

University General Education Council
February 24, 2016, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: P. Wertheim, E. Gumm, M. Lynn, M. Smallwood, C. Niccum, G. Straughn, M. Garver, J. Xu, R. Ashlock, K. Pybus, J. Wallace, K. Hendrick B. Hammack

Absent: P. Roggendorff, K. Pamplin, N. Santana,

Ex-officios: T. Milholland (T. Lee - absent)

Guests: Susan Lewis, Kari Hatfield, Dawne Meeks

The meeting began at 3:34 p.m.

I. Call to order by Eric Gumm.

II. Prayer by R. Ashlock.

III. Approval of the minutes from 2.10.16

Motion to approve by J. Xu with correction to page 3 – HSIT to HIST; seconded by K. Pybus; all in favor. Motion passes.

Information Item:

IV. Cornerstone Theme Section Plan

E. Gumm - This is not changing any actual course content, so it does not require a vote. This is a plan to offer a limited number of cornerstone sections with a focus on a theme. The theme material (or lens) is *in addition* to the requirements of the course, to enhance the experience. Faculty can select a supplemental text to fit their theme. The theme would need to appeal to a cross-section of majors and be open to students of all disciplines. We will be creating a theme approval form for faculty to submit ideas for consideration. We are not looking for small, specialized sections, so if a section's theme does not draw enough students, we will probably have to revert it to a regular section. Each section will be evaluated, and those themes that are not well received will not be repeated in future semesters.

J. Wallace – Is this to try to get a student-content match? E. Gumm – The nature of the course lends itself well to personal exploration and hands-on experience, so like-minded students can see the topics ahead of time and migrate toward those sections that interest them.

M. Lynn – Are there any SACS concerns about a common numbering system with different theme elements? E. Gumm – No. The transcript will not show the themes, it

will just show CORE 110. K. Pybus – I remember some discussion at the original CORE vote about wanting things to be standardized across sections. E. Gumm – We are not changing the content, and we are not returning to majors-based sections, so I think we are being true to the intent of the previous faculty vote. R. Ashlock – You might get more faculty interest in teaching if they can teach with a theme that interests them.

G. Straughn – I would encourage stronger language stating the idea that a themed section that doesn't meet the enrollment threshold MUST revert to a general section. So it is clear from the outset and there are no misunderstandings on why a section reverted.

Action Items:

V. BCOR 310 Proposal

E. Gumm – Proposal to remove the BCOR 310 requirement and add it to the advanced Bible selections menu. There is a teach-out plan for the course for 2016-17 and Bible will be adding a new BIBT course to replace the BCOR course. R. Ashlock – Cynthia Powell mentioned that BCOR 310 was the course that appeared most frequently on their student evaluation forms as the most meaningful class taken outside of their major. The class has meaning, so we don't want to completely throw it away, but we want to develop a new course that would carry some of the same emphases – starting with experience then moving to text. E. Gumm – As a point of clarification, we are not voting on the new course. We are voting on moving BCOR 310 from a specified 3 hour requirement to a selection option on the upper-division Bible electives. The elective hours would then be increased from 3 to 6. K. Pybus – So if a junior needs BCOR 310, can they take an elective instead? R. Ashlock – Only if they change their catalog year. K. Pybus – Do you anticipate the curriculum for the final year of BCOR to remain unchanged? R. Ashlock – There will not be any radical changes. Each faculty member will have their own take, but the course will remain basically the same. C. Niccum – It won't be team-taught. So that will be a change. Only one teacher. M. Lynn – This has been approved by the faculty? G. Straughn – Faculty vote dealt with eliminating CORE 210 and gave the Bible Department the freedom to do with BCOR 310 as they saw fit. What is not changing is the 15 hour Bible requirement. M. Lynn – Substitutions? R. Ashlock – The new course will be the preferred substitution starting 2017-18. There could be other options.

Motion by M. Lynn to approve with the content starting with “Beginning 2016-17...”; seconded by J. Wallace; all in favor. Motion passes.

VI. Eliminating CORE 115 as a requirement for transfer students

G. Straughn – Faculty vote did remove CORE 210 as a requirement for all students. It did not specifically address CORE 115 for our transfer students. 75% of the content of CORE 115 is identical to CORE 210. We propose eliminating CORE 115 as a requirement for transfer students with more than 24 hours. Those with fewer hours would be required to take CORE 110. Admissions considers this course a barrier to transfer admission. We have other barriers like Bible. But CORE 115 is not missionally central to our institution. It is more of a general studies class. We had hoped to use this course to

bond transfer students into a cohort and therefore help with retention. The anecdotal data I viewed showed that the retention piece is not really happening.

E. Gumm – My sense is that the faculty's desire to eliminate CORE 210 was not a way of saying that the content is not important. We have limited numbers of opportunities to connect transfer students with our expectations of critical thinking, etc. This course is a good way to do that. Without it, the responsibility for this falls to the departments. This does not affect students matriculating from high school. K. Hendrick – I spoke to two teachers of CORE 115, and they said it provides an opportunity for our transfer students to form relationships. They came in not knowing anyone, and they feel like they form some community and identity at ACU through this course. E. Gumm – I agree with that, but Greg's data is true, it hasn't affected our transfer retention rate. B. Hammack – I think having this extra class does make a barrier, and I would like to see it gone.

C. Niccum – I designed the BIBL 103 course for transfer students, and we arranged it to either immediately precede or follow CORE 115 to help establish a cohort. I don't think the low retention rate is because of this course. G. Straughn – The cohort idea could be addressed in extracurricular matters. C. Niccum – I don't want to lose one prop without having another prop already in place.

G. Straughn – Removing this class does help free up funds for courses to be taught other places. C. Niccum – Or for adjunct faculty to lose their positions. G. Straughn – I feel a need for consistency. If we are not requiring it for matriculating freshmen, it doesn't seem fair to require it for transfer students.

J. Xu – For a student who went elsewhere for 12 hours one semester then had dual credit to get 24 hours, would that student be able to avoid CORE 110? E. Gumm – We usually look at high school graduation year first, so they would still be considered a matriculating student.

C. Niccum – Another option would be to require all students to take CORE 110 and then take a “themed” version of CORE 110 for transfer students.

M. Lynn – Does this leave a hole for CORE for transfer students? E. Gumm – It doesn't decrease the required 128 hours, but it would be eliminated from the University Requirements. Those three hours would be required for degree completion, but students could use a free elective for 3 additional hours.

Motion to approve by B. Hammack; seconded by R. Ashlock; 8 in favor; 3 opposed; 0 abstention. Motion passes.

VII. Inclusion of THEA 490 on the Historical Literacy Menu (Tabled from previous meeting)

E. Gumm – The question is, are you as a council ready to take this question up, or are we wanting to postpone? G. Straughn – K. Pamplin could not be here, but he suggested that an exception be made for this class to count as Historical Literacy credit for Theatre

majors and minors but not for students outside that major. There is some precedent for this. C. Niccum – Would this align with SACS expectations? G. Straughn – It's been done in the past. J. Wallace – Would you do that for every major? G. Straughn – I think that is a fair question. I don't have the answer. J. Wallace – Any course would have to meet all the criteria. I don't think this course meets general education requirements. If we set this precedent, it defeats the whole general education mindset. C. Niccum – Are we going to be a liberal arts college or not?

M. Lynn – I know our categories are shifting, but 40% of courses in the Cultural Awareness menu are upper-division. It seems we are way over the line already. I think we might need to reconsider the whole policy of the University Requirements menus. E. Gumm – So do we take action to prevent that same thing happening to the Historical Literacy menu? Also, if we look at changing the criteria to a combined format for the new Cultural Awareness/Fine Arts & Humanities – we might have to have all current courses be re-approved.

R. Ashlock – I would suggest we take the THEA 490 proposal off the table. M. Garver seconded. All in favor.

E. Gumm - Now we can open it up for more discussion. D. Meeks – This is an applicable course to many other students than just theatre majors. There is a writing intensive component, but we think we have found a solution to that barrier. K. Hatfield – The students would still participate in the writing intensive assignment, but we would only turn in the samples from our majors. Everyone gets a grade, but only the majors would be assessed for university requirements.

G. Straughn – We could use the same language that we use for writing intensive for historical literacy – students could either take a course from the historical literacy menu or a course from their major that meets the Historical Literacy criteria. J. Wallace – If we go down this road, we are getting away from the liberal arts model. We will have students just taking majors courses and not having a broader emphasis. S. Lewis – I'm wondering if your thought about changing the university requirement language in the catalog is where we need to address this and not this specific item with theatre. T. Milholland – I would remind the general education council – that this is a core requirement. If you are found out of compliance for a core requirement, you will be sanctioned. The spirit of general education is to be general.

E. Gumm – If this is a direction that the council is interested in pursuing, remember that the faculty voted to create a Historical Literacy menu requirement of 3 hours on the general education menu. Those hours are on the general education menu. With a capstone or writing intensive course – those hours are within the major. The flexibility is not the same with the general education menus. S. Lewis – There is a difference between "general education" and "University Requirements." The general education menu is not really general education. It is University Requirements. T. Milholland – SACS defines general education as a core requirement. University Requirements and general education are not equal. C. Niccum – How many of our University Requirements have to be general education? E. Gumm – 30 hours. We have to decide

where this Historical Literacy menu falls. Is it general education or just a University Requirement?

J. Wallace – I move to table this discussion again. C. Niccum – I second.

E. Gumm - We will seek a different proposal and a different way to approach this question.

Motion to table by J. Wallace; seconded by C. Niccum; all in favor. Motion to table passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.