

University General Education Council
January 24, 2024, 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present: K. Witemeyer, J. Smith, A. Pittman, K. Carroll, L. Sharp-Penya, J. Jones, S. Sanders, S. Kang, D. Jackson, D. Kneip

Absent: None

Ex-officio: E. Gumm, A. Sutherlin (C. Riley was absent)

Guests: J. Huddleston, J. Bluitt, S. Self, S. Jones, M. Atkinson, D. Counts

The meeting began at 3:30 p.m.

- Call to order by J. Smith
- Minutes from 9/27/23

No corrections, so minutes were accepted as approved.

Action Items

1. Content & Outcome Revision of Courses on a Gen Ed Menu
(BIOL 101, 121, 122, 123, 124 on Life & Physical Sciences Menu)

J. Huddleston – BIOL 101 - We are updating the outcomes because the ones we had were very antiquated. We also want to make sure that we have the same outcomes here and in Dallas.

Motion to approve BIOL 101 by J. Jones; seconded by D. Kneip; all in favor; motion passes.

J. Huddleston – BIOL 121, 122, 123, 124 - We want to move ecology from the first semester to the second semester. It will align better with transfer coursework and will work better for student learning. We reworded outcomes to address this. J. Jones – Does this change how you will map to assessment? J. Huddleston – No, it won't. J. Jones – I think these were all assessed by a final exam. J. Huddleston – That is correct. D. Kneip – This looks good to me.

Motion to approve BIOL 121, 122, 123, 124 by D. Kneip; seconded by K. Carroll; all in favor; motion passes.

2. Fall Gen Ed Assessment Update

J. Smith – As we look at assessment data that we have received from our menu courses from last semester, we looked at all courses on the opt-in menus and reminded instructors that they will need to submit assessment data at the end of the term. We learned that we might need to ask for those results a little later so that courses using a final exam have time to compile their data. We will need to refine our process. There may have been some sections missed that were created after our initial search.

The biggest gap is the Arts & Humanities menu. Most of our missing sections came from study abroad courses.

L. Sharp-Penya – I see COMM 321, was that supposed to be COMM 231? J. Smith – Probably. I typed this quickly. L. Sharp-Penya – That course is being taught again in the spring. If data was not reported in fall, should we report both fall and spring in the spring assessment? J. Smith – I think we will stick with just spring. One missed semester is not a problem, but if it is regularly missed, that is an item of concern.

J. Smith – With our Arts & Humanities menu, one of the things that is part of the requirement is 3 hours of literature, 3 hours of history, and 3 hours of selection. We knew that literature and history would fall onto that selection menu by default. However, we did not ask the faculty to tell us how they would be assessing those outcomes. LangLit and History asked if they could have time to work through the criteria for the A&H menu and submit their assessment in the spring for that menu.

J. Smith – The second item of note is the challenge of working with our study abroad sections. For example, our foreign language instructors in those locations are local and not entered in our system as instructors of record. We also have difficulty getting our ACU faculty who are traveling to submit. I would like to hear your thoughts on how to better engage these instructors. D. Kneip – My overall recommendation would be to engage the faculty well before they go. Once the semester starts, it is like a train running downhill at top speed. If I were to get an email after the semester started, it would be really hard to incorporate something into the schedule to accommodate the assessment. For our local instructors, it might be helpful if we could build a template that would be simple for them to complete. Perhaps work with the study abroad office to get those things in place. L. Sharp-Penya – Having been on study abroad several times and knowing what the language classes are like, they seem to be very different from the language courses being assessed here. Is it possible to omit the ones that happen on study abroad from assessment? It would be very hard to get them to submit the type of artifacts that we are asking from our residential courses. J. Smith – That's a good question. Do we exempt them, or do we look at the course itself as perhaps not being a good fit for the menu? J. Jones – I think we have to assess them because of the emphasis in study abroad for offering gen ed courses. J. Smith – I will meet with the director and see if we can find a solution. E. Gumm – Mark and I have had a conversation about credentialing local faculty. Since GLST courses are only offered in study abroad, we could remove those from the menu. But we can not exclude a course

from a menu based on the location it was offered. D. Kneip – Those GLST courses are so rich, removing those would be a huge loss. I would really like to find a way to make the assessment work so we can keep those in place.

J. Smith – Two other things that might be worth keeping an eye on. 1. The Spanish language classes were not assessed for cultural literacy. When one section doesn't submit, that's not a big problem, but when multiple sections fail to submit, that creates a significant gap in our knowledge. 2. We have several courses that are listed on two menus and faculty submitted assessment for one menu but not the other. Faculty need to realize that all assessment needs to be completed. It is a lot of work, but that is the price that comes with courses being on more than one menu. J. Jones – I think learning they "why" behind that finding is the most important piece. J. Smith – It's possible if faculty received two emails, they might think that one was a duplicate instead of a separate assessment.

J. Smith – This is the first time we've done this assessment. We will need to tweak as we move forward. Is there a way we can improve the reporting process? K. Carroll – I had a little trouble getting started. Perhaps some additional directions about finding where to start would be helpful. J. Smith – I heard several questions from faculty. Some don't know what they are supposed to be assessing since they weren't part of the approval process. A. Sutherlin – As a department chair, I had to go and compile our documents and make them available to my faculty. We might need to remember to share things we compile with our Dallas colleagues as well. J. Smith - A central repository could be helpful. One other question I received was how to address multiple sections when different instructors use different assignments. The one thing that needs to be in every section is the assignments where assessment is taking place.

L. Sharp-Penya – The SBS rubric asks for a percentage of students who earned a C or better, but the report form asks for a number of students. There is a disconnect there. That could have led to differences on how things were reported. J. Smith – That is good to note. We'll take a look at that. We have a new staff member in Academic Affairs who will focus on helping us with this assessment piece and collecting the general education data. We will also need to look at how we want to handle a change to the artifacts being assessed. Do we want that to come back to council or just let Academic Affairs handle that? We don't need to decide today, but that is something to keep in mind.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.