

University General Education Council
April 13, 2022, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: K. Witemeyer, J. Smith, J. Jones, R. Brown, J. Prather, C. Flanders, R. Ashlock, S. Sanders, M. Atkinson, D. Flanagan

Absent: R. Rama, S. Talley, M. Straughn, K. Jang, L. Sharp-Penya

Ex-officio: B. Smith, E. Gumm (C. Riley, L. May, S. Macaluso were absent)

Guests: D. Counts

The meeting began at 3:31 p.m.

- Call to order by J. Smith
- Prayer by J. Smith
- Minutes from 3/23/22

With no corrections brought forth, the minutes were accepted as approved.

Business Items

The council reviewed drafts presented by the menu criteria teams.

1. Cultural Literacy Criteria

J. Smith - I like that we specifically named the outcomes that we are mapping to. J.

Prather - I would like to standardize the format. J. Smith - I agree. We will standardize them. We are focused on content today. If there are things that you see that you would like to add to the standardized formatting, please note that.

C. Flanders - There were many different opinions represented in our committee. The discussion focused on the expectations for meeting the SLOs. How many assignments to address these? This is a mediated version where we tried to find a compromise. Also in course content percentage there were divergent opinions. We settled on suggesting 50%.

J. Smith - Essentially, a course would need to do nine things, three for each SLO based on your recommendation. R. Brown - I'm curious how assessment works here. How can we get data if there are so many different assignments? The B assessments are going to be difficult. C. Flanders - We want to maximize flexibility, and they are so disciplinary-specific. It is hard to have a uniform assignment. R. Brown - We don't have to have a uniform assignment, but we need guidance for assessment. C. Flanders - We only focused on how to qualify a course for a menu. We did not address assessment after the fact. J. Smith - That assessment piece could be something we address as we look at the examples of some of the other criteria team recommendations.

J. Smith - We do want this menu to be smaller than it has been in the past, but we don't want it to be inflexible. J. Jones - I'm anticipating some overlapping content between humanities and cultural literacy. J. Smith - So that is what we need to decide about how many menus a single course can populate. We have had a good number of history/global studies, foreign language, mission, sociology/social work, and communication courses that have been part of this menu in the past.

J. Smith - Having 9 assessment points to address in one course could be a challenge. What happens if a department wants to address an SLO with an option that is not included in the criteria menu? C. Flanders - Our committee was not concerned with how difficult it would be for a course to get on a menu, but what would fulfill the core intent of the menu. J. Prather - It does not sound practical to ask a course to do 9 things. J. Smith - Would reducing the number of things under each SLO make it more manageable? R. Brown - Two items instead of three would be much more manageable. D. Counts - I appreciate that this is a negotiation because we have even fewer courses to select from in Dallas. J. Smith - What do you think about one item for each area? S. Sanders - I think one of the strengths of this document is that the items are all very specific. I can see great clarity here, and even choosing one would be specific to the outcomes. One might be easier for the submission process. R. Ashlock - If you go down to one, we would have too many courses that were eligible. J. Jones - Maybe you can have either two or one big one, like 50% content. C. Flanders - Or a total of four, one from each area plus one additional item other from any list.

2. Humanities Criteria

J. Jones - We spent a lot of time defining what Humanities are. My group is pretty adamant about not including Bible on the menu since there are already so many required Bible hours. We have 5 outcomes, and we ask courses to address one from A, one from C, and one from any of the B items. We would rather have 2 assignments or less for assessment purposes. J. Smith - I have had some conversations with Berlin Fang and Brent Reeves about using Canvas for assessment.

C. Flanders - Regarding religion, are we talking about subject codes? J. Jones - We are somewhat divided. The group would focus not on content but on courses that would count as a Bible course, which would be the subject code divider. J. Smith - Bible courses are humanities, but we can exclude it knowing that it is represented elsewhere in the general education. J. Jones - If you take philosophy with a PHIL prefix, it would count, but not with BIBP. C. Flanders - Would Greek and Hebrew count? J. Jones - Possibly. E. Gumm - If students transfer in with religion courses, we can transfer it in as a generic humanities transfer course - such as Bible as Literature.

E. Gumm - Our speech course is a humanities course, but would we want that on the menu? J. Smith - I think the social science branch of communication is a better fit for humanities than speech.

J. Smith - I appreciated the inclusion of the rubrics. R. Ashlock - How do you determine what is "keen and effective"? J. Smith - We might want to standardize levels in the

rubrics across the board. Usually an uneven number is helpful 3-5. R. Ashlock - I like 3. High pass, pass, does not pass.

3. Life & Physical Science Criteria

J. Smith - We will strike through section one as we work to standardize the format. R. Brown - We have set proficiencies but leave it up to the instructor to assess. J. Smith - We will need to give some guidance for assessment, same as Cultural Literacy. We can look at adding a rubric, perhaps with that 3 point scale. They gave us a flow chart. What do you think about this? I will observe that the science menu has seen the least movement over the last decade. R. Brown - I like how straightforward the chart is. The courses that would populate this menu are all very similar. I don't think it is a hard task to distinguish them. J. Jones - SLO C2 is also mapped to the humanities menu. Do we need similar measures? J. Smith - I'm fine with the assessment measures being different for the two menus.

4. Social & Behavioral Sciences Criteria

R. Brown - We spent time trying to explain what these different outcomes looked like in an SBS course. We narrowed down the outcomes to fit SBS courses. One piece that is up for debate is the amount of course content required. We have the generic term "majority" now. The rest is a blank rubric followed by examples. J. Smith - I like that you had examples of how different types of assignments could be used. R. Brown - We encourage them to pick one item from each outcome category to address. J. Smith - Our SACs team mentioned that we are making things too complicated. We need to simplify. I think it is good to keep that in mind. M. Atkinson - Some have only one outcome indicator, is that right? R. Brown - Yes. We had two but they were too similar, so we combined them. J. Prather - Under subject matter, are you expecting them to address that entire list? R. Brown - No, the intent was to be an and/or scenario. We can make that adjustment. J. Smith - I like the potential format that we have here that we can use in our standardizing.

Overall criteria to apply to all menus:

Guidelines For All Menus*

*For discussion and decision by UGEC.

1. All general education courses must be 100-level or above.
2. All general education courses should present a breadth of knowledge, not focusing on skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.
3. Individual courses will fulfill only a single requirement.

4. Courses free of prerequisites are preferred. Courses with prerequisites must provide additional evidence that the course contributes to a student's breadth of knowledge and is not specific to a particular occupation or profession.
5. Each course may appear on a maximum of *(one/two)* menu(s).

J. Smith - The items that we agree on were that they must be 100-level or above, that they could not fulfill more than one general education requirement with a single course, and possibly the lack of prerequisites. We will need to decide the number of menus a course can appear. One is very restrictive. J. Jones - Some of this is theoretical and some is practical. One class one menu can make it difficult for scheduling. E. Gumm - It also increases the pressure to offer that course more frequently than faculty might be able to teach. J. Smith - We need to find the balance between being somewhat restrictive and still offering enough courses to fulfill the need. J. Prather - One way to avoid faculty cuts is to have larger classes. So faculty might want to create courses to fit on multiple menus. J. Jones - If you have an Art History class on two menus, and it is popular, that is how it should work. C. Flanders - If a course can meet the criteria, I think it should be eligible for all the menus. J. Smith - We will have departments that will propose a course for multiple menus, but they won't follow through with the assessment for all those separate criteria. I have concerns about faculty burden and assessment. J. Jones - I think the maximum should be two. J. Smith - That was the original recommendation from the proposal team. We have started counseling departments to limit a course to two menus because the burden is too much. We also need to define what constitutes a menu. Is it only the four that we are discussing criteria for, or does that incorporate the other requirements? For example, History is a required element, can it also be on Cultural Literacy and Social & Behavioral Sciences or do they have to pick only one. M. Atkinson - I would vote for 2 from the existing 4 menus. R. Brown - I would vote for a course only showing up twice on the gen ed menu, because all the assessment would become unwieldy. J. Jones - If we limit the number of outcomes being assessed (max of 4 or 5 mapped sub-outcomes), that could address both sides. R. Brown - I like it, but I think that would be confusing to faculty. B. Smith - I like the idea of pushing students to pick courses out of their comfort zone by not having the same courses on several menus.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.