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University of Nebraska at Kearney General Studies Council

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**GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL
Meeting of December 5, 2002
Minutes**

PRESENT:

Faculty: Peg Camp, Valerie Cisler, Sandy Cook-Fong, Randall Heckman, Allan Jenkins, Sonja Kropp, Larry Kuskie, John Lillis, Marta Moorman, Chuck Peek, Janet Steele, Kenya Taylor, Ed Walker
Students: Doug Carroll, Chip Sheild
Ex officio members: Jeanne Cutler, Mary Daake, Kristi Milks, Ken Nikels, Kim Schipporeit, and Bill Wozniak

Wozniak called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Warner Conference Room.

A. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2002

Taylor (Cook-Fong) moved for approval of the November 7 minutes. Motion passed.

B. CD/WI COURSE SUBMISSIONS

1. Writing Intensive:

- a. ITEC 499, Independent Study and Research (Larson)
- b. ENG 425, Children's Literature (Honeyman)
- c. BSED 295, Business Communication (Houlden)
- d. SPAN 304, Adv Conversation and Composition (Eduardo Gonzalez)

Wozniak reported that the 4 courses above were reviewed and approved by the WI subcommittee. *Peek (Heckman) moved for approval of items a through d as WI courses. Jenkins pointed out a problem with the bureaucratic process concerning the re-approval of courses such as BSED 295, which is regularly offered only as a WI course. The issue was discussed later in the meeting. The motion passed.*

Wozniak said that there was an additional item that had arrived after the subcommittee meeting, consideration of

- e. PTE 499, Readings in Education as a WI course.

There was some initial confusion concerning which prefix was the correct one, PTE, TE, or ELED. There was also uncertainty whether the course had already been discontinued in the recent TE curriculum renewal. Walker explained the circumstances necessitating the approval of the course and predicted that the course would be phased out and replaced once the renewal was phased in. *Cook-Fong (Steele) moved for approval. The motion passed.*

2. Cultural Diversity:

- a. none

C.

D. OLD BUSINESS

1. WI Cleanup:

- . FCSC 481 - Cross-Cultural Family Patterns (Sylvia Asay)

Wozniak said that the above course was revised by Dr. Asay and was reviewed and approved by the WI subcommittee. *Kuskie (Lillis) moved for approval of the above course as WI (both the tour and campus versions). The motion passed.*

2. CD Cleanup:

- . none

E.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Forms for CD, WI, and Student Appeals

Wozniak asked that the Council review and provide feedback on drafts of forms for use in submitting WI and CD course proposals. For the CD Application form, it was suggested that it be clear that new course proposals have received approval before applying for CD status. For the WI Application form, Council members commented on the font size (mostly the chronologically-challenged members), the need to specify all of the criteria for WI, and the need to remind Chairs of the process. Wozniak suggested that reminders of the process in the form-seemingly obvious to some Chairs-may be unknown by other Chairs. Wozniak also suggested that a reminder to the Chairs that the department faculty should review course proposals may also be needed. The form for student appeals was also discussed. It was noted that a signature lines for the advisor and the department chair may encourage the student to visit with their academic advisor when there is difficulty in meeting requirements for graduation. Wozniak suggested that making this form readily available may help the student to find the right help from the right person. Wozniak will provide revised form to the Council for further review before publicizing them.

2. Reconsideration of Policy Concerning Department Chair Clerical Errors

Wozniak offered the following proposal:

"If a course had been approved for WI status and had been offered by an approved WI instructor, but the Department Chair or Program Director did not list the course as WI in the schedule for a particular semester, then the Chair of the Department or Program may request to have the course designated as WI retroactively. (All approvals were obtained before the beginning of the course in question.) The request must be approved by the General Studies Council before the changes can be recorded at the Registrar's Office."

A lively discussion followed. Wozniak described two pending appeals from Airway Science (BASM 363) and Women's Studies (WSTD 220) wherein a bookkeeping error caused WI courses to be listed as non-WI. The current policy is to deal with errors on a

case-by-case basis rather than correct the entire roster. Schipporeit described the difficulty in getting the computer to change a course to WI after a semester has begun. Because the registration database is connected to financial aid and other databases, changing an entire class is a rather lengthy and elaborate process. Schipporeit also described the numerous notifications concerning WI and CD courses that the department and program chairs receive. Currently, students have a note inserted into their record indicating that a course not actually listed in the computer as WI will count in the WI total. However, that information may be known by neither the advisor, the department chair, nor the student, unless specifically requested. The value of on-line records would necessitate doing the elaborate change to the computer database. The consensus was that giving the students WI credit was clearly deserved, however, the means to record the credit, notify the student, the advisor, and the chair was yet to-be-determined. Jenkins asked if this was a chronic problem for some departments. Schipporeit said that it happens at least once a semester. Wozniak had observed no repeat offenders--at least so far. There was some discussion about Chairs who have difficulty doing this job. Given the number of reminders, the simplicity of the task, the large consequences of not doing it well, the other demands placed in Chairs and Directors, and the number of brand-new Chair, the discussants were either appalled or understanding, sometimes both. Wozniak suggested that the Chair or Director should state their case to the General Studies Council and assume responsibility for providing a list of students effected and responsibility for informing the students and their advisors of the clerical error. Other means of handling the correction were discussed. *Peek (Jenkins) moved to postpone until the next meeting. The motion passed.*

3. Reconsideration of WI course and Instructor Approval Process

Wozniak offered the following proposal:

"To this date, the Writing Intensive Course designation has been granted for specific courses taught by specific faculty. This proposal is to separate WI course approval from WI faculty approval. Once a course has been approved as WI, a Department Chair may assign any WI-approved-faculty member from their department to teach that course, as long as they agree to follow the WI course guidelines. If the course will be taught by that faculty member for the first time, the Director of General Studies should be notified and provided a syllabus for the course." Jenkins had pointed out that some courses are offered only as WI courses but by different adjunct or regular instructors. Yet, if there is a new WI course-WI instructor connection, the entire course syllabus needs to be reviewed. The gist of the motion is to have a list of approved WI courses, a list of approved WI instructors, and allow the Department Chairs to make the assignments. If it is a first time offering of that course by that instructor, the Director should merely receive a copy of the syllabus. Moorman asked if this was an infringement of academic freedom. Wozniak said that the Council only looks at the means to achieve the WI criteria in the syllabus. Jenkins also stated that it is the professional responsibility of the department to ensure that the course actually meets those criteria when it is offered, we are simply trying to simplify the bureaucratic process. Daake expressed concern over courses listed as being taught by

STAFF, which later becomes WI when an instructor is assigned. The reverse is also true, that is, a course is initially thought to be WI, but turns out otherwise. The proposal may not address that issue directly because no course would be listed as WI without an instructor. That problem may not be resolvable. The default of non-WI listing would remain, but the means to change a course to WI would be easier.

Heckman (Peek) moved approval. Motion passed with one dissenting vote.

4. Information concerning web page redesign

This item was postponed until the next meeting. Wozniak will present some ideas concerning the design of the Web page for the General Studies program.

G. MISCELLANEOUS

H. NEXT MEETING

The next General Studies Council meeting will be February 6, 2003 at 3:30 p.m., at a location to be announced.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.