

General Studies Council

November 2, 2023

3:30 PM, Warner Conference Room

****Formerly the Chancellor's Dining Room, second floor of NSU****

**** Approved via Email ****

Present: Derek Boeckner, Jonathan Dettman, Megan Hartman, Kate Heelan, Suzanne Maughan Spencer, Tami Moore, Noel Palmer, Rochelle Reeves, Whitney Schneider-Cline, Mallory Wetherell, Melissa Wuellner, Greg Brown, Mark Ellis, Jessie Bialas, Joel Cardenas, John Gibbs, Lisa Neal, Beth Hinga, Jacob Howe

Guests: Dean Jares

Absent: Steve Hall, Greg Benson

I. Call to order:

- **Approve Agenda:** Wuellner/Schneider-Cline moved to approve the agenda.
Motion Carried
- Minutes from Sept. 7, 2023 meeting (approved via email)
- Information Items - Course Title Changes

II. Business

- Governance Document Revisions
 - Voting Policy-Heelan/Moore moved to adopt the new voting policy; simple majority plus one for ordinary council business.
Yes-9/No-0/Abstain-1 Motion Carried
 - GS Mission:
 - The Council discussed the proposed mission statement:

Mission

The UNK General Education Mission is to support the university's academic mission by developing students' knowledge, skills, and abilities to understand the world, make connections across disciplines, and contribute to the solutions of contemporary problems.

What is General Education at UNK

It is a shared education that blends an individual's lived experience with the development of the following:

- *Effective oral and written communication*

- *Essential quantitative skills*
- *Critical and ethical evaluation of information and environment*
- *Identifying, finding, evaluating, applying, and acknowledging sources of information*
- *Social and civic responsibility*
- *Self-empowerment to excel academically, creatively, and practically*
- *Emotional intelligence*
- *Understanding of the physical world and its interactions*
- *Cultural and aesthetic appreciation*

To this end, this General Education program provides accurate information and sound theory; develops the intellectual abilities to reason well, and the physical abilities to live well; fosters curiosity and appreciation of our world and of each other. These are the characteristics that lead to well-rounded, well-informed, competent, trusted, and productive individuals who will benefit their local and global communities.

- Palmer stated he thinks the last paragraph is not needed as it is just recapping the mission statement. Palmer stated that he thinks the purpose of General Studies is to build advanced study for students and that is missing from the mission statement. Boeckner suggested putting the last paragraph at the top as the mission. Ellis suggested having a group of 3 work on the changes to the mission statement and bring it to the next meeting. Wuellner suggested using the “What is General Education at UNK” section as core values instead. Wetherell suggested the mission guide what General Studies is now and moving forward. The Council agreed to have a committee of three work on the mission. The committee includes Schneider-Cline, Palmer, and Hartman.
- GSC Composition
 - Brown stated he thinks a Council of 13 is too big due to the fact that it is hard to find Council members that have all the required qualifications. His Council composition suggestion is:
 - 2 tenured faculty members from the College of Education (2-year terms, staggered so both do not leave the council at the same time)
 - 2 tenured faculty members from the College of Business and Technology (2-year terms, staggered so both do not leave the council at the same time)
 - 3 tenured faculty members from the College of Arts & Sciences (2-year terms, staggered so all three do not leave the council at the same time)
 - This gives CAS more representation, but not as much as the other two undergraduate colleges combined

- 1 tenured faculty member from the Library (2-year term)
 - 1 at-large tenured faculty member from Faculty Senate (1-year term, as terms on Faculty Senate may not align with a longer term of service on GSC)
 - Maintain the non-voting current membership of 1 student from student senate, 1 from Academic Advising and Career Services, 1 from the Registrar's office, 1 from Assessment Office, and the Director of General Studies
 - Each college can also designate a single tenured faculty member as an alternate to fill in if one of the members from their college is absent, which will help maintain the integrity of the council for voting.
- Hartman stated that it is important to have representation from the four divisions of CAS. Schneider-Cline suggested having three from CAS and that they each must come from different divisions of CAS. Wetherell stated the current size is good in relation to the size of campus.
 - Dettman suggested having more student members on the Council that are allowed to vote to make the Council more student centered. Brown stated that he asked a student last year from the student government if they wanted to be a voting member and that student said they did not want to be a voting member. Howe stated voting could put too much pressure on the student member especially if they have not been a student very long.
 - Heelan stated that if there are three from CAS it could be: one from Natural Sciences, one from Social Sciences, and one from Humanities, Communication, and Fine and Performing Arts. Boeckner stated there are more faculty in CAS and if the Council is going to be democratic there should be more CAS members on the council than the other two colleges. Hartman stated she would prefer to see 4 from CAS and 3 from CBT and 3 from COE and 1 from the Library and she would hesitate to reduce the council too much. Wetherell suggested to also have one person from faculty senate as well.
 - Boeckner/Heelan moved to have the Council composition be: 4 CAS/3 CBT/3 COE/1 Library.
 - Wetherell asked if council members are allowed to have proxy. Brown stated he suggests having a designated proxy from each college. Heelan suggested having faculty senate have an ex-officio member.

- Boeckner/Heelan moved to amend the motion to have the Council composition be: 4 CAS/3 CBT/3 COE/1 Library. The 4 from CAS would be 1 from each division (Natural Sciences/Social Sciences/Humanities/Communication and Fine and Performing Arts). The Council will also ask Faculty Senate to have one ex-officio member on the Council.

Yes-10/No-0/Abstain-1 Motion Carried

- Brown suggested having a retreat between Fall and Spring semester to finish the governance document so the Council can get back to approving courses for the LOPERs in the Spring semester. Brown also stated he thinks the governance document should have an option to remove a course.
- Wetherell asked if the Council could discuss having a proxy on the Council. Boeckner asked if a proxy is necessary with the new voting structure of majority plus one.
- Boeckner/Reeves moved to adopt having alternates on the Council as suggested by the Ad-Hoc committee.
- Palmer asked if it needs to be a designated person but instead the Council member can choose a proxy.
- Boeckner withdrew his motion.
- Heelan/Hartman moved to allow a proxy tenured voting member if the General Studies Director is informed by noon the day of the meeting.

Yes-11/No-0/Abstain-0 Motion Carried

- LOPER 1 Evaluation
- GS Assessment
 - Syllabus Review plan
 - Benchmarks

III. Other:

IV. **Adjournment: The Council moved to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned @ 4:57 pm.**

Next meeting: December 7, 2023 @ 3:30 pm- Warner Conference Room (formerly the Chancellor's Dining Room) or via Zoom