

University General Education Council
September 25, 2024, 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present: K. Witemeyer, J. Smith, S. Marshall, M. Isbell, K. Carroll, M. Deeg, A. Pittman, D. Kneip, L. Reed Senter, A. Randrianasolo, D. Jackson

Absent: None.

Ex-officio: E. Gumm (B. Reeves and C. Riley were absent)

Guests: C. Miertschin, D. Kennamer, S. Jones

The meeting began at 3:32 p.m.

- Call to order by J. Smith
- Minutes from 4/10/24

No corrections were presented, so minutes were accepted as approved.

Discussion Items

1. Review of 2023-24 General Education Menu Assessment Findings

D. Kneip – As a matter of clarification, is it correct that the fifth column represents the 3rd and 4th columns combined? J. Smith – Yes. Those show students meeting the outcomes. M. Deeg – Is the target 80% or higher? J. Smith – We did not set a target. So that might be a good topic to discuss. It is hard to evaluate how we are doing without a standard to measure against.

J. Smith – How this impacts students is always the most important question. What results give you cause for concern or areas of commendation? D. Kneip – It was nice to see that there were no obvious black holes. J. Smith – We have about an 11-point spread, with two on the high side and two on the low side. S. Marshall – I noticed relative low performance on the Life and Sciences menu. There seemed to be a discrepancy between that menu and others. K. Carroll – I was actually pleased to see an 80% level of success on the science menus for general education. J. Smith – Those are the areas where students outside those disciplines tend to struggle.

J. Smith – On our first overall general education outcome of communicating clearly, we were at about an 81% success rate. On the second outcome, we achieved 89% with relatively tight clustering. On outcome C, this one rated lower than the others with the ties to science.

Arts & Humanities – Any concerns about these courses contributing to the outcomes? D. Kneip – Looking at Table 2 – Is 70 the raw number of students? That number seems small to me. J. Smith – Yes. That is an outlier. Arts & Humanities only submitted data from 44 sections. There were 32 expected missing sections. UGEC said that since English and History courses already count on the Arts & Humanities menus they didn't need to go through a formal approval process for inclusion on the A&H menu. However, that meant that they did not submit assessment plans. We never collected applications from those courses. We will fill in those gaps over this next year and try to get those assessment plans in place so that we can look at more data in future. M. Deeg – On Table 3 we have two different menus addressed. Why are things lumped together? J. Smith – Some of that might be a formatting decision. We have articulated the standards and rubrics differently for different menus. That might lead to some seeming discrepancies.

Cultural Literacy – Any concerns? This was the most consistently high-performing outcome that we had.

Life & Physical Sciences – This was a lower-performing area. D. Kneip – In the abstract, for a university that has a good track record with pre-health fields, I wouldn't be surprised to see some incoming students who think they want to be pre-med and then realize they aren't ready and change majors. That could lead to poorer performance in those more rigorous courses. J. Smith – I think that is a good observation. K. Carroll – For us, our pre-nursing students struggle with biology. We are planning to make some changes to B100 101 to try to help students be more successful. S. Marshall – We teach Astronomy. Students take it expecting it to be easy and it ends up being less easy than anticipated. C. Miertschin – Engineering Physics I and II are on the gen ed menus too. S. Marshall – That can contribute as well.

Social & Behavioral Sciences – This was a lower-performing area as well.

Without thresholds to consider, nothing seems to be wildly out of line. Having results between 70-90% is a good start on student performance in meeting the outcomes. Let's continue to watch trends.

Submissions – There seems to be pieces missing from adjunct instructors and study abroad courses. We will be working on communicating those expectations in the future. We need to do a better job of closing course sections where no students are enrolled. We did not include courses that did not collect data.

Rubrics – Are there any areas that you think should be revised? It is a little odd that A&H measures an outcome one way and S&BS measures it another. That might be something to look at. It might be good to chat with your colleagues about how the rubrics are working.

Report – Is there something we can tweak to show the data better? How would you like to see comparison data over time? K. Carroll – I really like Table 1 showing the overview. That would be great to have from year to year. L. Reed Senter – I love the

graphs. It is easier for me to process than just the numbers. I would like visual breakdowns of the individual categories. Especially those that combine menus.

Our assessment plan is still under development.

2. Assessment Goals for 2024-25

J. Smith – I think it would be wise to look at an overall assessment plan. This also only addresses 3 of our 4 outcomes. We have a fourth outcome for the spiritual side of student development. We need to look at how to assess that. We can also look at assessing our Math courses. We also need to work on the ENGL and HIST courses on the A&H menu.

L. Reed Senter – One of our faculty asked about removing a course from a menu. Is that possible? J. Smith – There is an item on our approval chart that would allow for that. K. Witemeyer – Also keep in mind that programs outside the department might be using that course for gen ed, so that is something to consider when removing a course from a menu.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.