

Undergraduate General Education Council
April 8, 2015, 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: E. Gumm, G. Straughn, R. Ashlock, L. Baker, B. Hammack, C. Niccum, K. Pamplin, P. Roggendorff, N. Santana

Absent: C. Flanagan, M. Garver, D. Perkins, J. Nichols, M. Smallwood, P. Wertheim, J. Xu

Ex-officios: T. Milholland

Guests: J. Cardot, S. Lewis

The meeting began at 3:35 p.m.

I. Call to order by E. Gumm

II. Prayer by L. Baker

III. Approval of the minutes from 3.25.15

This item was postponed due to not having quorum.

IV. COMS 211 competencies change

E. Gumm began by stating that these are not substantial changes, so the council will not vote on this item. The civic engagement competency was originally part of CORE 210, but it is better assessed in COMS 211, so the department was asked to update the COMS 211 competencies to reflect this. G. Straughn mentioned that there is the possibility of expanding the type of course that is accepted for the COMS 211 requirement; he asked J. Cardot how many of the existing competencies could be in a broader menu. J. Cardot responded that there would be fewer options that meet the current competencies; the other potential courses aren't structured to meet the current COMS 211 competencies.

V. General Education Review - Findings and Recommendations

G. Straughn began by stating that he wants to discuss the budgetary ramifications for general education. He talked to Clint Buck and there was a spreadsheet provided at the meeting with budget details. CORE was originally planned to be a \$1.2 million investment, but it has dropped significantly over time. The broad foreign language requirement was never implemented; COMS 211 and the four course CORE (now 3 course) sequence were implemented. CORE is doing 85% of its intent at half its funded rate. This is unsustainable and unrealistic. He asked the council to consider what are ACU's institutional priorities and what is actually funded. ACU can be creative with how general education is done, and there is some capacity for change. ACU is unable to deliver the kind of team-taught, ACU specific courses that were imagined a decade ago.

K. Pamplin said that the budget issues imply that the university does not support the CORE curriculum that the faculty wants. G. Straughn said that is a fair conclusion but not the only one. Division I is an institutional priority. E. Gumm said that in 2013-14 the general education faculty stayed the same, but the number of courses increased, so they spread fewer dollars between the same faculty with more classes. G. Straughn noted that CORE was implemented in fall 2010; CORE hasn't had stability until last year. There is a lack of institutional support for the CORE. There have been numerous leadership transitions. ACU made institutional cuts that had the least amount of impact for department specific issues. It was easier to cut money from CORE as opposed to cut funds from specific departments. He then brought up that CORE was voted on in 2007, the number of students who bring in hours and the amount of hours they bring in is vastly different now than it was then; the number of students who bring in hours is higher, as well as how many hours they bring in. It's possible that nearly half of the 2025 entering class will be at or near an Associate's degree. If that's the case then the transfer pressure brought up by the review committee is going to be magnified. ACU's goal is to have meaningful, impactful, thoughtful, Christian alumni who are making a difference. ACU may need more flexibility in how students matriculate. The reality of changing demographics of incoming students will require a change irrespective of the budget.

T. Milholland noted that the council is talking about a substantive change in general education. The 2011 reaffirmation was that ACU was moving out of the old and into the new, but now the conversation is moving out of the new and into the old. G. Straughn asked him if faculty conversations are finished at the beginning of the fall semester, will that give enough time for SACS to review possible changes for the following fall catalog? T. Milholland said yes, it's a reasonable timeline; the change would just be a notification item for SACS.

P. Roggendorff asked what are the consequences of the budgetary problems? Have CORE classes been cancelled because of lack of funding? Have departments or colleges been pressed to give up money to fund CORE through unofficial channels? G. Straughn replied that there haven't been many cancellations of CORE classes. Departments have prioritized majors courses before general education and CORE courses. However, some departments have offered CORE to the detriment of upper level majors courses. As CAS Dean he's had to say no to other things like travel, equipment, guest speakers, etc. in order to break even at the end of the year. P. Roggendorff then asked if anything happens on an individual level. E. Gumm said occasionally a faculty member agrees to teach on overload. G. Straughn replied that he tries to limit overload exposure for CAS because it causes burnout and frustration. He then said that these numbers are budgeted within departments. Departments deliver x number of general education courses and y number of CORE courses and have the faculty in place to run that.

G. Straughn then mentioned general education outcomes. The general education requirements could be a smaller menu of courses for students to choose from CORE/capstone/social science type course, which would give a measure of transferability, and there could be some flexibility on how that is designated. That would allow courses that are already developed to continue but fewer sections would be needed. R. Ashlock replied that CORE 110 would probably not be cut. G. Straughn said

that this could be a menu that is broader than just choose CORE 210 or BCOR 310. He then noted that UGEC could define a menu of courses that would have integrated and interdisciplinary thinking.

G. Straughn then said that the next priority is the faculty meeting, which would cover the findings of UGEC and the review committee. The faculty meeting would be followed by a survey that would articulate the notion of whether or not the faculty is in favor of the historical literacy component in the general education elective, if they are supportive of an expansion of the COMS menu, and if they are supportive of a reduction in CORE classes. S. Lewis noted that there is an all faculty meeting on 4/21 with the Provost. G. Straughn replied that the UGEC conversation needs to be the single item. K. Pamplin suggested that there should be a survey question asking if the faculty is in favor of continuing CORE without the budget to fund it. He also suggested that it should be asked if the faculty are in favor of adjuncts teaching CORE classes. The council then discussed a good date for the faculty meeting; April 20 was decided upon. G. Straughn then asked if UGEC would be able to reschedule the April 22 meeting in order to wrap up the general education conversation. J. Cardot noted that he will talk to the Faculty Senate about this.

The meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.