

Council on General Education Minutes

March 22, 2022

10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., STV 140

Presiding: Chris Worland

Present: Brian Aitken, Allison Antink Meyer, Mary Elaine Califf, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Tony Marinello, Taeok Park, Yvette Pigman, Rocio Rivadeneyra, and Chris Worland

Guests:

Dr. Wouter Van Alebeek, Interim Director Academic Programs, International Pathways

Worland called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Approval of February 22, 2022 Minutes

Worland asked if there were any corrections to the February 22, 2022 minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

2. ESL 39 Grammar and Academic Success Skills (new course proposal)

3. ESL 49 Grammar and Academic Success Skills (new course proposal)

4. ESL 59 Grammar and Academic Success Skills (new course proposal)

The courses were proposed by Dr. Wouter Van Alebeek, Interim Director Academic Programs, International Pathways. The Council chose to discuss the three proposals together.

Worland believed the courses were the introductory ESL program and while reducing the number of courses required, kept the amount of contact hours students received in the classroom. Van Alebeek noted ESL 39 was a merging of ESL 33 and ESL 34 which are their grammar and special topics courses. The long-term plan is to move away from special topics. By combining the courses, it would allow the course to provide more well-rounded material by giving students the ability to use grammar skills in context with academic skills and University skills.

Worland asked for confirmation the actual content of the original courses would not be changed and instead it would just be combined into the proposed respective courses. Van Alebeek confirmed that would be the case. Hurd asked if Van Alebeek planned to delete ESL 33, 34, 43, and 44 or leave them on the books. Van Alebeek responded for now the courses will be left active as they would like to see how these new courses turn out. Ideally, they would request they be delated at a later date but would like to hold off on making any changes until a new NTT contract is ratified and new pay rates made available.

Worland asked if these courses would be offered in the fall, and if so, would they run in addition to ESL 33, 34, etc. Van Alebeek was not sure if they would be offered yet in the fall but that they would not offer both at the same time. Rivadeneyra asked if students would receive credit hours for the course. Van Alebeek confirmed they would not as all ESL courses are offered for a letter grade, but students do not earn credit hours.

Worland asked if these courses were required for all incoming students. Van Alebeek responded students whose TOEFL scores are lower than Admissions requirements are required to successfully complete four ESL courses before they can move to their respective Pathway program.

A motion was made by Califf to approve ESL 39, ESL 49, and ESL 59 as new courses. Ferrence seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

5. General Education Feedback

Hurd noted that as this Council is where General Education lives, she wanted to give an overview of the progress made by the various committees on the proposed General Education revision. It has been over 30 years since the last attempt to majorly revise/overhaul the program has taken place. In fall 2019, the Provost assembled an Executive Committee to begin work on reviewing and possibly revising the current program.

The Executive Committee and subcommittees have met over the last several years and have held focus groups, researched best practices and structure and have done a lot of definitional work which is part of an ever-changing working document. Hurd shared a document with Council members that outlined a proposed new structure. The Core/Foundation courses would consist of two Communication/Writing courses; one Quantitative Literacy course and one Scientific Inquiry course. The Academic Bands would consist of four bands and a General Education elective course which could be any course that has a General Education designation. Hurd added almost all degree programs waive one General Education requirement based on the major requirements. In addition, there are 378 courses that “double-dip” in that they meet both major and General Education requirements. Students will still be required to complete other graduation requirements such as IDEAS, AMALI, BS SMT, and the CAS Foreign Language requirement.

Hurd noted students could still double dip the IDEAS and AMALI requirements with General Education courses but could not do so with the BS SMT requirement. The Redbird Banner requirement would be a new requirement that involve a more hands-on approach and allow students and faculty to think outside of the box. Examples could be having undergraduate research embedded within the course, civic engagement, study abroad, Honors explorations, and other courses that would involve High Impact Practices (HIP). Worland commented that he could see the Redbird Banner as a place where faculty could get excited. Califf agreed but was worried that it would turn into an experience such as Foundations of Inquiry (FOI). She wondered if there would be enough seats available to accommodate the demand. Hurd agreed we needed to make sure we could handle the course capacity requirements.

Ferrence wondered if those programs over 120 hours would get an exemption. Hurd responded that per the STAR state law, programs are not permitted to have over 120 hours without having approval from IBHE. Rivadeneyra noted the number of required General Education hours in this proposal was reduced to 30 compared to 39 hours in the current program but that the committee was still working on details. Aitken noted transition courses such as IDS 128 and IDS 108 could count as a Redbird Banner course. They have around 700 students now and this would provide additional incentive for students to enroll in them. Rivadeneyra shared Califf’s concerns regarding the ability to scale enrollment up in these classes as given their nature, class size is typically kept smaller. Hurd thought it would depend on the

course and the topic being discussed. Clemmons noted the Honors experience courses were smaller because they involved a lot of hands-on work and discussion.

Marinello asked if course could count under multiple banners. Hurd responded as HLC has set 30 hours as the minimum number of hours a General Education must have, there will be no double-dipping allowed between the banners. Antink Meyer noted there would be a need for a large number of seats and wondered if what the time frame was for the overall process. Hurd responded that the Provost would like to have a proposal to the Academic Senate for review by the end of the fall 2022 semester. Prior to going to the Senate, the proposal would go before the campus community for feedback. It will take a while for it to be reviewed by the Senate so Hurd thought it would take around another 1.5-2 years for the process to conclude. Califf asked about the approval process. Hurd said the proposed revision would need to be approved first by the Council. From there it would go to the Academic Senate. Hurd is currently working with Shari Zeck to draft a timeline for the entire process.

The last part of the proposed structure includes the Purples. If students wish to enroll in courses in one category of Purples, they would then be eligible for a Liberal Studies completion designation on their transcripts. However, students are not required to stay within a certain set of Purples and can take courses from any of the columns to fulfill their requirements. Hurd did mention Purples is just a place holder name and that along with the different categories are still under review. In addition, Hurd has met with the college curriculum committees to garner feedback. Most groups had the same comments and identified writing as a main concern in that they all felt students could not write effectively. Work will need to be done on current courses, as well as the possibility of adding additional courses, in order to try and address that issue.

Hurd asked Council members to send her any additional feedback or questions regarding the proposed revisions.

6. Curriculum Committee Structure

The Council began discussing at a previous meeting. Hurd noted the last time it was discussed, the Council went back and forth regarding if there should be a representative from each college on the committee. Marinello pointed out that not everyone would come in with the same experience or level and deans would need to help make serving on the committee a priority. Worland added expectations would need to be clearly stated in the bylaws and thought deans would need to twist arms a little in order to get participation from every college.

Further discussion was tabled due to time constraints.

Meeting adjourned 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons