

# GEOC Meeting January 31, 2008

*In Attendance: Katharina von Hammerstein, Arnie Dashefsky, Anke Finger, Hedley Freake, Marie Cantino, Xae Alicia Reyes, Murphy Sewall, William Lott, Tom Roby, Peter Gogarten, Rosa Helena Chinchilla, Jane Goldman, Anabel Perez. Missing: Felicia Pratto, John Bennett, John Troyer, Michael Darre, Cora Lynn Deibler, Niloy Dutta.*

Meeting called to order at 11:10am.

**1. Minutes** from the December 3, 2007 will be edited as follows:

- Page 2, point one of W recommendations, should be edited to state: co-registration for the linked 1-credit W course should be required.

**Motion to approve the minutes as edited. Motion passed with 3 abstentions.**

**2. Announcements:**

- *Welcome new members.* Anke Finger, Murphy Sewall, Rosa Helena Chinchilla.
- *Priorities for the coming semester.*
  - Interdisciplinary Course Proposals. We are aiming for a site page that states what interdisciplinarity means and what GEOC is looking for in interdisciplinary proposals.
  - Assessment documents for different content areas and competencies.
    - W, CA3, and Information Literacy are being assessed this academic year.
    - Coming next are some of CA2, CA4, Computer Technology, CA1, Q.
  - W challenges. This issue will be postponed to a later meeting.
- *GEOC Membership.* Several member terms expire at the end of the academic year. They include:
  - John Bennett (has served 2 terms and cannot be renominated)
  - Marie Cantino (has served 2 terms and cannot be renominated)
  - Arnie Dashefsky (has served 2 terms and cannot be renominated)
  - Cora Lynn Deibler
  - Hedley Freake
  - Peter Gogarten
  - Dean Hanink (has served 2 terms and cannot be renominated)
  - William Lott

Katharina von Hammerstein asks that the above members notify her of their decisions.

- *GEOC website.* We are in the process of making the website more user-friendly and accessible. Emergency source warning will be updated soon.
- *Provost's Competition.* Information Workshop is coming up February 5<sup>th</sup>. We currently have 10 faculty that have RSVPed. Deadline this year is February 29<sup>th</sup> at 12pm. Manuela Wagner will be the representative for previous winners.
- *American Association of College and Universities conference, Washington D.C.:* John Bennett not in attendance to discuss meeting. This will be deferred to a later meeting.

## Subcommittee Reports

### Writing Competency

The W subcommittee recommends **approval** of the following courses:

ARE 240W [3440W]	Writing in Environmental and Resource Policy
ARTH 267W [3640W]	History of Photography I
BME 261W [3600W]	Biomechanics
PHRX 208W [4001W]	Current Topics in Pharmacy
PSYC 205W [3200W]	Introduction to Behavioral Genetics

At the request of the department, the W subcommittee recommends **dropping** the following courses from the general education curriculum:

ARE 234W [3434W]	Environmental and Resource Policy
PT 280W [3280W]	Research for Physical Therapists

The W subcommittee recommends **revision** of the following courses:

ANSC 277W [4667W]	Daily Herd Management
NRME 233W [3345W]	Natural Resource Planning and Management

**Motion to approve the W report. W report approved as presented.**

### Quantitative Competency

The Q subcommittee chair recommends revision of the text describing the Q Center on the GEOC website. The text will be changed as recommended by the Q chair with the following edits:

- Remove “Q courses” to state “quantitatively intensive courses.”
- Replace the word “classes” with “courses.”

Murphy Sewall asked about the capacity of the Q Center. Tom Roby reports that there are some courses that are not officially supported by the Q Center, though he offers several recommendations for students looking for support in those courses.

Note: The original Q Center language is included in the approved General Education Guidelines. GEOC suggests that changes to the official document be postponed until we have more changes to propose to the Senate. The above changes will be made to the website description only.

**Motion to approve the proposed language, as copied below. Motion approved.**

Approved Revision of Original Language for GEOC website:

The University Quantitative Learning Center:

**Faculty and** advisors may also recommend that students **in quantitatively intensive courses** avail themselves take advantage of support services offered by the University's Quantitative Learning Center ~~in Storrs and at the regional campuses,~~ **a resource to elevate the proficiency of students taking Q courses quantitatively intensive courses across the undergraduate curriculum.** ~~The Quantitative Learning Center will be directed by a full time faculty member who will oversee the administration of diagnostic examinations, quantitative skills tutorials, workshops, modules, supplemental instruction, etc. The Quantitative Learning Center will also provide support to advisors and to faculty teaching Q courses on all campuses.~~ **It provides direct assistance to students via peer tutoring, review sessions, and the compilation of innovative learning tools. It assists Q faculty to incorporate successful practices in their teaching, and serves as a clearinghouse for information about Q resources and discussion of Q issues within the university.** (<http://qcenter.uconn.edu>)

### Assessment

CA3 Science and Technology- The assessment subcommittee is interested in whether instructors actually teach toward the course goals stated when the course was approved. Further, the assessment subcommittee wants to know whether the courses include methods to assess whether students are achieving the respective learning goals. A graduate student has been hired to interview course instructors for the following identified courses:

BIO 102 [1102]	Foundations of Biology
BIO 103 [1103]	The Biology of Human Health and Disease
EEB 202 [3307]	Evolution and Human Diversity
NUSC 165 [1165]	Fundamentals of Nutrition

PHYS 103Q- 104Q [1030Q-1035Q] Physics of the Environment /with Lab  
PHYS 155Q [1025Q]           Introductory Astronomy  
MARN 170 [1002]           Introduction to Oceanography  
PSYC 132 [1100]           General Psychology I  
COGS 201 [2201]           Foundations of Cognitive Science

Scott Brown is working on a self-efficacy survey for students in the above listed courses to complement the instructor interviews.

Writing- the assessment subcommittee is in the process of identifying 4 departments to collect senior writing samples and a faculty member in that department to serve as the Assessment liaison. Rubrics will be created to assess the gathered samples. Graduate students will be hired next summer to review the papers using the rubric.

Information Literacy- 840 incoming ENGL 110/111 students took the SAILS test in early Fall 2007. The post-test drew 113 student participants. We are in the process of trying to find out more demographic information about the post-test students. We will receive reports about this testing round in June 2008.

### **General Education Courses in Second Languages**

The Senate Office has received a letter from the ECON Undergraduate Coordinator expressing concern over the teaching of Gen Ed courses in second or foreign languages. William Lott stated that the problem is that the catalog description of the course does not identify the course as being taught, and that writing will be, in a foreign language.

The majority of GEOC members are not convinced that teaching in a second language violates the spirit of universality of the general education guidelines. There is no right of accessibility for W courses in the major.

Some second language-taught courses, however, are also CA1 or CA4 courses. This raises a question of accessibility, though, as Katharina von Hammerstein points out, the Second Language gen ed requirements make second language courses automatically gen ed courses. As Hedley Freake notes, though, upper-level division second language classes do not apply.

In an effort to support the internationalization of this campus, it is important to leave second language courses open to students other than MCL majors of a given second language/culture/literature. Several GEOC members recommend urging MCL to include a statement in the catalog description stating that the course is taught in a language other than English. This statement could be limited to Gen Ed Content Area and Competency courses, though it would be a good idea for such courses in all departments.

Arnie Dashefsky recommends a letter to John DeWolf, rather than a motion, with a recommendation to respective departments and colleges teaching courses in second languages that they include this statement in the catalog description.

Jane Goldman adds that the catalog language regarding second language instruction could be added by having departments give blanket approval for the changes to schools or colleges curricula and courses committees'. This would enable the Registrar's Office to process this change more quickly.

This issue is worth having CA1 review their approved courses to see how many have prerequisites. Gen Ed guidelines require that gen ed courses have no prerequisites other than other gen ed courses, though it does approve recommended preparation.

Hedley Freake and Katharina von Hammerstein will pass the above recommendations on to the Senate Executive Committee.

### **Quantitative Course Substitutions**

The Senate Office has received a note from an Honors student that is missing her third Q in the CLAS gen ed requirements and is hoping to graduate in May.

This is a matter that should be referred to the CLAS Dean's Office with a recommendation that her academic advisor initiate a substitution. Tom Roby will follow up on this matter by responding to this student.

### **Interdisciplinary Courses that Span Content Areas or Competencies**

The University wants to enhance interdisciplinarity on campus. Thus, GEOC needs to discuss how proposals for these courses should be treated and has to provide clear guidelines for the submission of interdisciplinary course proposals. Some interdisciplinary courses are INTD while others are cross-listed. Difficult to place are those bridging two different content areas. Hedley Freake points out that there is a structural problem in the gen ed system about interdisciplinary courses. Katharina von Hammerstein presents several options for discussion: a 50/50% split between two content areas (where the synthesis would more beneficial to the students than two halves); a 50/50% solution and students could decide which content area the interdisciplinary course would fulfill for them; a 60/40% or 70/30% solution (the course would have one CA home, the second CA would be an add-on). Alicia Xae Reyes suggests a 100/100% split. Jane Goldman points out that some interdisciplinary courses clearly meet gen ed guidelines for particular content areas, while others are more complicated and should not be accepted as Gen Ed courses just because they are interdisciplinary.

One important note is that interdisciplinary Gen Ed courses involving the Science and Technology content area provide a hook by which non-science students can be drawn to the sciences. Pure science gen ed courses do not encourage non-science oriented students to pursue further science or technology study. Interdisciplinary courses with 70% in CA3 and 30% of the course in another CA would allow some students to begin to see how science relates to their every day lives. This is one major goal for CA3. Note that courses may not overlap between CA1, CA2, and CA3.

This issue will be revisited at our next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anabel Perez  
GEOC Administrator