

Youngstown State University  
**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
Meeting: April 17, 2012, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, Tod Hall

Present: Porter (chair), O'Mansky, Tomhave, Garr, Crist, Beebe, Felix, Curnalia, Stringer, Ball, Baker, Shah-Rowlands, Reday, Lowry

1. Joseph Palardy, who will take over as General Education Coordinator next academic year, was introduced to the committee.
2. Minutes for the meeting of March 27<sup>th</sup> were approved with modifications
3. HMEC 4877, *Research Capstone*, was approved as a capstone course in the general education model
4. The committee voted to recommend to the Charter and Bylaws committee that the Academic Senate charter be modified to reflect the new knowledge domains and add the Assessment Director and an academic advisor as voting members of the committee (see edited version of Bylaw 7 below).
5. The committee then considered the following policy for upper-division courses in the General Education model:

“One purpose of the General Education Requirements is to ensure that students are exposed to a diverse range of disciplines. Therefore, in general, upper-division courses will not count towards the general education requirements. However, the committee is cognizant that exceptions may need to be made in some cases. For example due to accreditation requirements and situations in which the number of hours required for a program become excessive or other extraordinary circumstances.”

Criticisms of the policy included:

- Allowing upper-division courses in the general education model increases the diversity of courses students can pick from, this is especially important for students in programs that do not have room for many hours of electives
- Requirements to assess general education courses should be an effective way to limit the number of courses departments submit for inclusion in the general education model
- Requiring that upper-division courses be subject to special scrutiny is arbitrary

Arguments in support of the policy included:

- The rule provides the committee with additional language to keep the list of general education courses from becoming excessively large
- Additional courses in general education make it more difficult to assess the general education program
- Since students only need to take two courses in each domain, it should be easy to fulfill the general education requirement with lower division courses
- Courses at the 3700-level and above are typically designed for majors and are inherently inconsistent with the requirement that general education courses provide students with an introduction to a discipline or major field in the discipline

The committee voted to endorse the proposal for senate approval by a vote of 7 to 4. The next topic of discussion is whether upper-division courses currently in the general education model should be grandfathered into the model. Arguments for “grandfathering” the current upper-division courses were that curriculum sheets identifying the courses as being in general education had already been distributed; it was also noted that there might be greater opposition to the upper division proposal if it was unclear whether the courses would count towards general education. The primary argument against “grandfathering” the courses was that the courses in the model should go through a review process similar to newly submitted general education courses. The committee voted against a “grandfather” exception for the courses currently in the model by a 5 to 7 margin. If the upper-division motion is passed, upper-division courses currently in the model will be reviewed by the committee.

Submitted by Tod Porter

## **BYLAW 7 ELECTED/APPOINTED CHARTERED COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. The General Education Committee**

(a) The membership of the General Education Committee shall consist of: six faculty members with one elected by faculty from each undergraduate college; one representative from each of the model categories (essential skills, natural science, ~~artistic and literary perspectives, societies and institutions, personal and social responsibilities~~ arts and humanities, social science, and social and personal awareness) and a representative ~~academic advisors~~ to be appointed by the Provost and subject to ratification by the Senate Executive Committee; two students appointed by Student Government; and the Coordinator of General Education. The Coordinator of General Education shall chair this committee.

(b) The term of service for the six college representatives shall be for three years, with two members selected each year. ~~Initially, members are to be selected on a staggered term basis.~~ The term for those appointed by the Provost shall be three years. ~~Initially, the appointment will be on a staggered basis with a subsequent cycle of two the first year, two the second year, and one in the third year.~~ Elected and appointed members may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The two students will be appointed each year by Student Government.

(c) The General Education Committee shall review and recommend policies regarding general education to the Academic Senate. The General Education Committee shall review and approve for general education certification course proposals designed to satisfy the general education goals. It shall also develop course implementation policy, criteria, and procedures and present same to the Senate for approval.

(d) The General Education Committee shall develop assessment plans and procedures for ~~the~~ general education ~~program courses~~ to determine ~~if it is they are~~ meeting the defined goals.

(e) The General Education Committee shall place the approved courses into the GER program and serve as an advisory body to the Coordinator of General Education.