

GEOC Meeting November 21, 2013

In attendance:

Mike Young – Chair, (Karen Piantek – Admin), Eric Schultz – Ex-Officio, Tom Abbott, Tom Long, Tom Meyer, Wally Madych, Peter Kaminsky, Scott Campbell

Not present:

Francoise Dussart, Fatma Selampinar, Gustavo Nanclares (sabbatical), Richard Jones, Charles Mahoney, Linda Neelly, Olivier Morand, Ana Maria Marcos-Diaz, Eduardo Urios-Aparisi, Michelle San Pedro, Stephanie Mila, Laurent Michele, Kathleen Tonry

Meeting called to order at 12:35 pm.

1. Minutes of the November 7, 2013 meeting

The minutes of the November 7, 2013 meeting were accepted.

2. Announcements

- A. University Senate update – The residency proposal put forth by Sally Reis was retracted pending further investigation; The CA1 guideline revisions were approved with minor changes, and a suggestion to postpone accepting them pending other Gen Ed guidelines changes was curtailed.
- B. Course Realignment update – 22 of 25 forms have been received; 2 departments have requested the withdrawal of one of their courses, 1 course is MIA with no explanation. One course requesting withdrawal, PP3011Q has never been offered and was supposed to be part of a program that never materialized. M. Young asked the GEOC if they felt as though courses like this should officially be deleted from the catalog. There was a suggestion that the course could simply be “inactivated,” but no general consensus was reached. The committee questioned what the timeline on review of alignment forms would be, and M. Young noted that he would like to have the results in time for the submission of the GEOC report in the Spring. The committee questioned what their role was in the process in terms of outcomes (e.g . Would the GEOC strip courses of their Gen Ed designations if they did not meet the standards?) It was determined that the process would steer away from being punitive and instead strive to open a dialog with departments whose courses did not align. A motion was made (T. Long, seconded by P. Kaminsky) to have the full GEOC vote to receive all alignment report from subcommittees before submission to the Senate. **The motion was approved unanimously.**
- C. Provost’s Competition update – The announcement has gone out on the GEOC website and Daily Digest; it will go out again early December and January; K. Piantek was unable to access the full-faculty Listserv, so she will try to email department secretaries. All GEOC members should promote the competition among their colleagues; several past contest winners have volunteered to be on the evaluation committee as well as staff from Instructional Development.
- D. Updates on “provisional” course approvals – K. Piantek will not follow up with proposers on courses that have been provisionally approved; subcommittee co-chairs are in the best position to do that, and they must sign off on edits made to the courses; only then will K. Piantek take over and move the courses forward in the workflow.
- E. A Doodle Poll will be sent after Thanksgiving for Spring meetings – Please expect an email asking about your Spring schedule shortly after Thanksgiving.

3. Subcommittee Reports

W

- A. T. Long reported that he and K. Tonry have met with Tom Deans to set up a procedure for review of 1-credit W courses that is streamlined and retrospective. P. Kaminsky asked for a brief explanation of what a 1-credit W was. T. Long explained that they are often co-requisites of other courses but have the same requirements as regular Ws: 1) multiple drafts and revision, 2) writing instruction, and 3) 15-pages of writing. T. Long noted that there are some stand-alone 1-credit Ws, and this assessment will also focus on these and how they work.

- B. With the inclusion of the English department in the current realignment process, the issue of writing across the curriculum has drawn considerable concern from GEOC members. Budgetary reductions are pressuring instructors of Freshman English to reduce costs by teaching more sections or larger sections. S. Campbell noted that due to budget cuts, the English department had been given two choices: increase the enrollment caps on courses so fewer sections could be offered, or expand the waiver for students who score high enough on the SAT or AP exam (making the 2007 changes permanent). He consider the value of GEOC requiring that student who waive Freshman English might be encouraged to take a 2000 level W course early in their careers, avoiding issues of writing courses not being taken until Senior year. Conveniently the new Provost's Competition encourages new and revised 2000-level courses; M. Young noted that an issue with waiving the First-Year Writing course is that many majors fulfill their Information Literacy requirement this way. T. Abbott shared preliminary thoughts about how a waiver of Freshman English might dovetail with changes in Honors program requirements. The consensus was that GEOC needs to draft a statement on this issue; T. Long and K. Tonry will meet with S. Campbell to draft a document regarding writing across the curriculum that will be presented to GEOC.

- C. The W committee was presented with an issue when an instructor making "minor" revisions to a course in the CAR questioned the need to fill out Gen Ed related boxes on the form. The W subcommittee sought input from the GEOC at large on this issue in order to adopt a consistent policy. M. Young reminded the committee that one department took several of their courses off the table for alignment based on the assumption that they were thoroughly reviewed when they were submitted for revision previously; he noted that the GEOC must either require all portions of the CAR to be completed no matter how small the revision, or they must change the waiver condition on the alignment guidelines. T. Meyer expressed that as a committee member he sees the value in completing the whole form, but as an instructor this would seem like bureaucratic nonsense to him. E. Schultz and M. Young both noted that so-called "minor" revisions can have major implications, and they recounted examples. The GEOC agreed to enforce completion of the whole form for any and all revisions to courses.

- D. M. Young reported that the combined Info Lit and Computer Competency subcommittees met and drafted an outline of a proposal to merge and update the 2 competencies into a Digital Work and Learning competency. Additional meetings are planned and will be required before their work is completed. Input is being sought from additional interested stakeholders.

Meeting adjourned at 1:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Piantek
GEOC Administrator

Appendix:

W Subcommittee Report

11-21-2013

Co-chairs of the W Subcommittee confer to discuss three items.

1. Tom Deans has discussed with us his plan to conduct a retrospective review of one-credit W courses and has identified candidate departments/courses. Although he will apply for IRB approval (to leave open the door for publication of results), he will not conduct the full process involved in previous years (engagement with faculty and grad students in participating departments, development of scoring rubrics, administration of writing self-efficacy surveys).
2. On the matter of course alignment review (freshman English), we are awaiting the development of a plan.
3. On the matter of submitters of CAR course revision forms failing to complete 40 and 42f in order to document relevant general-education competencies, we are both in agreement that those sections should be completed even though the CAR request only entails a revision. CAR becomes the official record; it supplies information that subsequent instructors (frequently including adjuncts or graduate students) require in order to be able to teach the course; and it supplies ready document for course alignment activities.

Thomas Lawrence Long
Kathleen Tonry
Co-chairs