

General Education Council
Minutes of February 4, 2013

Present: Karla Davis-Salazar (chair), Manish Agrawal, Dan Belgrad, Annette Christy, William Cummings, Jeff Cunningham,

agreed to keep the status quo a while longer, i.e., keep all recertifications on hold and allow those on hold to be recertified after 6 years rather than 5. These decisions are due to the statewide general education changes that remain in progress and undecided.

New Business

Karla Davis-Salazar began the discussion by asking the General Education Council to consider what they perceive as their role with regard to the state-mandated 15 credit hours, and what the implications are for USF.

One reply was that the council's role is ensuring 'quality control.'

Another response indicated there is nothing we can do, since what the state ultimately decides will be mandatory.

Questions were raised regarding what mechanism will be put in place to ensure these mandated courses are taught effectively and that learning outcomes are being met.

Several council members asked about funding for general education courses and how to go about obtaining it.

Department chairs will decide how many sections of these courses will be needed, based on 'supply and demand.'

The State must meet USF's FKL requirements, because it is beneficial to our students.

A council member asked whether these state-mandated courses will have to go through the usual New Course Proposal process. If it is a new course for USF, then yes. Substantive changes to any existing USF courses that are among the state-mandated ones will also require review.

The GEC process could be abbreviated some to enable state-mandated courses a faster process due to the short timing required for these courses to be in place, as reflected in the current state timetable.

The Chair mentioned that the rule in which all SUS institutions 'must accept and offer' the mandated courses change.

There was discussion of SCH (Student Credit Hours) vs. budget issues.

The Provost is interested in lowering the number of general education courses that we offer. But the point was made that the faculty own the curriculum.

The Provost wants USF general education curriculum to be distinctive.

Discussion points:

This is a good chance to create more interdisciplinary courses.

The approved, state-mandated courses should be taken off the list of possibilities for USF's to give those courses 'frozen out' of the first an equal chance to be taken.

Additional concern was expressed regarding SCH vs. budget issues.

Interdisciplinary courses that are team-taught were recommended.

Offer 'free-floating' electives

A thematic approach was suggested, i.e., the 15 USF hours could be in a certain general education track (which would require approval from the General Education Council).

Selected themes/tracks could be formed from existing general education courses.

The FKL already has some 'purposeful pathways;' GEC could expand upon these.

GEC must consider the logistics of multiple themes and create a viable process.

There was discussion regarding "gatekeeper" courses