

# GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

OCT. 2, 2015 – 2-4 p.m., L-105

**Chair:** Cindy McGrath

**Members present:** Curtis Corlew, Judy Pettite, Chao Shih Liu, David Reyes, Shiela Rodolfo, Nancy Ybarra

1. Everyone was welcomed. No announcements or public comments.

2. Agenda approved.

3. May 1 GE meeting minutes approved as written.

4. GE Committee: Cindy McGrath gave a brief structural history of the committee

■ **Relationship with Curriculum Committee:** Cindy explained the historical development of the General Education Committee as an outgrowth of the GE Task Force Implementation Committee in the spring of 1998. The task force itself was created to implement the revised GE model passed in 1998. The GE committee was formally created as a sub-committee by action of the Curriculum Committee and implemented in the fall of 1999. Its main task was to assume some of the workload of the Curriculum Committee by evaluating whether a course outline sufficiently met the five GE criteria that had been recently consolidated from the original eight criteria, rewritten and approved by the Senate when it approved the revised GE model.

Cindy also reported that, concurrently, the Curriculum Committee delegated COOR review to the Ethnic Studies and Ethical Inquiry committees to determine whether courses sufficiently met those criteria as well. When Librarian Ed Bolds retired and the Ethnic Studies Committee ceased to function, the GE Committee unofficially took on the responsibility of determining whether courses met the Ethnic and Multicultural Studies requirement. A few years later, philosophy professor Danny Ramirez asked the GE committee to read COORs for placement in the Ethical Inquiry requirement box, which the committee did. Following the GE model revision in 2012, the ethical inquiry requirement was removed and the Ethnic and Multicultural Studies requirement was given its own GE requirement box.

■ **Relationship with Teaching and Learning Committee:** Cindy explained that in 2004 the Teaching and Learning Project utilized the GE Committee as the body to write the five GE Criteria into GE Student Learning Outcomes for pilot assessments. In 2008 the TLP officially integrated the GE Committee into its Assessment model and allocated 25 percent reassigned time load to the GE chair for purposes of ongoing GE assessment.

When the New Model of Assessment was implemented in the fall of 2012, a leadership position of GE Assessment Coordinator was created with ongoing negotiated reassigned time (currently 25 percent), and one of the roles of that position was identified as chairing the GE Committee.

■ **Membership and leadership overview:** Cindy explained that when the committee was originally created as a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, the membership was purposely left open to all interested parties. However, given current college attention to the Brown Act, which requires meetings have quorums, there has been an unofficial attempt to

suggest specific membership, but no formal membership list has been voted on by the Curriculum Committee itself. That is something that should be done.

Over time, it has been difficult to recruit faculty to serve as both the GE Assessment Coordinator and GE Chair. We should try to find out why there is a current leadership vacuum. One possibility is to include questions on the issue in a GE Faculty Survey.

■ **Brown Act requirements:** Cindy explained the Brown Act requires that meeting agenda to be posted 72 hours in advance, a quorum be achieved to formally hold a meeting, and meeting minutes be posted and archived.

■ **Note-taking for minutes:** Cindy volunteered as chair to take the meeting minutes, and announced that meetings may be recorded to streamline the minute-taking process. There were no objections to such recording.

## 5. The GE model and curriculum review

■ **What makes a GE course: GE philosophy and the integrated model:** To steep the committee in background, Cindy handed out copies of an old GE philosophy statement from the late 1970s as well as a current philosophy statement written in 2013 for inclusion in the College Catalog per accreditation requirements. The group looked at the statements briefly. Nancy Ybarra said she loved the language of the old document and selected an excerpt from the historic document to read out loud. After some brief discussion, committee members were asked to read both statements before the next meeting.

■ **Current GE Student Learning Outcomes:** Cindy handed out a packet that included the current five SLOs were written during 2004-05 academic year from the five GE course criteria that had been streamlined by the GE Task Force in 1998 from the historic eight GE course criteria. The packet contains a list of the GE SLOs along with an explanation, assessment criteria and examples of each.

■ **COOR review forms and assignments for the fall:** Cindy explained that information within the GE SLO packet is what the GE Committee uses to evaluate course outlines of record to see whether they are appropriately integrated pedagogically. She also handed out a form that had been derived from the information in the packet to help guide the evaluation, but noted it would need to be updated since the Academic Senate streamlined the GE course package in 2012. Cindy will work on updating the form.

Committee members were asked to each select an SLO they will be committed to reviewing COORs for this semester:

CSLO 1. Read critically and communicate effectively as a writer and speaker. **Shiela Rodolfo**

CSLO2. Understand connections among disciplines and apply interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving. **Judy Pettite**

CSLO3. Think critically and creatively. **Curtis Corlew**

CSLO4. Consider the ethical implications inherent in knowledge, decision-making and action. **Chao Liu**

CSLO5. Possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural and global perspectives. **David Reyes**

Nancy Ybarra suggested that she and Cindy look at the course outlines holistically.

As an exercise in how to read a COOR for the five GE SLOs using the evaluation form, the committee began to look at the Course Outline of Record for English 124: Children's Literature. Members were asked to read through and evaluate it for "homework" for the Oct. 16 meeting when it will be on the agenda for formal evaluation and a vote.

**6. GE SLO changes that have been recently floated:** Cindy informed members of the committee that during the past few years, as a result of the assessment initiative, there has been some dialogue about revising the current five GE SLOs. Much of the discussion has centered around the "interdisciplinary" GE SLO which faculty have found challenging to assess. Cindy reported that when the GE Committee wrote the five GE course criteria into SLOs in 2004-05 committee members were novices in assessment and have learned over the years that it is probably a characteristic of a GE course rather than a student learning outcome. So there has been a suggestion on the back burner to remove it as a GE SLO. If that were to happen it would then become a course characteristic rather than an SLO, and applied to evaluating the content of a GE course. That is generally how it has been unofficially applied anyway. Committee members seemed supportive of the idea. It will require more discussion.

Cindy reported that, concurrently, there had been some discussion the past few years about the importance of information literacy and that Librarian Christina Goff suggested it be added to the GE package in some way. Christina is currently on leave, so we will continue the discussion in the spring when she returns.

**7. GE assessment:** Cindy suggested that given the recent difficulty in attracting both membership to and leadership of the committee, it may be time to consider assessing the General Education structure on campus. Among the things we might consider along these lines is a GE Faculty Survey, as well as professional development about general education at LMC.

Cindy reported that some people on campus have suggested the GE Committee should consider returning the task of evaluating GE course outlines to the Curriculum Committee since a lot of the tension around the perception of the GE Committee revolves around this function. In addition, GE quorums have been difficult to maintain in the recent past, and this has bogged down getting GE course outlines through Curriculum Committee review since COORs must first be evaluated by the GE Committee. Any such change would have to be approved by the Curriculum Committee itself since it originally created the GE Committee.

There was a lot of discussion around the idea of reinvigorating GE on campus. Curtis said we need to do a better job of marketing GE, and jokingly suggested that committee members all don academic robes and take to the sidewalk to promote general education. The idea took a more serious turn with the suggestion that GE committee members serve as roving ambassadors mentoring new adjunct faculty teaching GE courses. It was also suggested that we use a GE Faculty Survey to find out whether department chairs have been explaining the integrated GE model to their new faculty hires, both full-time and adjunct. Another idea floated was that we offer a flex workshop on how GE at LMC is different from GE at other colleges.

Both the flex workshop and the survey ideas seemed to receive support. Cindy asked committee members to send her possible survey questions by Friday, Oct. 9 so she can put together a rough draft of a survey for the Oct. 16 meeting. Cindy also said she will find out details about proposing a flex workshop on GE.

Cindy explained the committee itself, and the GE Assessment Coordinator who serves as chair, are responsible for coordinating assessment of the GE model and its integrated GE SLOs. Given the fact that next year is Year 5 of the New Model of Assessment, when program assessment takes place, we need to begin planning how we might assess the general education program and its SLOs. Cindy reported that when Alex Sterling was chair recently, he and the GE Committee conducted an assessment on the reading, writing and ethics SLOs. We could consider replicating that assessment, or creating a new assessment, but need to come up with a plan before the end of the academic year. She also said a GE Faculty Survey could also be used as an assessment of the model and its structure.

8. **GE leadership:** Most committee members agreed that while we need to spend time discussing the issue of the difficulty finding faculty to serve as GE chair, it would be better to wait until we have survey data before trying to solve the problem. We will include leadership questions on the survey and put this item on a future agenda.

9. Setting priorities: Committee members decided to focus on the following priorities this semester:

- Creating and administering a GE survey
- Determining the best venue for GE course outline review
- Revising GE SLOs

10. **Future agenda items:** No items were brought up, so Cindy asked members to send her agenda items via email before the Oct. 16 meeting

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 4 p.m.