

Minutes
Friday December 5, 2008
Western Connecticut State University
General Education Committee
2008-2009

Attendance: Veronica Kenausis, Daryle Brown, Matt Buchta, Alba Skar, Robin Flanagan, Patty O’Neill, Kerry E. Walker, Rob Wittemore (Guest).

- I. Minutes of May 2 meeting (Motion to Approve: Rocca/Kenausis): Some items that had been tabled for the September meeting were left on the table for the February meeting. Approved with 3 abstentions after some corrections.
- II. Minutes of November 14 meeting (Motion to Approve: Brown/Skar): Unanimously approved with corrections.
- III. Input from community (15 minutes)
 - a) Matt Buchta shared a letter from the SGA concerning the proposed HPX 177 requirement. (see attached letter)
- IV. Old business
 - a) Update on FYE
 - i) We need to find ways to increase the number of FY sections. It may help/be necessary to allow some portion of FY courses to be populated by upper classmen (defined here as not FY).
 - ii) There is general concern, in the university population, that restricting these courses to only FY students may make it difficult to ensure that the classes run and/or that there will be sections available to other students.
 - iii) There was some discussion, prompted by Matt Buchta, about what the differences are between FY and non-FY sections. He relayed that there is a general feeling among the pre-FY student population that they are glad they did not have to do it.
 - iv) The discussion lead to the conclusion that we need to find ways to ramp up the number of sections. One member described it as a “Who moved my cheese?” sort of thing.
 - b) Update on assessment of General Education curriculum
 - i) Patty O’Neill relayed that there had been a great deal of discussion at the University Wide Assessment Committee meeting about our effort to assess the general education program. In particular there was some concern over the whether the MAPP test had been properly validated.
 - ii) Most of the MAPP tests have not been returned. There was unfortunately no due date placed on them when they were distributed.
 - c) The Writing Requirement
 - i) Robin pointed us toward the 2004 Taskforce recommendation that WCSU institute an Advanced Writing (AW) requirement. There was some agreement that this could be a good idea. After some discussion we arrived at three possible courses of action:

- (1) We could issue suggestions/recommendations to the University and leave it at that.
 - (2) We could move to require all students to take two W courses. Inherent in this is the possibility that the General Education committee would take over control to the W designation.
 - (3) We could leave the W designation as it is and introduce a new AW requirement that the General Education committee would administer.
- ii) We then debated whether the proposal should originate with our committee or from the Writing Department. There was also concern that if the proposal originated with us then the Writing Department may feel slighted. Veronica said that she would meet with Patrick Ryan to discuss these issues.
 - iii) The discussion over whether or not we should have this series of writing classes lead to a more general discussion about whether or not we were forcing stuff on to the university community and if we should be.
- V. New business
- a) New Geography courses and program (Motion to approve: Kenausis/Brown): Approved with 1 abstention.
- VI. Motion to adjourn at 10:30-ish (Rocca/Buchta/Skar/ et al.)

Eventually Submitted By: Charles Rocca

Dear General Education Committee,

It has come to the attention of Student Government Association, on behalf of the Student Body, that the HPX General Education requirement is up for review. It is understood that in the proposed change all activity courses will be realigned to fit with the HPX 177 activity requirement, thereby disabling students to take solely activity courses to fulfill the HPX requirement.

It is realized that in the realignment all one-half (.5) credit activity courses will become one (1) credit activity courses. However, it was noted at the General Education Committee that some of the courses may be dropped. Courses that could potentially be dropped are Hiking and Backpacking and Softball due to their seasonal nature. These staples of the HPX program have long been favorites of the Student Body, and if removed would be a disservice to the students and the program at large.

Understanding the value of having all students take HPX 177-Fitness For Life Lecture it is recommended that all activity courses-as they currently stand-be aligned to count for the HPX 177 activity requirement. This enables students to have exposure to and participate in a couple different one-half (1/2) credit activities. Further it is recommended that a more equitable substitute to the required blood test, be established, rather than the excessive 10 page essay.

Please take these recommendations into careful consideration when voting on the proposed change.

Sincerely,

Edmund Breitling
President, and Voice of the Student Body
Student Government Association
Western Connecticut State University

