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November 2019 General Studies Council Minutes

University of Nebraska at Kearney General Studies Council

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**General Studies Council Minutes
November 7, 2019 – 3:30 p.m.
Warner Hall, Warner Conference Room
*** Approved via email *****

Present: Julie Agard, Sylvia Asay, Joan Blauwkamp, Debbie Bridges, Greg Brown, Joel Cardenas, Scott Darveau, Jeremy Dillon, Mark Ellis, Aaron Estes, Tim Farrell, Michelle Fleig-Palmer, Beth Hinga, Kristi Milks, Erin Pearson, Doug Tillman, Rebecca Umland, Jeff Wells, Ron Wirtz

Absent: Sri Seshadri

Guests: Dr. Bicak

I. Call to Order:

Debbie Bridges called the meeting to order.

1. Approve Agenda:

Brown/Darveau moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

2. Minutes from the October 3, 2019 meeting were approved via email.

II. Old Business (Open Items):

1. Course Proposals (Review for Final Approval):

PHYS 203: General Physics for Allied Health (Department: Physics and Astronomy: Instructor: Jeremy Armstrong):

Darveau/Wirtz moved to approve the above course and send to Dr. Bicak for final approval. Motion carried.

III. New Business:

1. Course Proposals (New): Nothing submitted:

Moratorium on new course proposals continued for 2019-20 AY (approved at 9/5/19 GSC meeting). If a department feels a new course is needed then justification will need to be provided as to why it needs to be included in the current General Studies Program.

2. Assessment and GS Program:

a. Results from Fall 2019 Syllabi Review:

Bridges asked each review team to give a brief summary on the syllabi they reviewed. Groups saw a variety of mistakes and omissions. Each team reported the syllabi lacked linking the course assignments/projects to the course learning outcomes. A few of the syllabi didn't have the correct catalog course descriptions or didn't have the same course title for all courses. Feedback will be sent to the faculty.

4. Review/Revision of General Studies Program:

a. Reports/Updates from Working Groups:

Group 2 – Dillon reported the group was struggling with a strategy to work on learning outcomes without an existing program. They also looked at ACE from UNL and compared it to UNK's current learning outcomes. The group also came up with a list of what we want UNK graduates to look like.

Group 3 – Darveau reported their group discussed a great deal about what we want UNK graduates to get from the GSP. Grasp on skills, good start on cultural/social/informed citizen areas. He used a skeleton analogy – we have a skeleton and muscles, but not teeth and hair. He stated they need to work on the bulk of the middle.

Group 1 – Blauwkamp reported their group has a lot consensus on what the skills and knowledge should be. The group is at the point where they are drilling down on what the learning outcomes should be. Right now they have 8-9 outcomes.

Dean Hinga sent Bridges an email from the Equity Access and Diversity Advisory Council making it known that they do not want for GSC to lose the opportunity to incorporate diversity/inclusion into GS. Includes information from Kaleidoscope Group climate survey. Bridges is sharing it with the GSC at the EAD Advisory Board's request.

3. General Studies Council Governance Document (College Merger and Updating GSC Governance Document):

The Council began discussing page 3 of the Governance Document.

No changes made to the student appeal process. Student appeal process is: 1. Transcript evaluation in the registrar's office. 2. Referral to GSC Chair. 3. Student can request appeal to be heard by entire GSC. 4. Student can request appeal to Dr. Bick.

What is the approval process that should be followed for course approvals? Darveau asked why under Item D that capstones and portals are available right away when all other courses had to wait until the following fall. Bridges' answer is that the course number is always within the catalog as a GSC course. Darveau asked if that means if a course is approved for GS this semester, will not be available until fall of next academic year instead of in the spring. Pearson explained that new courses go through a different process than portals and capstones (that have an approved GS catalog number), and the approval appears in the catalog in the new academic year. GS requirements are tagged to specific catalogs, so students can only get GS credit after it's been approved. A student who took a course before it was approved for GS credit would not be awarded GS credit. However, a student may appeal and have consideration on a case-by-case basis. Ultimately, no changes were made.

Bridges reminded the Council that there was much discussion during the forums in spring 2019 regarding structural and fundamental changes to GS curriculum. This governance document update is a chance to address this issue.

The Council had a considerable amount of discussion regarding fundamental and structural changes. Blauwkamp noted that while the description of what a "structural" change is vague, the approval process is essentially the same as approval of a new course, then goes on to college Ed Policy Committees. For a fundamental change, the process is much more involved, and it makes that more

difficult for actually getting changes made in a reasonable amount of time. In particular, the 60 day comment period after each change makes it difficult to make changes in a single academic year. Blauwkamp stated it would be beneficial to have a different process for small changes vs. large changes.

The group agreed that there needs to be a differentiation between small (structural) changes and large (fundamental) changes. Need to quantify what is meant by a small change vs a large change.

Perhaps the way the document defines structural versus fundamental change is problematic. Cutting a large portion of the credits out of the GS curriculum seems like it should trigger a fundamental change. However, the proposal last year fit the current definition of a structural change in that no distribution areas were eliminated.

Blauwkamp stated that adjusting the language of a learning outcome, goals and current content would be considered a small change. A big change would be anything that affects structure of the program in terms of how many hours students have to complete and in what areas.

Bridges stated that since we are moving towards a 30 credit hour GS program and 30 hours is the floor mandated by HLC, we need to have greater review for cutting courses. Blauwkamp suggested maybe we move from three types of approvals to two. One would be a minor change (expedited) process for one course up or down, then full process for larger changes – changing the structure of the program more or less than 3 hours, changing the wording of goals, or changing learning outcomes.

Darveau suggested that changes to credit hours that don't change categories or not to exceed 10% since the last campus vote/approval. Asay stated that not all situations are foreseeable and if there is a discrepancy on which change it is then maybe the Council should review and vote to determine in those gray areas.

The Council suggested calling changes minor modifications and major revisions.

Minor modifications would consist of adjusting the wording of goals and outcomes, less than or equal to 3 credit hours from the last campus approved program (approved via vote).

Major revisions would include any change in credit hours greater than 3 credit hours from the last campus approved program (approved via vote), program level outcomes additions or deletions, and/or adding or deleting categories.

The approval process for minor modifications: Approved by GSC, sent to both campus and Ed Policy / Academic Affairs committees for comment; require a formal response Ed Policy / Academic Affairs committees that they received proposal with comments due within 21 days, overlapping with a two week campus comment period.

Bridges asked the Council to study and think about the major revision process and the amount of time it needs to go out to campus and who should be required to give feedback and what voting should be required. Bring thoughts and comments to the next GS meeting.

IV. Other:

Dr. Bicak addressed the Council and indicated he expects to have a sense of what the plan might look like by December 20. In addition, he expects to have a coordinated plan for implementation and deployment by May 8.

Brown asked the GSC members to attend Faculty Senate tonight to address the Senate regarding the History Department's vote of no confidence. Blauwkamp noted the frustration on campus with the length

of time this revision is taking is not limited to the History faculty. Darveau and Brown argued that this move is ill advised and the History faculty are ill informed.

V. Adjournment:

Farrell/Asay moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 3:30 p.m., Warner Conference Room.