



USF St. Petersburg Faculty Senate Committee: General Education: Meetings USF St. Petersburg Faculty Senate Committee: General Education

9-23-2016

General Education Committee Meeting : 2016 : 09: 23

General Education Committee

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General Education Committee, "General Education Committee Meeting : 2016 : 09: 23" (2016). *USF St. Petersburg Faculty Senate Committee: General Education: Meetings*. 78.
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Meeting of the General Education Committee
Friday, 23 September 2016 12:00noon-1:45pm
Dav 100, Dean's conference room
Minutes

- Committee members
 - Morgan Gresham, chair (CAS--English)- attended
 - Hugh LaFollette (CAS--Philosophy)- attended virtually
 - Adrian O'Connor (CAS--History)- attended
 - Henry Alegria (CAS--Chemistry)- attended
 - David John (CAS--Biology)- attended
 - Rick Smith (KTCOB)- attended
 - Tony Stamatoplos (Library)- attended
 - Cyndie Collins (*ex officio*, Academic Advising)- attended
 - Michelle Madden (*ex officio*, Institutional Effectiveness)- attended
 - Liz Southard, graduate student assistant to General Education- attended
- Dr. Martin Tadlock, VCAA- unable to attend
- Terry Rose (COE)- unable to attend

- Review of [AY 2015-2016 report to Faculty Senate](#)
 - *Committee had no questions or comments*

- **NEW** assessment guide for General Education (**Liz**)
 - *General Education Committee Assistant, Liz Southard, presented to the committee the "Guide to Assessments for USFSP General Education Courses" that she and Morgan Gresham created in collaboration with Michelle Madden to aid faculty and adjuncts with the new assessment process. The assessment process has largely remained the same except faculty is now required to assess all State and USFSP Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) through critical assignments and faculty must report the number of students enrolled in courses at the time of each critical assignment.*
 - *Adrian O'Connor expressed concerns regarding the restrictive nature of the guide and it may upset Department Chairs and Faculty.*
 - *Additionally, concerns were expressed about providing information from course applications because these applications were written as examples*
 - *Morgan and Liz assured the committee the purpose of the guide is to simply act as a reference for faculty, especially adjuncts. Numerous times in the guide it is stated that professors teaching General Education courses should consult with Department Chairs and other faculty that have taught these courses previously to aid them in this process.*
 - *The Committee expressed concerns about assessments still being sent to Liz Southard's personal email address. Michelle said she would contact IT about getting an email address that is solely for Assessments.*
 - *Lastly, concerns were expressed regarding the initial guide that was sent out at the beginning of the semester prior to Committee approval. Morgan and Liz explained that the initial guide*

was preemptively sent to faculty because they felt it was important to get the information out there while faculty were creating and finalizing course material.

- The Committee was sent a copy of the Assessment Guide after the meeting for feedback and edits.
 - Liz also reported on Assessments for the 2015-2016 AY. For Fall 2015, only 9 assessments were not submitted and, for Spring 2016, only 7 assessments were not submitted for the General Education Core Courses. Exit Course responses remain low.
 - Michelle Madden described the new Institutional Effectiveness Committee and the proposed purchase of an online assessment tool that will act as a depository for assessments, ALCs, course syllabi, etc.
 - Hugh LaFollette raised several concerns about using online software and the lack of faculty representation on the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (citing Sec. 5.4 of the Faculty Contract). Hugh is concerned how the data gathered in this tool could be used in regards to the Strategic Plan, Master Academic Plan, and University goals. He cautions that qualitative decisions could be made off of quantitative that it was not intended to do. Hugh feels that there needs to be a statement made regarding how the data will be used prior to be implemented.
 - Michelle asked for Hugh to write up these concerns/comments regarding the software and send them to her.
 - Additionally, Michelle asked all members of the committee and Liz to review the potential software programs and provide feedback to her.
- **Agenda for academic year 2016-2017:**
 1. Review Gordon rule and Gordon Rule courses
 - Committee feels that Gordon Rule is not under the charge of the Committee (see below)
 2. Since no action was taken on the following items, GEC will follow up with UGC and Faculty Senate in AY 2016-2017
 - a. Faculty Senate **deferred action** on proposal that there be a minimum grade of C- in GE courses for students to receive GE credit, with a scheduled review of the consequences of this change 2 years after its implementation to **Undergraduate Council**. ([see attached minutes](#))
 - Committee had no comments or questions
 - b. Faculty Senate **took no action** on the continuation of the USF system General Education articulation agreement. ([see attached minutes](#))
 - Committee had no comments or questions
 3. General Education Committee will work with the new Director of Institutional Effectiveness to
 - a. develop a process for review, recertification, replacement of General Education courses that will include substantial and sustained work on the process of assessing GE courses and areas, on developing a coherent and well-considered process of meaningful review, recertification, and replacement of GE courses,

and on designing an implementation process and timeline for the findings in each year's reviews.

- *The Committee agreed that one GE Area should be reviewed each year, but the exact structure of this process was yet to be determined and will be discussed at the next meeting.*
- *Adrian suggested a substantive review for each Gen Ed Area that would include inviting faculty into the discussion to answer questions and provide feedback about the Gen Ed courses they are teaching that are under review.*
- *Hugh suggested encouraging faculty from other areas to come in and participate in the discussion so we gain perspective from inside and outside of GE Area. He also felt that the emphasis should be on encouraging the GE Area under review*
- *Rick suggested having the review be broken down by semesters, so the first semester (fall) would focus on an the internal self evaluation of the GE Area under review and the second semester (spring) would focus on external discussions that would include participation from outside the GE Area under review.*
- *Cyndie suggested that the first GE Area under review should be Mathematics, the committee agreed with this recommendation.*
- *David and Rick stated that the next step should focus on designing the review process and determining whether feedback will be enough to make decisions.*
- *Concerns were expressed about the replacement process, including whether the committee will allow for alternate proposals to be put forward when a course is suggested for replacement.*
- *Does the General Education Committee have the right to nix a Gen Ed course? All Committee members agreed that the answer to this question requires Faculty Senate approval.*
- *All Committee members agreed there needs to be a defined set of circumstances/rules to remove a course from GE curriculum.*
- *Should there be a "probation period" for GE courses suggested for replacement?*
- *David stressed the need to provide thoughtful language on what a "problem" is that would result in the replacement of a GE course and that there needs to be guidance on review/assessment of past performance*

- b. develop a website of the following materials: 1) the official mission and charge of the GE committee, as well as the GE Philosophy; 2) the history of the GE program and its revision in light of the Florida state legislature's reform of general education requirements; 3) GE area SLOs; 4) a clear presentation of how GE courses and areas will be reviewed (one area each academic year), of what will be included in the review process, how it will proceed, and when its results will take effect.

- *Committee was unable to address this part of the Agenda due to time restraints. This will be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.*

- Request for clarification regarding General Education Committee's relationship to exit courses and the "liberal arts requirement" before reviewing applications for Exit Courses.

Specifically what relationship – if any – the GE committee ought to have with courses that are designated:

- Gordon rule (some course are not GE courses that are Gordon rule)
 - *The Committee expressed concerns over whose responsibility Gordon Rule is, whether it should be assessed and reported, and the multiple definitions associated with it.*
 - *Adrian O'Connor suggested that Gordon Rule should be QEP responsibility.*
 - *Committee ultimately decided Gordon Rule should not be in their charge since some General Education Courses do not have Gordon Rule requirements.*
- Exit courses
 - *Committee is still waiting on charge and written confirmation on Exit Courses from the Faculty Senate.*
 - *The Committee agreed that assessments for General Education Core Courses and Exit Courses need to be streamlined.*

Suggest that Faculty Senate **include that clarification in its charge** for General Education Committee for AY 2015-2016.

- Recommend Faculty Senate **endorse** continuation of the USF system General Education articulation agreement.
- Identifying concerns with scheduling of Gen Ed courses
 - *Committee was unable to address this part of the Agenda due to time restraints. This will be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.*
 - a. who schedules Gen Ed courses for each department?
 - b. expected number of Gen Ed courses?
 - c. assessment duties
 - d. what role can/should committee play in scheduling and planning?
 - e. Proposed a Gen Ed Coordinator position
 - *Committee discussed position again. Adrian O'Connor suggested that chair should remain as a faculty member and should have a course exemption and an assistant.*
 - i. what would be the expected qualities and duties of a General Education coordinator?
 - ii. Role of the committee with a position
- Proposal for a faculty director of General Education ([see position description below](#))

Interesting Reads:

- <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/09/23/students-who-earn-cs-gateway-courses-are-less-likely-graduate-new-data-show#.V-Uqe9QKxBs.facebook>

Gen Ed Course List for AY 2016-2017

<https://docs.google.com/a/mail.usf.edu/document/d/1Y2rncLcQ9sXosQKbkQyOWSxti2II9J9GDdx26vJ66QU/edit>

Proposal for GE, “competencies,” and exit courses

While the SACS COC meeting with Dr. Cuevas included a reprieve from needing to generate General Education assessment data for the upcoming 5-year review, it left us with a new and not insignificant task: identifying and assessing student “competencies” for the decennial review (SACS “Principles of Accreditation” §3.5.1).

It also provided us with an opportunity.

Over the last year and a half, we have discussed the purpose of exit courses in the USFSP curriculum and whether the General Education committee should evaluate them. In light of our meeting with Dr. Cuevas, it seems that there may be good reasons for us to do so. Exit courses are an upper-level complement to the General Education program *and* an appropriate mechanism for assessing student “competencies.”

When creating the General Education philosophy, SLOs, and curriculum, we wanted GE courses to contribute to a robust culture of learning, one that encourages students to think across disciplinary silos, helps them to develop and nurture their intellectual curiosity, and prepares them to continue their intellectual, cultural, and personal development long after college. This requires not only that students master particular subjects and develop particular skills, but also that they learn how to bring specialized knowledge to bear on wide-ranging and far-reaching questions. A similar ambition is articulated in the Liberal Arts requirements described in the USFSP undergraduate catalog and is embedded in the exit course requirements (particularly in the requirement that students take at least one of their exit courses outside of their “disciplinary cluster”). In short, the way to meet the SACS requirement that we measure student “competencies” is implicit in our existing exit course requirements.

We should formalize this by adopting Student Competency Standards (SCS) to be assessed and reported by each exit course. Those data would serve as the basis for the university’s “competency assessment” report in compliance with section 3.5.1 of the “Principles of Accreditation.” To make this assessment substantive but still flexible enough to be incorporated across the many disciplinary clusters, we could adopt two competency standards based on the language in the faculty-approved GE philosophy and the undergraduate catalog, with each standard serving one branch of the exit course curriculum (1. Major Works and Major Issues; 2. Literature and Writing):

SCS 1: Students will demonstrate competence in understanding, reflecting upon, and communicating about major works and major issues in the liberal arts.

SCS 2: Students will demonstrate competence in understanding, reflecting upon, and writing about important works of world literature.

Assessment Update

Semester Summary

Academic Year	Semester	# Sections	# Entered	% Entered
D\#17048	Ide#347	539	459	94.4%
	Vsubj#34848;		;	3
				83.196
Academic Year Total:		364	206	
D\#16047	Ide#346	4;5	489	;81.4
	Vsubj#347496		45<	:<14.7
Academic Year Total:		345	285	
D\#15046	Ide#345	4;7	47;	;31.76
	Vsubj#346486		455	:<1.7
Academic Year Total:		337	270	
D\#14045	Ide#344	4:4	47;	;9.188
	Vsubj#345477		446	:;17:
Academic Year Total:		315	261	
D\#13044	Ide#343	47<	459	;7.189
	Vsubj#344458		438	;7.133
Academic Year Total:		274	231	
D\#12043	Ide#33<	463	9<	86.13;
	Vsubj#343448		8<	84.163
Academic Year Total:		245	128	
D\#1103<	Ide#33;	44;	<8	;3.184
	Vsubj#33<43;		98	93.14<
Academic Year Total:		226	160	
Report Total:		2106	1541	

Please note:

Fall 2014- Our numbers are still low because the 24 labs for Natural Science courses have not been removed from the database. Once these are removed our percentage will go way up.

Spring 2015- Our counts are still very low for this semester. I am going to send out reminders to faculty next week regarding Spring 2015 assessments.

