

GEOC Meeting March 2, 2016

*Members in **BOLD** were in attendance:*

Mike Young – Chair, (Karen Piantek – Admin), Joseph Abramo, Pam Bedore (Sen C&C ex-officio), Michael Bradford, Scott Campbell, Ana Maria Diaz-Marcos, Arthur Engler, Bernard Goffinet, David Gross, Thomas Meyer, Stephanie Milan, Olivier Morand, Gustavo Nanclares, Fatma Selampinar, Eduardo Urios-Aparisi, Manuela Wagner, Bing Wang, Steve Zinn, Shabaz Khan (student rep)

Meeting was called to order at 10:35am.

1. The minutes from February 17, 2016 were accepted unanimously.

2. Announcements

A. None

3. Old Business

A. Gen Ed Task Force Updates

- The focus groups are almost complete. Surveys for faculty, students, and alumni should be coming out within two weeks.
- The Task Force's findings thus far are that the curriculum seems to be in line with peer and aspirant institutions. Their recommendation to the Senate will likely just involve some minor adjustments or additions; a major overhaul will not be needed.

B. Susanna Cowan, RE: approval of intensive session courses

- Susanna Cowan was introduced to the committee. She noted that she was essentially on a "fact-finding" mission regarding intensive session GenEd courses. She informed GEOC that her office often fields questions to which they do not know the answers about these courses. Example 1: Courses appear to be approved in very instructor-specific ways, but departments often want to use a different instructor and ask her if they can do this. She was unsure if the instructor was restricted. Example 2: Courses that have conditional approvals are currently being offered. S. Cowan was unsure if Summer Programs was supposed to police this and deny offering provisionally approved courses until they receive full approval.
- M. Young explained that GEOC approves syllabi and content, not instructors or pedagogy. He noted that the issues Summer Programs is having are the same as those for regular courses but that typically GEOC has not been tasked with setting any of these restrictions.
- D. Gross suggested that provisional approvals are simply too hard to keep track of. He felt that nothing should be provisionally approved; courses should be approved or not.
- S. Zinn felt that W courses should not be approved for intensive session in general. He does not believe that there is enough time in the compressed format to conduct the writing instruction, review, and revision process required for Ws.
- S. Cowan brought a document that showed the percentage breakdown of GenEd courses in the summer and winter intensive session courses for reference. She wanted to know if her office should take a more proactive approach to managing these issues. She asked, for example, if her office should contact GEOC if an instructor wants to teach a course on the provisional list.

- M. Young advised S. Cowan to continue to contact GEOC when these issues come up so that GEOC can document them in its reports and provide guidance.
- C. Course Realignment – Never received materials for FINA course.
- (See below for reports and discussion)
- D. Digital Information and Literacy competency – Motion to delete Computer Competency
- S. Campbell reported that there is no controversy about the deletion; however, there is some discussion of the wording regarding what will replace it. The GEOC can expect to vote next time on the deletion.
- E. Next steps on the proposal regarding First Year Writing waivers – On hold until after Task Force review

4. Subcommittee Reports

- A. CA2 Report – No report
- B. CA3 Report
- B. Goffinet noted that he is one of the instructors on the course. The students taking this course have become more diverse over the years in terms of their academic backgrounds with students coming from all majors, but the course is geared mainly towards science majors. The change requested is to clarify that the course is not designed for non-science majors while still keeping it open to anyone who wants to take it.

CA3 Report approved unanimously (revise BIOL 1110)

- C. CA4 Report and Alignment Report
- There was a question about whether the W portion of SOCI 1251/W has reviewed yet. It was also noted that SOCI 1251/W is not listed on the CA4 subcommittee's docket, but SOCI 3651/W is. K. Piantek will look into this discrepancy.** (See below for post-meeting follow-up notes)

CA4 Report approved unanimously (revise SOCI 1701 and SOCI 1251/W)

- D. Q Report – No report
- E. W Report
- Clarification was asked for on the prereqs for the STAT 3484 and 3494W sequence.

W Report approved unanimously (POLS 3023W, POLS 3211W, POLS 3250W, PSYC 3302W, STAT 3494W)

5. Alignment Reports

- A. CA1 Alignment Report – No report.
- B. CA2 Alignment Report
- No discussion.

CA2 Alignment Report accepted unanimously.

- C. CA3 Alignment Report
- B. Goffinet noted that the committee found apparent inconsistencies in the delivery of class sections across campuses. They were unsure what to do about this issue.

- There are still questions as to what the next steps are when these issues crop up in the alignment process.

CA3 Alignment Report accepted unanimously.

D. Q Alignment Report – No report.

E. W Alignment Report

- S. Zinn explained the committee’s process and noted that none of the courses appeared to meet all the W criteria. Some were missing one or two elements, but a few were missing all or most elements. He said that subcommittee members felt that some of the syllabi were very poorly written.
- In many cases, there was no evidence of teaching the writing process within the W course. Instructors did not address how the particulars of writing were going to be addressed in class.
- M. Young questioned if this was just an issue of the syllabus or a real drift from the pedagogy. S. Zinn felt that it was a real issue of pedagogy.
- There was some discussion of course variation between instructors. S. Zinn noted that there need to be departmental-level plans on how to fulfill the W requirements.
- D. Gross asked if GEOC and Senate C&C should reconsider the whole concept of “writing in the major.” In some cases he felt that major-specific writing instruction was not as valuable to students as regular writing instruction might be.
- M. Wagner recounted evidence she’s seen in her 1000-level W course of how seniors have not been getting the writing instruction that they should have had by this time.
- M. Young noted that the problems found during alignment seem to be mostly related to W courses. S. Zinn noted that courses in most other content areas and competencies are going to conform by default; i.e. a sociology course will likely be CA2 and most MATH classes will inherently satisfy Q guidelines. The issue with W courses is that the writing component seems too much like an add-on in many major-specific courses.
- There was some discussion and disagreement about how closely the CAR and the syllabus must both display the criteria.
- In terms of next steps, K. Piantek and M. Young will contact the departments and instructors to convey issues. The GEOC must also consider whether this is a bigger issue that needs to be addressed more broadly across GenEd within the university.

W Alignment Report accepted unanimously.

6. New Business

A. None.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55am.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Piantek
GEOC Program Assistant

****POST-MEETING NOTES:** It was discovered that SOCI 1251/W was previously approved at the 2/17/16 meeting. It has not yet been reviewed for either W or CA2 status because those fields on the CAR were not completed. The proposer was contacted and is aware of the need to complete the form. SOCI 3651/W mistakenly appears on the docket. The course has been submitted for revision, but the CA4 field on the CAR was not completed, so it is being withheld from the subcommittee until it is complete. Again, the proposer has been notified.