

# GEOC Meeting March 27, 2013

## In attendance:

*Mike Young – Chair, (Karen Piantek – Admin), Eric Schultz – Ex-Officio, Tom Abbott, Scott Campbell, Ana Maria Diaz-Marcos, Tom Long, Mary Ellen Junda, Gustavo Nanclares, Fatma Selampinar, Stephanie Milan, Michelle San Pedro, Peter Kaminsky, Eric Schultz, Eduardo Urios-Aparisi, Olivier Morand*

## Not present:

*Richard Jones, Charles Mahoney, Kathleen Tonry, Laurent Michel, Tom Meyer, Wally Madych*

Meeting called to order at 9:34am.

## **1. Announcements**

### A. W Course Substitute

- One department has lost a professor who was teaching a W course and would like to know if they can use a grad student who has not been W trained to finish off the semester since no one else is available.
- The GEOC felt this was appropriate under the circumstances and recommended that the grad student use the Writing Center as a resource. S. Campbell noted that he was available for a conversation with grad student, or the grad student can reach out to Tom Deans.

### B. 2014 Institute on General Ed Conference – University of Vermont – June 3-7

- There was no response to the call for volunteers to attend this conference.

### C. Strategic Plan

- The university's new academic plan was submitted for review and feedback around the school and was forwarded to the GEOC at the request of the Senate C&C.
- Of concern is the fact that Gen Ed is only mentioned briefly in the report, and efforts to correct this seem to have fallen on deaf ears. When it was asked why Gen Ed wasn't included, the answer was that it just wasn't brought up early and it is largely too late to include it now.
- M. Young questioned what the university's commitment to Gen Ed is and should be.
- Some GEOC members felt that the silence was meaningful; we talk about what's important to us.
- One member suggested that there is silence because a workable system is already in place – "Don't fix what ain't broke."
- The committee felt that it's clear there *are* issues with Writing Competency.

### D. Content Area/Competency Guideline Revision (on hold until Fall 2014)

### E. Update on revision of the Info Literacy and Computer Literacy Competencies

- Nothing to report.

### F. GEOC Member Reappointments: Laurent Michel

- T. Long recommends Doug Kaufman to replace him on the W subcommittee.

## **4. Subcommittee Reports**

### CA1 Report

- There were two controversial courses (HIST 3635, WGSS 1104) that used overly generalized language often cut and pasted directly from the Gen Ed guidelines. The subcommittee felt there was a general lack of care taken on the alignment for these courses.
- The committee suspects that the courses align based on syllabi, it but was difficult to determine this conclusively based on CAR.
- G. Nanclares asked why we even ask for the form if the syllabus is the defining document; members felt the form was important towards at least informing instructors of gen ed guidelines.
- M. Young suggested that the courses be reported as, “Unable to determine if the course was fully aligned.”
- Other GEOC members felt that language was too strong.
- P. Kaminsky asked if subcommittees will communicate issues to proposers or if GEOC will do so through chair; M. Young felt that initial contact should be made through the chair.
- Some committee members were uncomfortable with communication coming from chair; M. Young pointed out that reports are being approved and thus are really coming from the full GEOC.
- P. Kaminsky didn’t think it was necessary for the proposers of the questionable courses to meet with the subcommittee. He felt the issues could be handled over email.
- The GEOC debated how the reporting should be handled with instructors and departments, especially with regards to courses that had alignment issues.
- CA1 decided to withhold their report until they had followed up on problem courses.

**CA1 Report was tabled.**

#### CA2 Report

- There was a question of how to handle courses taught by multiple instructors. It was felt that departments should submit a sampling.
- The CA2 subcommittee felt that no courses submitted were exemplary; all were just adequate.

**CA2 Report passed unanimously as submitted.**

#### CA 4 Report

- Like the CA1 subcommittee, CA4 felt that they experienced some passive-aggressive form filling.
- For CA4, the subcommittee really only needed to see a detailed explanation of how the course fulfills one criteria.

**CA4 Report passed unanimously as submitted.**

#### Q Report

- No discussion.

**Q Report passed unanimously as submitted.**

#### W Report

- Despite some issues, the subcommittee was impressed with the good-faith effort by departments to integrate W requirements into major courses.
- T. Long pointed out that the “W statement” is not actually required in the syllabus, although the subcommittee did flag this on some courses in their report.
- AIRF course was highly negligent in meeting the W requirements, perhaps largely due to perfunctory filling of form.
- The AIRF course is an optional W; some students get W, some don’t. The committee wanted to know how this was operationalized.
- The W subcommittee’s report will be a test case since they found so many issues. The report will be accepted as submitted and communication with departments will begin.

- For PHRX 4001W, the department was diligent in providing multiple syllabi, some excellent, some not so much. The subcommittee felt that there needs to be a conversation with School of Pharmacy about consistency between courses. There was no real core; all courses were very different.
- One member suggested that you don't want to punish Pharmacy for being diligent in sending multiple syllabi, as opposed to some departments who only sent an exemplary syllabus to cover multiple offerings.
- PP 3020W involves a final project that is "team written," so per capita production was below required 15 pages.

**W Report passed unanimously as submitted.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:59am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Piantek  
GEOC Administrator

Appendixes:

CA 1 Alignment Report:

**CA1 Sub-Committee Alignment Review** (March 2014)

Submitted by Peter Kaminsky, Charles Mahoney, and Gustavo Nanclares

#### **ENGL 2407: The Short Story**

Professor A. Harris Fairbanks provides a detailed overview of the numerous ways in which this course supports the goals of general education (with particularly strong emphasis on the acquisition of intellectual breadth and versatility, critical judgment, and moral sensitivity) as well as the specific objectives of CA1. He persuasively sets forth rationales for the ways in which English 2407 fulfills four of the five possible criteria, with particular attention to both the investigation into the modes of symbolic representation and the comprehension of written art forms. He additionally provides a detailed syllabus (Spring 2013) which further demonstrates the alignment of this course with the broad goals of general education and the more specific objectives of CA1. The committee recommends approval of the course alignment.

#### **HIST 1400: Modern Western Traditions**

Professor Michael Ditenfass has provided a detailed explanation of the manifold ways in which the course continues to support both the broad goals of general education and the more specific objectives and outcomes of CA1. The current syllabus provided (Fall 2013) accurately corresponds to the detailed information provided in the alignment form. Finally, the information provided in the form and the syllabus are perfectly in line with the objectives and goals described in the original CAR form approved by GEOC in the spring of 2004. The committee recommends approval of the course alignment.

#### **HIST 3635: Mexico in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

The committee agrees that this course is basically aligned with the CA1 guidelines. However, we have discovered that the course was approved in the fall of 2005 with the briefest of rationales for its inclusion in CA1: "This course engages students in historical and critical investigation and analysis." Not one word more or less. Likewise, in the new alignment form the instructor of the course has provided a similarly limited rationale: "Course is a survey of Mexico's history." While it seems evident that, by being a history course, the course satisfies the first CA1 criterion ("introduce students to investigations and *historical*/critical analyses of human experience"), the committee feels nonetheless that a more complete and elaborate explanation of the course's

contribution to the specific goals of CA1 would be in order. Just to illustrate with an example, the instructor dismisses all the remaining CA1 criteria with a “n/a” answer, and yet it seems obvious from the course syllabus that several other criteria are satisfied. For example, the second CA1 criterion is to “provide students with inquiries into philosophical and/or political theory.” While philosophical and political theory are clearly not the main focus of this course, it is also apparent that when discussing “the important political, regional, class, ethnic, race, gender, and generational differences that have always figured prominently in the shaping of Mexican affairs” the students will be exposed to some level of “philosophical and/or political theory.” Similarly, the instructor dismisses as “not applicable” the third CA1 criterion (introducing students to investigations into the modes of symbolic representation), and yet the syllabus includes plenty of symbolic representations of Mexican cultural and historical reality, from the drawing of Mexican revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata that heads the syllabus to the corridos and “narco-corridos” covered in the course, to the study of La Onda, and others. In conclusion, the CA1 subcommittee considers that, while the course is very meritorious and undoubtedly aligned with the goals and objectives of CA1, it would be very useful for this course to update its rationale for inclusion in CA1 in a more detailed and elaborate manner.

**LING 1010: Language and the Mind**

Professor Jon Gajewski has provided a detailed explanation of the manifold ways in which the course continues to support both the broad goals of general education and the more specific objectives and outcomes of CA1, by fulfilling 3 out of 5 possible criteria (only 1 of 5 is required). The current syllabus provided (Fall 2013) accurately corresponds to the detailed information provided in the alignment form.

Please note that the committee was not able to access the original CAR form for this course (the error message was “page not found”). Nevertheless, given the consistency between the 4 sample syllabi provided (from 2008 to 2013) with respect to fulfilling the CA1 criteria—even with the course being taught by different professors with a variety of textbooks—the committee recommends approval of the course alignment.

**WGSS 1104: Feminisms and the Arts**

The current version of the course appears to fulfill both the general aims of general education and the more specific criteria for CA1 (Arts and Humanities). At the same time, a close reading of the course alignment form shows a reliance on overly generic language, and whole-scale cut-and-paste repetition of text. In the broad goals section, the entries for “acquire intellectual breadth,” “acquire awareness of their era,” and “acquire conscious of the diversity...” all repeat the same text with little variance. Moreover, basically the same text is used for the first 3 of the 5 criteria for CA1. The current syllabus includes a wide variety of readings, artists, and perspectives that clearly support the goals of CA1. It does not, however, provide information that would further substantiate the relevant criteria.

The committee recommends that the submitters consider with more specificity how each element addressed by the course fulfills both the broad principles of general education, and especially the objectives of CA1.

CA2 Alignment Report:

**CA2 Course Alignment Review 2014**

Co-chairs: Stephanie Milan & Olivier Morand

Committee Members: David Atkins, Charles Venator, Linda Lee (absent)

Course number	Name	Comments	Recommendation
LING 3610W	Language and Culture	-It is not entirely clear in the CAR form how all the CA2 requirements	ALIGNS

		are met (particularly requirement 3); however, it is clearly evident in the provided syllabus -The syllabus was informative and comprehensive -Although the comments indicate that the course is taught by multiple faculty (including adjuncts and advanced grad students), only one syllabus was provided	
PP 1001	Introduction to Public Policy	-The course easily meets the CA2 requirements. -The syllabus was very helpful	ALIGN
WGSS 1105	Gender and Sexuality in Everyday Life	-The CAR form specifies how the course meets CA2 requirements -Two syllabi were provided; these indicate there is some overlap but also important differences in how the class is taught. In both cases, however, there is sufficient evidence that the course meets CA2 requirements	ALIGN

CA4 Alignment Report:

**GEOC CA4 Subcommittee**

**Course Alignment Review 2014**

**Committee Members:** Eduardo Urios-Aparisi, Mary Ellen Junda, Joseph Abramo

<i>Number</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
ENGL3128W	Ethnic Literature of the US	In compliance with CA4 Criteria #5	Aligns
ENGL 3613	Introduction to LGBT Literature	In compliance with Criteria #1 and 2	Aligns
NUSC 1167	Food Culture and Society	Compliance with #1 and 3	Aligns
WGSS 1105	Gender and Sexuality in everyday Life	Compliance with CA4 Criteria #1	Aligns
LING 3610W	Language and Culture	Compliance with CA4 Criteria 1, 2,3	Aligns
HIST 3635	Mexico in the Nineteenth and Twenties Centuries	Compliance with CA4 Criteria 3,4,5	Aligns

Q Alignment Report:

Q subcommittee report - James Cole, David Gross, Wally Madych (co-chair), Fatma Selampinar (co-chair), Jennifer Tufts.

- PHYS 1201Q was first approved Spring 2004. All the members of the Q subcommittee agree that it aligns.

W Alignment Report:

**GEOC W Subcommittee Course Alignment Review 2014**

Tom Long & Kathleen Tonry, Co-  
chairs; Douglas Kaufman & Mark  
Brand, Faculty Representatives;  
Michael Mei, Student  
Representative

*Course  
Prefix/Number*  
AIRF 3000/AIRF 3000W  
ENGL 3218W

*Course Name*

Air Force Leadership Studies  
Ethnic Literature of the US

*Comments*

Compliance issues: 2, 4, 5, 6, 8  
In compliance with spirit of W,  
although ambiguity *in re* 6

*Recommendation*

Does not align  
Aligns

HIST 4994W

The Nature of Fascism in  
Western Europe

In compliance with letter and  
spirit of W

Aligns

LING3610W

Language and Culture

Exemplary

Aligns

NUSC 4237W

Writing in Nutritional Sciences

Exemplary

Aligns

PHRX 4001W

Writing for the Pharmacy  
Professional

Among multiple sections,  
numerous inconsistencies and  
compliance issues: 1, 2, 5, 6, 8

Does not align

PHYS 2501W

Laboratory in Electricity,  
Magnetism, and Mechanics

Exemplary

Aligns

PP 3020W

Cases in Public Policy

Compliance issue: 1

Does not align

PVS 3094W

Seminar

In compliance with spirit of W,  
although not compliant with 8

Aligns

WGSS 3265W

Research Methodology

In compliance with spirit of W,  
although not compliant with 8

Aligns