Meeting Notes

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name/Title</td>
<td>General Education Review Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>December 5, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>1:00-2:00</td>
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<td>Location</td>
<td>302 Halle</td>
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<td>Members Attending</td>
<td>Zenia Bahorski, Daryl Barton, Chris Foreman (co-chair), Christopher Gardiner, John Koolage (co-chair), Peggy Liggit, Mary Rearick, Michael Tew</td>
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<td>Also Attending</td>
<td>Rhonda Longworth, Sandy Norton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Ali Eydgahi, Gerald Newberry (excused)</td>
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Committee Function
Associate Provost Longworth opened the meeting with a discussion of the function of the committee, referencing the Evaluation section (section 6) of the General Education Program implementation document. She highlighted key elements of the original charge including:

- The committee is designed to review the General Education Program as a whole, similar to program review.
- The committee will work in concert with the Evaluation Subcommittee (of the General Education Committee) in preparing a report for the university community.
- In reviewing the program as a whole, the committee should evaluate marginal changes in goals, learning outcomes, supporting processes, and benchmarking against peer programs and nationally recognized best practices. The focus is continuous improvement, not a comprehensive re-write of the program.

More specifically the review:
- Is intended to be holistic and programmatic, as course level assessment is conducted by the Assessment Committee. The charge is to look at the overall program, not individual courses.
- Should focus on improvements and enhancements. It is not intended to begin a new program from scratch. As in all program reviews, we are looking at continuous improvement as the central focus.
- Will include external members as consultants in whatever manner the committee decides to utilize their services and support. At a minimum, they should be used to provide an outside, objective perspective.
- Will utilize administrative support provided by the Provost’s Office.

Assessment
In her role as Associate Vice President for Academic Programming and Services, Rhonda Longworth has encountered reoccurring questions coming from various constituencies, including faculty, students, parents, and educational partners. On the basis of these, she suggests that the review should, at a minimum, include examination of the following.
• Do program components compare favorably with peer institutions and best practices? What are the appropriate metrics and/or criteria for making these comparisons? Should the components be revised in any way? Components comprise skills, disciplines, and course content.

• Are the supporting processes—such as vetting and assessment—functioning effectively? What process modifications, if any, should be considered? This includes the issue most frequently raised by departments as to whether we should limit the size of certain choice categories, particularly with respect to diversity and global awareness. Does this impact different departments in different ways? If there is too great a choice, what solutions should be considered?

• Faculty suggestions for improvements and enhancements. One of the most impressive things about the initial program effort was the attention the committee paid to seeking out department feedback. It is important to come up with a mechanism early in the process to include faculty feedback on a comprehensive basis. Methods could include small groups, listening sessions, etc. The Provost's Office can assist with whatever methods the committee decides to employ.

• Student satisfaction, both current and alum, with the program and any suggestions they may have. The committee might consider inviting Bin Ning from IRIM, who already does some data gathering on this. If independent efforts are employed, data sources may already exist to support them.

• Employer feedback on program content and student outcomes. Feedback from graduate school placements.

• How effectively the program supports the partnerships EMU maintains with other higher education institutions, both four-year universities and community colleges. Students are increasingly fluid across these institutions. Need to consider the balance between transferability and what EMU can uniquely bring to General Education. Data sources and experts in these areas are available on campus and should be utilized. There was discussion of providing a spreadsheet showing articulation agreement equivalencies.

Rhonda Longworth emphasized that this list of areas of assessment is by no means exhaustive. She is optimistic on the content of the review based on the feedback she receives from our education partners. She encouraged the committee to look at the positive aspects of the program and not just the critical aspects.

Daryl Barton suggested the inclusion of Advising when seeking feedback on the program.

Mary Rearick emphasized the need to incorporate accountability to the larger world—particularly in terms of technology and online advances in education—not just campus in General Education review.

Peggy Liggit emphasized the need to make explicit examining the extent to which students are meeting learning outcomes and also the need to consider which questions hold the greatest weight in terms importance and priority. Michael Tew agreed that student achievement in terms of learning outcomes would be the driving force for many
other questions. Rhonda Longworth stated that learning outcomes would come under the area of comparison with peer institutions and metrics and criteria used in making these comparisons.

There was some discussion as to whether learning outcomes are the work of the Assessment Committee rather than the Review Committee. Rhonda Longworth stated that this is the connection between the two committees. While on a course level this is the work of the Assessment Committee, to the degree assessment informs program evaluation it is the work of the Review Committee. There will always be some blurring of the line between assessment and program review and they need to operate in concert with one another. It is possible to have every course meeting its objective and not to have the program meeting its objective, but it’s unlikely that the program could be meeting objectives if the courses within it are not meeting theirs. There is the added complication of some components, such as oral communication with only one course, being the same at the course and program level and others comprising multiple courses.

External Resources

Peggy Liggit suggested using colleagues at UT and Dearborn as resources.

Rhonda Longworth suggested using Michigan public universities basic agreement to become a LEAP (Liberal Education and America’s Promise) state as a resource for connections. This is part of a national effort to move application of General Education outcomes into upper level courses.

Chris Foreman recommended Jan Smith of Pittsburgh State’s HLC Leadership Team as an external consultant.

Committee Composition

Faculty Senate Representatives:
Zenia Bahorski             CAS
Daryl Barton              COB
Ali Eydgahi               COT
John Koolage (co-chair)   CAS
Gerald Newberry           CHHS
Mary Rearick              COE

Administrative Representatives:
Chris Foreman (co-chair)  Director, General Education
Christopher Gardiner      Department Head, Mathematics
Peggy Liggit              Director (I), Faculty Development Center
Michael Tew               Professor, CMTA
Additional assessment and informational resources as needed.

External Consultant
Jan Smith                  HLC Leadership Team, Pittsburgh State University
Administrative Support
Winifred Martin Provost's Office

Sandy Norton, Faculty Senate President, and Rhonda Longworth, as administrative contact, will attend when invited. Judy Kullberg is the point person on the Executive Board of Faculty Senate as Chair of Academic Issues. Administrative appointees are selected on the basis of their assessment experience and issue expertise as it relates to General Education. Winifred Martin (Provost’s Office) will provide administrative support.

Rhonda Longworth suggested Chris Foreman as a co-chair, pointing out that she works directly with the Provost’s Office on the General Education program. Faculty Senate representatives suggested John Koolage as the other co-chair.

**Action Items**
- John Koolage and Chris Foreman will coordinate the first meeting and send out agenda.
- Winifred Martin will email minutes to committee members and work to put committee charge, meeting minutes, data, information, and resources (as available) on committee website. Will arrange to schedule meetings for next semester at regular day, time and location.
- Committee members should think about what sort of communications they would like to see the committee provide to campus.

Attachments:
General Education Program implementation document
General Education Review Committee