# General Education Committee Minutes, 9/5/18

## Call to Order / Roll Call

Members present: L. Ametsbichler, R. Fanning, K. Graham, L. Metcalf, D. Parson, G. Peters, J. Randall, A. Sala, S. Schwarze

Members Absent/Excused: B. Clough, B. Durnell, N. Lindsay P. Muench, J. Wilkinson, J. Willmus  
  
Ex-Officio present: B. French, M. Opitz

The minutes from the 4/25/18 meeting were approved.

Communication items:

* Members introduced themselves and new members were welcomed.
* The rolling review of Historical Studies (H), Democracy and Citizenship (Y), and Cultural and International Diversity (X) was put on hold. There may be a few new courses proposed for general education submitted for review. The administration asked Faculty Senate to work on a UM Core Pilot. Rather than establish a Taskforce, ECOS charged the General Education Committee with this task. The pilot should be an option for incoming students fall 2019. So the Committee should identify several models for a feedback discussion this October.   
    
  Chair Randall used the notes from the summer meeting to create a document that contains various resource links. He asked members to become familiar with the information and think about the homework questions (appended). He hopes the committee can build upon work that has already been done and maintain components of the current general education program that are successful. He met with Interim Provost Paul Kirgis, who provided some guiding principles for developing the pilot. It should be simpler, have fewer credits, and have an interdisciplinary component. It should work well with transfer students, so the committee should consider the MUS Core and the Interstate Passport and incorporate UM Ways and the Communities of Excellence. It should also focus on critical skills for students to be successful in life.   
    
  Originally the GLI was intended to be an alternative model for general education. The GLI seminars could possibly be used for the interdisciplinary component. The Committee will need to define interdisciplinary for the pilot. This has been a challenge for the GLI. Does it mean two disciplines or team taught? Interdisciplinary courses can create complications in scheduling, awarding credit, and funding.   
    
  A possible focus for the pilot would be to target the undeclared students with an introductory experience, possibly a large lecture and then breakout in smaller groups by academic interest. It could possibly begin with the freshmen seminar and then provide students with thematic paths to fulfill Gen Ed.

The Committee would like to meet with Provost Harbor to understand the goal of the pilot and whether the Committee should consider budget restrictions. [Provost Harbor is scheduled for the October 3rd meeting. This is too long to wait for guidance given the tight timeline. The Committee should draft questions for the Provost to address in writing as soon as possible. ]   
  
There are many issues that make changing general education challenging. These include logistics of transfer students, students that change majors, and transitioning requirements. Missoula College should have the same options as students transferring from other MUS campuses. Our current funding model’s focus on student credit hours and our scarce resources are a concern. Faculty need incentives to develop new courses. Many are overwhelmed with the current climate on campus. There is tension between unique programs vs. accommodating programs and curated plans verses student created plans.  
  
Should the Committee consider how the loss of faculty will impact general education? Should some of the requirements be met through online courses? Or experiential learning tied to the Communities of Excellence? Should the pilot include pedagogy /best practiced known to help students connect to other students and therefore help with retention?   
  
For the pilot to work it needs to be in place by January, so the timeline is extremely sort. Advisors will need to be up to speed. The components should be clearly defined and developed by March.

* Camie will send the preliminary analysis of general education enrollment data. Members should consider what else could be analyzed with the data that would be helpful.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

## Homework Document

**Charge to GE Committee from ECOS**

Develop a pilot program for UM Core that can be offered as an alternative to our existing GE to incoming freshman for Fall 2019.

*What should the pilot look like?*

• Simpler and fewer credits than our current GE

• Must have an interdisciplinary component

• Should work well with transfer credit programs (MUSCore and InterstatePassport)

• Incorporate “UM Ways” and “Communities of Excellence” developed by UPC

• Skills -focused rather than content based:

problem solving, adaptability, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and ethical reasoning

*My thoughts*:

• Shouldn’t sacrifice all that is most distinctive/successful in our current GE (Writing, Language, Ethics…)

• We need not reinvent the wheel; there are existing UM, MUS, and regional models to consider, as well as prior UM conversations (GE Forums; Strategy for Distinction; UPC, etc.) to inform our pilot

Our GE Committee Timeline

• September: consider existing models that may be adapted or modified for pilot

• October: present our best ideas to ASCRC and ECOS for discussion and feedback

• November: submit pilot proposal to the Senate

**HOMEWORK ☺**

**Familiarize yourself with the following**

**UM CORE**

<http://www.umt.edu/planningassessmentcontinuum/Planning/UPCProcess/mission-identity.php>

\*Our pilot program doesn’t have to satisfy every area of the UM Core, but it shouldn’t be at odds with it.

UM Ways (I think administration has moved away from “Montana” in title, but the “ways” remain)

Ways of Communicating

Ways of Creating

Ways of Knowing

Ways of Living

Communities of Excellence

Artistic Expression & Communication

Business & Entrepreneurship

Environment & Sustainability

Health & Human Development

Justice, Policy & Public Service

Science & Technology

**GE/Core Systems that we might consider adopting, modifying (cross-pollinating?) for the pilot:**

MUS Transfer Core (Montana University System)

<https://mus.edu/Transfer/MUScore.asp>

Our Current GenEd Requirements

<http://catalog.umt.edu/academics/general-education-requirements/>

Interstate Passport (WICHE: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education)

<https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu>

Strategic Vision 1.1: Reinvent the Heart of the Curriculum

<http://www.umt.edu/strategy/strategic-vision/opportunities/reinvent.php>

GLI (Global Leadership Initiative)

<https://www.umt.edu/gli/about/default.php>

Open Educational Resources (open source textbook and instructional resources)

<https://libguides.lib.umt.edu/oer/resources>

\*Not a GE system per se, but we discussed the possibility that UM Core Pilot might attract students to the university and the program if we required courses to use open source materials rather than commercial textbooks

**Questions to consider when evaluating these systems for adoption/modification**:

1) Which models best serve particular student populations? (It’s not going to be the best fit for all, so we’ll have to shoot for a middle ground). For instance:

Transfer Students

Bachelor of Arts/Liberal Arts

Professional School Students

Disadvantaged students

Dual Enrollment students

Non-traditional students

Missoula College students

2) Which of our current GE perspectives would suffer or are absent in these individual models?

3) What new competencies/skills are covered that aren’t in our current GE?

4) How much *new* work is involved in adopting/modifying the system?

5) How much continued effort on the part of faculty/staff/administration is required to maintain? (course approval, review, assessment, etc.)

6. Think of how models would play out in a four-year plan. How can we expand the timeline?