

## GEOC Meeting March 12, 2007

*In Attendance: Hedley Freake, Katharina von Hammerstein, William Lott, Robert Jeffers, Manuela Wagner, Cora Lynn Deibler, Michael Darre, John Troyer, Thomas Recchio, Clare Eby, Felicia Pratto, Dean Hanink, Thomas Roby, Anabel Perez, Peter Gogarten, John Bennett.*

Meeting called to order at 2:05pm.

Minutes from the previous meeting approved as presented.

### Announcements:

- Cora Lynn Deibler has joined GEOC as CA1 Arts and Humanities co-chair.
- Provost's Competition Informational Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 14th.
- Provost Nichols held the global education meeting following the February Senate meeting.
- There are Continuing discussions with regional campus representatives about offering more 200-level geneds on those campuses. This issue particularly affects BGS students that need 200-level credits to graduate. Hedley Freake will be meeting with Veronica Makowsky and Doug Hamilton to discuss this problem. CA2 Social Science 200-level courses, in particular, are needed.
  - There are currently few 200-level CA3 courses, but given the nature of the science curriculum BGS students are appropriately taking the 100-level courses to meet this gened requirement if they did not transfer in a substitution.
  - The addition of courses to the schedule should be faculty-driven; administration-driven attempts to add courses to the schedule may cause problems.
  - The 200-level designations, and subsequent degree requirements, are important to ensure the quality of instruction of the undergraduate degree.
  - Hedley Freake will report back to GEOC as these conversations continue.
- Curriculum Action Request Form: Hedley Freake met with the Associate Deans to discuss the creation of one standard course proposal form. Talks are continuing.
- Academic Adjustments Committee: a report of all students with revisions made to their second language and quantitative competencies requirements was presented and discussed. All reported revision cases had legitimate disability issues. It appears that the substitution process approved previously is working effectively.
  - We do not yet have data about substitutions sought and approved through other means.
- Senate C&CC: In an attempt to decrease the number of courses that would come to Senate C&CC for editorial changes of the catalog description due to course renumbering, the phrase, "This course is only open to sophomores and above," will to be allowed in the catalog descriptions of select courses; The Senate approved this proposal at its February meeting. This issue relates to the new numbering system and that any student can register for any course (level). This phrasing does not change current practice and is only a continuation of what is already in place.
  - This ruling would apply **only** to gened courses as the Senate has no jurisdiction over other courses.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### CA1 Arts and Humanities

The CA1 subcommittee recommends **approval** of the following courses:

ARAB 121	Traditional Arabic History
ARAB 122	Modern Arabic History
CHIN 121	Traditional Chinese History
CHIN 122	Modern Chinese History
ILCS 1XY	Introducing Italy through Its Regions
MUSI 193	Introduction to Music History I
MUSI 194	Introduction to Music History II

No written report provided. The CA1 verbal report was approved.

CA4 Diversity and Multiculturalism

The CA4 subcommittee recommends **approval** of the following courses:

International

GERM 175	Human Rights and German Culture
ARAB 121	Traditional Arabic Culture
ARAB 122	Modern Arabic Culture
CHIN 121	Traditional Chinese Culture
CHIN 122	Modern Chinese Culture
HIST 1XX	East Asian History through Essential Hanzi

The CA4 subcommittee **does not** recommend approval of the following course:

ILCS 1XY	Introducing Italy through Its Regions
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The CA4 report was approved as written.

Writing Subcommittee

The W Subcommittee recommends **approval** of the following course:

HIST 230W	American Environmental History
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No written report provided. The W verbal report was approved as written.

Computer Technology Competency Subcommittee

The distributed report shows the proportion of entering students completing the Computer Competency Entrance Expectations. We are running at an overall compliance rate of 35%.

Note: there is no way to enforce compliance of the computer technology competency.

William Lott will check with Kim Chambers about the student population considered in the report provided.

How are these expectations communicated to entering students?

- Orientation mention;
- Reminder by email;

- Appearance of the Computer Technology Competency module on WebCT student pages.

Why is the Computer Technology Competency test not administered during Orientation?

- It was felt that the testing atmosphere it created was not appropriate for incoming students.
- Orientation is already too crowded.

The Computer Technology Competency subcommittee will revisit how best to get the entrance expectations met, including the possibility that it should be made a requirement.

#### Information Literacy Competency Subcommittee

This subcommittee is working on something that would support departments looking to improve information literacy plans. Subcommittee chairs are more confident in their abilities to provide substantive guidance to departments looking to improve their information literacy major requirements.

#### Second Language Competency Subcommittee

Many incoming students are claiming proficiency in a second language through mean other than completion of three years in high school. This is putting a heavy burden on MCL, who are responsible for evaluating these claims. A process is being setup to facilitate this process.

#### Assessment Subcommittee

The Assessment Subcommittee was very interested in the curriculum map report distributed at the last GEOC meeting showing the extent to which courses claim to meet specific gened goals.

New data to be collected and distributed at a later date:

- The percentage of courses that cover particular goals;
- The percentage and number of students that are exposed to particular goals by enrolling in certain classes.

Assessment of writing: For writing within the major, one suggestion for assessment was to select a number of majors and ask for student writing from each. Ways to assess these writing samples would be developed by the assessment and writing subcommittees and graduate students would be hired to asses the samples. This would provide an objective assessment of student writing. The Assessment Subcommittee is currently exploring ways to assess future writing samples (rules, rubrics, etc.).

Other assessment resources and suggestions:

- Freshman writing: ENGL 110/111 final exams are available;
- Mid-point writing: samples to be determined;
- Senior writing: capstone papers. Majors to be determined.

Concerns:

- Final exams are less a crafted piece of writing than a knowledge-based exercise.
- The sample selection needs to be carefully devised in order to make the data meaningful for all departments. Therefore, samples are needed from all schools and colleges, with some schools/colleges providing samples from more than one major.

- Would a sample taken from a writing class offer an accurate look at student writing ability, as papers are revised several times over?
- Are assessment range finals relative to the sample pool? If so, how can annual data be accurately compared?

**AAC&U General Education Conference: Engaging Critical Questions, Fostering Critical Learning, March 1-3, 2007, Miami, FL**

Katharina von Hammerstein and Hedley Freake attended for UConn.

AAC&U is very much in the business of undergraduate liberal education and is driven by the idea of improving student learning. At the moment, they are highly focused on global learning as are most other higher education institutions.

Richard Hirsch, former president of Trinity College, offered a session about a standardized test, CLA, and argued that teaching to “the test” is not bad so long as the test is appropriate. Some universities use the CLA for a select number of students in order to capture a snapshot of data.

Hedley Freake distributed information about different sessions at the AAC&U conference that discuss different methods for assessing general education. Copies of these documents will be retained in GEOC office.

Barabara Wright, a former UConn colleague, offered a session about successful steps for the assessment of general education. She argued that the keys to successful assessment are to build a personal assessment program to suit the university community and to make it a collaborative effort, one which includes students, administrators, and faculty.

Institutional culture was also highlighted throughout the conference. The university administration needs to communicate a consistent message about the importance of assessment and it should be a built-in part of the faculty merit process and student teaching. Ideally, a reward system must be set up to support assessment.

**Next GEOC meeting:**

March 26, 2007 2-4pm CUE 134.

Respectfully submitted,

Anabel Perez  
Administrator