General Education Program Committee
Minutes
25 April 2005

Present: Chuck Booth, Hope Cook, Richard Jones-Bamman, Maggie Martin, David Pellegrini, Delar Singh, Nancy Salter (ex-officio)

1. Minutes
   Minutes of the 18 April 2005 meeting were moved and approved (Jones-Bamman, Booth).

Old Business

2. Faculty Survey
   The survey is open until midnight tonight. Preliminary results indicate about half the respondents are supportive of adding credits in each of the areas and only a small proportion (10% or less) in favor of not adding any additional credits. Each of the areas was reviewed in detail.

   Regarding a health requirement, the Committee recognized strong support for a health and wellness requirement, yet dissatisfaction with the current activities requirements. The Committee suggested a compromise of a two-credit health and wellness requirement that included active learning in only those areas demonstrated by research to promote specific wellness benefits, such as enhanced cardiovascular benefits, and the like. This would be a Tier I category and students would be required to complete the requirement within the first 30 credits of study.

   In regard to Modern Language, the Committee supports the value of foreign language skills. Members indicated a need to have more information and an informed discussion about the options, including increasing an entrance requirement, testing for competency, international study/travel and requiring all students to study at the novice-high level. We would like to better understand what students already know and their ability to speak non-English languages. The Committee recommends conducting research in the use of WEBCAPE or similar tests and continuing our dialogue with the Modern Language faculty.

   A variety of options were discussed regarding information technologies. One option would be the inclusion of a Tier I Technological Literacy course that presented foundational concepts. Students would be permitted to test out of this. Another was the development of a Tier II technologies category that would be broadly inclusive of multiple technologies and populated by courses from multiple disciplines. David Pellegrini will draft these curriculum proposals.

3. Proposal Development
   a) Meeting with History
      A report on the meeting with the faculty of the History, Political Science and Philosophy Department was made. Faculty discussed the structure of the categories and the historical perspectives categories. Faculty discussed with Committee members, specific diversity mandates and approaches to insure that the GER is not dominated by US, European, Western, or dominant cultural categories.
   b) New text and approaches
      The latest proposal draft still needs editing and revising. Language in Tier II categories should be introduced by a purpose statement and learning outcomes reflect higher level skills.

4. Referendum and Forum
   A faculty forum will be held at the time the second draft proposal is presented. Wednesday, May 4 from 3-4 was the best date and time for members present.

New Business

5. NEASC Fifth-Year Report
   Tabled.

6. Next meeting: May 2, 2005
Next Meeting: The next GEPC meeting will be Monday, 2 May at 2:00 p.m. in Webb 258.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Martin, Chair