

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
General Education Council
Minutes of August 18, 2008

Present: Scot Boeringer (Poly), Scott Campbell (COENG), John Ferron (COEDU), C. David Frankel (VPA), Michael Gibbons (CAS), Hunt Hawkins (CAS), Edward Kellner (COENG), Joan Morris (NURS), Jane Noll (CAS/Psych), Victor Peppard (CAS), Allison Cleveland (CAS), Cheryl Zambroski (NURS)

Absent: Michael Bowen (COB), Kenneth Caswell (CAS), Ilene Frank (LIB), Kathryn Laframboise (COEDU), Paul Reller (VPA), Drew Smith (LIB)

Guests/Ex Officio: Gladis Kersaint (COEDU), Janet Moore (UGS), Terri Fleteby (DS), Diane Williams (C21TE), Tony Embry (Registrar), Robert Sullins (UGS), Michael Kanning (UGS)

The meeting was called to order at 3:03p.m.

The minutes of the April 21, 2008 meeting were approved.

Guest Speakers

Robert Sullins, Dean of Undergraduate Studies spoke about the importance of assessment with respect to the forthcoming SACS accreditation process. He reported on two recent circumstances that will require a focus on the assessment of the Core Curriculum. First, SACS reinstated the need to incorporate assessment data as part of the 5th year report, and second, that USF St. Pete is on probation because of their General Education assessment. He reported on information provided by Margaret Sullivan, a consultant hired to examine USF Tampa's assessment plan and emphasized USF's need to focus on assessments. Key points of the discussion included the following:

- There is a need for 2 years of assessment data related to the General Education Curriculum.
- According to the consultant, the current General Education program is too big in terms of the number of courses expected to represent the "core." This might mean that there is a need to reduce the number of dimensions in the future. Also, SACS will look closely at which General Education courses are available to all students.
- The Foundations of Knowledge Core Curriculum will be fully implemented beginning Fall 2009.
- There is a need to help faculty distinguish between the 36-hour "Core Curriculum" and the Exit courses. The exit courses are not part of the Core, but provide a means for determining student learning based on their experiences at USF.
- The Provost has ensured that funding remains available for new assessment techniques as part of the QEP.
- The unique needs of online courses in the assessment process need to be considered.

Margaret Sullivan will continue to serve as a consultant related to the SACS assessment.

Janet Moore provided an update regarding the status of the Core Curriculum. Eighty "Core" courses and 27 exit courses have been approved. The goal for this year will be to fill in the remaining gaps, as we are in a good position with most areas. There should be a concerted effort to recruit courses from needed areas (Life Sciences, Mathematics and Fine Arts). There was a discussion of precisely how many Core classes are needed. The council agreed that it will need to recruit proposers for more courses from Departments representing these areas. The council acknowledged that there may also be a need to encourage courses in other areas to round out the Curriculum (e.g., although we currently have sufficient seats under natural and physical science, no physics courses have been approved to this date.)

Announcements

Kersaint announced the following:

- CAS Department Meeting: Kersaint reported that she met with the CAS department chairs on August 15, 2008, to provide an update about the Core Curriculum and the needs related to assessment.
- GEC Handbook: The GEC Handbook provides information about policies and procedures that are used to conduct the work of the council. Council members are encouraged to become familiar with the information provided in the document and refer to it as they review courses.
- Course Review Assignments: Courses to review were assigned to GEC members. Reviewers will need to complete evaluations of those courses proposed in April of this year, as well as for those that have been resubmitted. A one month turn-around time on course reviews is the target. There was some discussion about the need to make the specific changes more explicit when course proposals are resubmitted.

Approved Courses

- None

Committee Reports

- **Course Funding Committee**
 - Hunt Hawkins read a report previously distributed to the Council on General Education funding for 2007-2008. It was recommended that future auditing of department spending be done by the total number of students served to prevent confusion. Also, it was recommended that some changes be made in the way that the GEC proposal web site solicits information regarding the number of sections to be offered and the level of TA support. The site needs to request details regarding the amount of a TA stipend, the number of hours and the percent of FTE that a full assignment represents.
- **Assessment Committee**
 - It was agreed that the charge for the Assessment Committee will need to be reviewed given the concerns regarding SACS accreditation.
- **Recertification Process**
 - Online documentation needs to be modified so that it is consistent regarding the change from a 5-year to a 3-year recertification cycle.
- **Marketing/Promotions**
 - During the year, this committee will work on documents to share information about the core curriculum.

New Business

- There will be an orientation for new council members with Gladis Kersaint on an as-needed basis. New members are asked to contact Kersaint to schedule a meeting if desired.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm. The next meeting of the Council will be on September 15, 2008.