General Education Program Committee
Minutes
10 November 2004

Present: Chuck Booth, Hope Cook, Novagrami George, Richard Jones-Bamman, Maggie Martin, Carol Williams, Bob Wolf.

1. Review and acceptance of draft minutes of 3 November 2004 (Jones-Bamman, Booth).

Old Business

2. Vote on GER Models
   The Senate Organization Committee conducted a vote on the proposed general education models. The tiered curriculum structure recommended by the GEPC was the clear winner. The vote was 84 for the tiered model, 44 for a distribution model, and 1 vote for “neither”.

3. Forums and Working Groups
   a) Reports on recent meetings
      Forum November 3
      The November 3 faculty forum was well attended with about 25 faculty present. Colleagues posed questions about the advantages / disadvantages of the tiered model, the anticipated timeline and plan for implementation for a new ger, the role of working groups, and University resources to support change. Questions were raised regarding how to prevent the growth of the ger and consequent loss of focus. Participants noted that the Committee may need to monitor the ger and remove courses not routinely offered.

      Social Sciences Meeting
      The Social Science Working Group met, refined its learning objectives, and proposed a curriculum. The group proposed a tiered system in which the first tier provided an introduction to disciplines and the second tier, thematic, interdisciplinary courses that are linked to the discipline chosen in the first tier. The second tier of classes would combine the perspectives of at least three social science disciplines and students will be required to have completed an introductory course in one of the disciplines/areas.

      Arts and Humanities
      The Arts and Humanities Working Group met and developed a draft statement of purpose and began discussing student learning objectives. Committee members inquired whether this area also could employ a tiered approach, with arts and humanities disciplinary courses constituting Tier I and integrated courses composing a Tier II. Members noted the strength of our current arts general education curriculum and stated that this is a unique strength of Eastern’s curriculum.

   b) Next meetings:
      Ethics November 10
      Culture November 10
      Natural Sciences November 11
      Communication November 16

      December 1 Forum
      The Committee discussed the format of the December 1 forum.

4. Student Engagement
   The Committee discussed various elements of the November 17 GER TV show. Carol Williams reported on the assistance provided by University Relations in designing and producing posters for the event. David Pellegrini and a design student working with him, discussed plans for a design
for tee shirts which will be given to student participants. Novagrami George reported on the number of students recruited to participate in the studio audience and arrangements with residential life staff to host events and programs to promote the show. Members brainstormed potential questions to be posed to the audience. David Pellegrini and Sharon Butler will host the show, Novagrami will read community audience comments, and other members of the Committee will staff computers, telephones and production booth.

5. Curriculum Committee
   Bob Wolf reported that the Curriculum Committee accepted the GEPC proposal to coordinate the approval and reporting of courses seeking both course and ger approval.

New Business

6. Spring Faculty Meeting
   Committee members discussed how to employ the period immediately following the spring semester University meeting to further the GEPC mission. The Committee discussed inviting schools with tiered models to speak and discussed hosting an expert in general education or general education reform. It was determined that the later was preferred. Maggie will seek resources to secure the services of a consultant to present to the faculty.

7. Proposal to Accept Experimental Courses into the GER
   Chuck Booth proposed that the Committee permit the limited acceptance of courses for a one year period. This would allow courses to be tried and “fast-tracked” for general education inclusion. This process would be analogous to the Curriculum Committee’s approval of courses to be offered on a one-time only basis. Using such a process would allow faculty to test new course concepts and allow a preliminary evaluation of the course prior to submitting the course for full GEPC approval. It was suggested that a designated course number could be introduced for experimental courses with the designation G added to indicate a provisional general education course. The course’s ger status would be identified and quickly posted on E-web permitting quick access for student registration. This process would assist faculty in developing new courses and be particularly useful for visiting faculty and those with one-year appointments. The proposal was moved and seconded (Booth, Martin) and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: The next GEPC meeting will be Wednesday, November 17, at 9:30 am in Webb 258.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Martin, Chair