

Council on General Education Minutes
February 21, 2023
10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., STV 140

Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Mary Elaine Califf, Gregory Braswell, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Kimberly Nance, Yvette Pigman, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Chris Worland, and Haiyan Xie

Ferrence called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Guests:

Malinda Aiello, Program Director, Illinois Articulation Initiative

Action Items:

1. Approval of January 24, 2023 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were corrections to the minutes as submitted. He suggested several grammatical and spelling revisions. No other edits were suggested. The minutes were accepted with the inclusion of Ferrence's edits.

2. Approval of February 7, 2023 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were corrections to the minutes as submitted. He suggested several grammatical and spelling revisions. No other edits were suggested. The minutes were accepted with the inclusion of Ferrence's edits.

3. POL 306 Community Civic Engagement (new course proposed for ICL designation)

The course was proposed by Brittany Vietti, Academic Advisor, Department of Politics and Government.

Ferrence noticed that the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee had noted several issues with the proposal which seemed to have been addressed. Aitken noted that while the course did meet the spirit of the designation requirement, he was concerned of the actual benefit of the course having the designation as no one would take it to fulfill the requirement. He added that most students fulfill their ICL requirement within their first few semesters and that the course's prerequisite of having completed 60 or more hours would be a deterrent.

Califf was concerned that the course did not meet the spirit of General Education as it was a 300-level course and had significant prerequisite requirements. Aitken responded that it was a tricky issue as the Council had previously approved CTK 302 for General Education. However, he added CTK 302 did not have any prerequisites. Additionally, the program does not have any 100-level courses. Aitken noted the proposal acknowledges that the course is an upper division course.

Aiello informed Council members the course would not qualify as part of IAI due to all the prerequisites. Ferrence asked a process question that if there was any way for a student to fulfill the ICL designation later in their academic career if the course was not approved. Aitken responded that anything could be petitioned, and a very small subset of students do not fulfill the requirement by their senior year.

Worland thought needing at least 60 hours to be able to take a General Education course seemed to defy the working definition of General Education and at that point, it feels like more of a major or minor requirement. However, he felt the course could bring exposure from other disciplines to work with the civic engagement aspect. Rivadeneyra agreed and thought the course would be a great course for the Redbird Banner in the proposed General Education program. Califf agreed that while the course may be an excellent fit for the revised General Education program, she did not feel it fit the current program's expectations.

Nance questioned what rule the course violated to be considered for General Education and pointed out if the Council could say it did not invoke the spirit but could not cite an actual it becomes frustrating to faculty trying to propose courses. Ferrence believed Nance had a very valid point and asked if it was worth asking the department what their intent of requesting the ICL designation for the course was. Hurd responded that we do try to limit prerequisites on General Education courses and thought that the department may not have thought through the impact of having such a prerequisite on a General Education course. Rivadeneyra pointed out that since being approved CTK 302 added two prerequisites so there currently is not a mechanism in place to monitor as well as we would like to.

Nance noted that an advantage of the former General Education program was that students took coursework throughout the program and did not just complete the program early. Hurd responded that was not really the case anymore and added many students do not complete our General Education program to begin with. Most students fulfill the ICL requirement within the first two semesters of attendance.

Nance reminded Council members the recent assistance the Council gave to the Department of Special Education with their SED 101 proposal. In the interest of equity, should the same courtesy be shown to this department. Hurd noted she loved the course for IDS majors and felt it would be popular among those students. A suggestion was made to ask the department to reconsider the prerequisite and lower the number of required hours to 30 or more completed.

A motion was made by Califf to table POL 306 as a new course with the ICL designation and ask the department to reconsider the prerequisites. Rivadeneyra seconded.

A vote was taken. Three in favor, five opposed, two abstained.

The motion failed.

A motion was made by Aitken to reject POL 306 as a new course with the ICL designation. Clemmons seconded. Discussion continued.

Clemmons felt there was a difference between this course and the assistance provided for the SED 101 course because it was a 100-level course. Aitken agreed and felt that course had a framework in place for it to work as a General Education course. Califf noted that even if POL 306 was denied for the ICL designation now, the course itself could still be offered as it was approved by the College. It could re-submit for the ICL designation at a later time. Rivadeneyra added that if the course was tabled, it would be sent back to the department which would delay the course from being available when fall registration opens in a few weeks.

A vote was taken. Nine in favor, one opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

Hurd will contact the department and provide them with the Council's feedback.

Information Items:

4. Data Science Update

Hurd informed Council members all revisions had been made to the sequence proposals as requested.

Worland made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pigman seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons