.

Blauwkamp suggested that if we go ahead with First-year seminar, let's let people try different ways to deliver those seminars and see what works.

What is the effect of Loper 9 and 10 (Dispositional requirement)? Can a student meet these in other ways? These are from the HLC expectations. Can the requirements be met with a stand-alone course or could there be classes that meet one of these in another area requirement? Need to always be cognizant of transfer students and the NE Transfer Initiative.

Seshadri/Blauwkamp moved to approve sending the number of hours (30-31) and the draft of Loper's 1-10 - excluding the additional notations marked with asterisks, the "1 course" notations, the program level outcomes, and the additional considerations - to campus for comment. Motion carried.

The program level outcomes need work and will not be sent out at this time.

Discussion to be continued at a special meeting scheduled for December 19 (time to be determined via email) – focus of meeting will be to finalize information to be sent to campus for comment / input.

- b. Next Steps – Plans for Spring Semester:** *Not addressed due to time constraints.*
- 4. General Studies Council Governance Document (College Merger and Updating GSC Governance Document):** *Not addressed due to time constraints.*

IV. Other:

V. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., Warner Conference Room.