



General Education Oversight Committee

Wednesday, September 1, 2021 at 10:00am-11:30am

Via WebEx

Meeting Minutes

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

Manuela Wagner – Chair, (Karen McDermott – Admin, Pooja Hingorany – Admin), Michele Back, Oksan Bayulgen, Lisa Blansett, Brenda Brueggemann, Keith Conrad, Robert Day, Kelly Dennis, Richard Dunn, Alex Gatten, Ali Gokirmak, Lori Gresham, Linda Halgunseth, Oliver Hiob, Tania Huedo-Medina, Morty Ortega, Eleanor Ouimet, Annelie Skoog, Jennifer Terni, Kathleen Tonry, Eduardo Urios-Aparisi, Suzanne Wilson (Ex-Officio)

Guest: Beth Ginsberg

Called to order at 10:02 am

1. Welcome and Regrets

- A. Regrets: Brenda Brueggemann
- B. Welcome New GEOC Members
 - a. Keith Conrad
 - b. Richard Dunn
 - c. Linda Halgunseth
 - d. Tania Huedo-Medina
 - e. Andy Jolly-Ballantine
 - f. Eleanor Ouimet
 - g. Annelie Skoog
 - M. Wagner introduced new members and facilitated a general introduction.

2. Past and Future

- A. Minutes of April 26, 2021 meeting.

K. Dennis motioned to approve. M. Ortega seconded. The Minutes were accepted as submitted with three abstentions.

- B. Future Meetings:
 - Mon. September 13, 1:00pm-2:30pm
 - Wed. September 29, 10:00am-11:30am
 - Mon. October 11, 1:00pm-2:30pm
 - Wed. October 27, 10:00am-11:30am
 - Mon. November 8, 1:00pm-2:30pm
 - Wed. December 1, 10:00am-11:30am

3. Chair's Report

- A. Senate and Delta2GE Update (Website: <https://delta.senate.uconn.edu/>)
- M. Wagner gave a brief overview of the taskforce's work. Changes were made over the summer based on feedback. The changes will appear on the website shortly, and there will be a special Senate meeting on September 20, 2021 to introduce and discuss the proposal.
 - Right now the plan is to have course navigators who will help departments transition from the old Gen Eds to the new ones.
- B. Graduate W Course
- We got an inquiry over the summer about adding a W to a graduate course. As it turns out, a W grad course already exists, so we may see more.
- C. 2021-2022 Preview of GEOC Business
- a. Provost's Competition, Proposer Workshop
 - b. Alignment
 - c. FYW Working Group
 - d. Q Requirements – Volunteers for Co-Chair with Suman Majumdar
 - M. Wagner gave a brief overview of the upcoming items.
 - We are looking for a volunteer to serve as a Co-chair with Suman Majumdar on the Q taskforce to revise the Q criteria.

4. Review of GEOC Policies and Procedures

- M. Wagner briefly reviewed a list of GEOC Co-Chair responsibilities and procedures.

5. Subcommittee Dockets

- A. CA1 Docket
- a. AFRA/HIST 3752 History of Pre-colonial Africa [CA1, CA4-Int] (#1991) [Revise level]
 - b. CLCS 2010 Media Literacy and Data Ethics [CA1, CA4-Int] (#6015) [Returned by Senate C&C for consultation with proposer]
 - c. ENGL 2107 The British Empire, Slavery, and Resistance [CA1] (#4315) [New course]
 - d. HIST 1805 East Asian History Through Hanzi Characters [CA1, CA4] (#6636) [Revise title]
 - e. INTD 3260 The Bible [CA1] (#6938) [Revise title]
- B. CA2 Docket
- a. URBN 3400E Urban Parks and Sustainable Cities [CA2, EL] (#6656) [New course]
- C. CA3 Docket
- a. ANTH 2200 Race and Human Biological Diversity [CA3, CA4] (#7157) [Adding CA3 and CA4]
 - b. ENGL 2614 Writing in Algorithms [CA3] (#4375) [New course]
 - c. GEOG 2410 New Digital Worlds of Geographic Information Science [CA3] (#6176) [Revise level and description]

- D. CA4 Docket
 - a. AFRA/HIST 3752 Precolonial Africa [CA1, CA4-Int] (#1991) [Revise level]
 - b. ANTH 2200 Race and Human Biological Diversity [CA3, CA4] (#7157) [Adding CA3 and CA4]
 - c. HIST 1805 East Asian History Through Hanzi Characters [CA1, CA4] (#6636) [Revise title]

- E. Q Docket
 - a. COMM 2010Q Applied Communication Research Methods [Q] (#5137) [Add Course]
 - b. MARN 3003Q Environmental Reaction and Transport [Q] (#7019) [Revise number, title, and description]

- F. W Docket
 - a. AFRA 4997W Senior Thesis in Africana Studies [W] (#6837) [New course]
 - b. ARE 3440W Writing in Environmental and Resource Policy [W] (#5836) [Revise level and description]
 - c. WGSS 3269W Gender, Sexuality and Social Movements [W] (#6576) [New course]
 - d. MUSI 3421W Music in World Cultures [W] (#6797) [Revise title, description, and prereqs]

- G. EL Docket
 - a. MARN 1002 Introduction to Oceanography [CA3, EL] (#15079/1892) [Revise description, add EL]
 - b. MARN 1003 Introduction to Oceanography with Laboratory [CA3-L, EL] (#15078/1891) [Revise description, add EL]
 - c. URBN 3400E Urban Parks and Sustainable Cities [CA2, EL] (#6656) [New course]

- H. Information Literacy Docket

- I. Second Language Docket

6. Writing (W) Course Recommendations

- L. Gresham, O. Hiob-Bansal, and Beth Ginsberg presented the work of the W subcommittee from last year.

Questions about Proposed Change 1: All W courses can be taken in another language.

- One member asked about whether Sign Language counted as a language. Yes, a W course can be in Sign Language. One was, in fact, approved a couple years ago.
- One member asked in the chat, “Do the writing expectations and styles differ in different languages?”
- One member noted in the chat, “As Head of LCL, students already do take W's in foreign languages – it's a requirement for all [LCL] majors, but they should do one course in English.”
- One member asked about computer language. Does coding count as a language?
- It was noted in the chat that, “At one point statistics was allowed as a substitute for languages. Is that still the case?”

- One member asked in the chat, “Can a student propose an independent study/directed study that allowed them to otherwise meet all the other requirements of the W course in a language not offered at UConn?” Only if a W Independent Study existed within a specific department, but W shells in this type of course do not currently exist.

Questions about Proposed Change 2: Word count added to page count.

- One member questioned whether it should say *and* a minimum of 4500 words, not *or*.
- Maybe a minimum number of words per page should be added? The issue of figures and charts taking up space on pages was also noted.
- One member noted in the chat, “If an instructor is accepting 15 pp of 100 words then the problem is not in the [W] description.”

Questions about Proposed Change 3: All Variable Topics need to be reviewed.

- One member asked in the chat, “If these recommendations are enacted, will all W courses be required to resubmit their syllabi for review?” For Variable Topics Ws, yes.
- One member asked in the chat, “Roughly how many departments are offering variable topics courses as W courses?”
- One member asked in the chat, “Is ‘writing instruction’ defined somewhere?”

Questions about Proposed Change 4: The syllabus must clearly delineate plans for writing instruction.

- One member asked in the chat, “Is there a minimum on the instruction hours?” L. Gresham noted that they discussed this but decided against it at this time.
- One member asked if departments will get more credit for teaching these courses.

Questions about Proposed Change 5: Instructors should provide feedback.

- One member asked in the chat, “Is ‘feedback’ defined somewhere?”
- One member noted in the chat, “W courses are very instruction-intensive. We need to consider a carrot for W courses. Let’s consider a way to award departments for W courses.”

7. New Business

- A. Discussion of Intensive Session Courses

8. Old Business

- A. Aligning the Alignment Process
 - a. Requiring Regional Campus Syllabi
- B. PR and Mentoring Campaign for Gen Ed in the Spring:
 - a. Nomenclature for New Gen Ed Areas
 - b. Awareness of importance of Gen Ed (students, staff, faculty: presentations of Gen Ed courses, videos about what Gen Ed did for..., student focus groups on specific topics,...)
 - c. Gen Ed and Covid-19: student survey conversation with colleagues at Stamford
 - d. Mentoring: Lack of knowledge about EL
 - e. Outreach to Student Organizations
 - f. Suggestions for student initiatives
 - g. Something related to Delta2GE

- C. Number of EL Seats

9. Carryover Business

- A. Gen Ed Goals and Syllabi
- B. Q Criteria Discussion
- C. W Guideline Changes?
 - a. Possible requirement that at least one W course should be in the English language
 - b. Possible change of W requirement on paper length, from page length to word number
 - c. W Course Instruction (aka “W Course Faculty Drift”)
- D. Study Abroad and CA4 Gen Ed

10. Course Action Requests in the Queue

Full-Committee Review

- A. HDFS 3240W Aging in American Society [W] (#3481) [Dropping W version]
 - There was a question as to whether it would be easier to keep the course so the department does not have to re-add it later if they change their mind. It was noted that the Registrar prefers to keep the catalog clean of unused courses.
 - There was a question about the availability of W courses. We do monitor numbers, but we do not have a way to force departments to offer Ws. At this point we can only encourage.
 - It was noted that the timing for all this is bad. It is difficult to ask instructors to develop courses, especially during the pandemic. Right now the stick – as opposed to the carrot – is the more effective option for administration.
 - One member issued a reminder that the regional campuses need EL courses.

J. Terni motioned to approve. M. Ortega seconded. The motion to drop was approved unanimously.

Requests on Hold

- A. N/A

Requests Awaiting Chair Review

- A. N/A

B. Day motioned to adjourn. M. Ortega seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.