

# **Annual Report**

**2003-2004**

**General Education Committee  
Oakland University**

**submitted by Dagmar Cronn, Chair  
June 2003**

# **General Education Committee Executive Summary of Annual Report 2003-2004**

**Submitted by Dagmar Cronn, Chair**

## **Membership:**

Faculty: Dagmar Cronn, Chair (Chemistry), Gene Fliedner (Business Administration), Tomas Giberson (Education), Stacey Hahn (Modern Languages) (fall)/Andrea Eis (Art and Art History) (winter sabbatical replacement), Madelyn Kissock (Linguistics), Stafford Rourke (Health Sciences)

Ex-officio: Susan Awbrey (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education), Carole Crum (September & October)/Cheryl Sullivan (November & December)/Carmiene Etienne (winter semester) (Professional Advisors' Group), Steve Shablin (Registrar)

Student Representative: None appointed

**Meetings:** The General Education Committee (GEC) met 8 times during the Fall 2003 semester and 9 times during the Winter 2004 semester, 6 times more than the previous year due to a larger work load. The committee corresponded via email regularly and was, occasionally, able to complete its business without face-to-face meetings.

## **New Courses & Course Revisions:**

New Courses As in the previous year, the GEC actively discouraged new course proposals and encouraged departments and faculty to wait until new courses can be reviewed under the new program.

### Existing Course Revision Reviews

PHY 106 re-approved after review of a changed course syllabus that incorporated some aspects of PHY 105

PHY 105 was removed from the OU catalog by the Department of Physics at the same time

## **Petitions of Exception and Course Transfer Reviews for the General Education**

**Requirements:** The GEC reviewed 33 petitions of exception for general education requirements and conducted 57 transfer equivalency reviews on behalf of 74 students, approving 29, and 34, respectively. There were 4 petitions denied and 22 equivalency determinations denied (another was withdrawn).

A new policy was developed for reviewing transfer of courses to Oakland University to fulfill general education requirements.

**Triennial Reviews:** During the 2003-2004 academic year committee members reviewed courses in the areas of Arts and Literature for retention on the list of approved general education courses. The reviews were conducted under the existing program, not the new program adopted by the Senate at the end of the 2003-2004 academic year.

## **Problems and Concerns:**

Communication. In concluding the Triennial Review the GEC communicated to the departments and the faculty the following requirements:

1. Every syllabus must include a statement to the effect that the course satisfies the appropriate General Education area requirement.
2. Explicit course objectives must be stated on the syllabus under separate heading.
3. Cross-collaboration between instructors should exist to ensure a degree of standardization in each course section offered.
4. That the department oversee every general education course to ensure that courses continue to meet the general education criteria.

Assessment. The Committee worked in conjunction with the General Education Task Force II and others to articulate a new assessment approach, which was adopted as part of the new program in general education by the Senate. GEC members also studied mechanisms for departments to assess and report their assessment activities for general education courses.

#### **Development of new General Education Program**

- GEC worked on aspects of the document for the new program with which the Committee will be most involved in the implementation phase, including process for review of courses for approval, imbedded assessment, etc.
- The Committee made specific recommendations concerning the proposal as requested by the Senate.
- The Committee developed documents for use in review and approval of courses under the new program

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Student Representative: None appointed

GEC petitioned the Senate to enlarge the size of the voting membership of GEC to deal with the continued expectation of a larger set of responsibilities. Three new members were appointed starting next year.

**Meetings**

The General Education Committee (GEC) met 8 times during the Fall semester; 9 meetings were scheduled during the Winter 2004 semester. There were 7 more meetings than the previous year due to the increased workload of the Committee. The minutes of scheduled meetings are presented in an appendix to this document. (See Appendix A.)

The GEC work is outlined in its charge from the Senate:

To recommend to the Senate general policies and requirements for undergraduate education, to function as a curriculum committee for a university-wide program of general education, and to respond to petitions of exception relating to the program, in accordance with Senate authorizations, to communicate through regular exchange the minutes with the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, and to provide information on petitions of exception regarding General Education to the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction for preparation of a university annual report on petitions of exception.

### **New Courses & Course Revisions**

PHY 106 re-approved after review of a changed course syllabus that incorporated some aspects of PHY 105

PHY 105 was removed from the OU catalog by the Department of Physics at the same time.

Changes were made by the Department of Physics to incorporate needed course content into an earth sciences course that would meet Michigan Department of Education standards for elementary education students for a science endorsement.

### **Petitions of Exception for the General Education Requirements**

Between May 1, 2003 and May 12, 2004 the GEC reviewed submissions on behalf of 74 students. There were 33 petitions of exception from general education requirements, of which 28 were approved and 4 denied. There were 57 transfer course reviews, of which 34 were approved, 22 denied and 1 withdrawn.

<u>Approved</u>	<u>Petitions</u>	<u>Course Transfer</u>
<u>Equivalencies</u>		
advisor error	6	
1 credit waived	12	
“One-time” circumstances	11	
Transfer courses		<u>34</u>
TOTAL	<u>29</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Denied</u>		
petition sought more than 1 credit waiver	3	
“One-time” circumstance	1	
course not acceptable	<u>—</u>	<u>22</u>
Withdrawn		<u>1</u>
TOTAL	4	<u>23</u>

A new policy was developed for reviewing transfer of courses to Oakland University to fulfill general education requirements. See Appendix B and minutes of March 8.

The chair has been given authority to act on behalf of the GEC to approve Petitions of Exception due to advisor error. This adds to the previous authority to approve petitions for 31 instead of 32 credits to meet the general education requirements.

### **Triennial Review**

During the 2003-2004 committee members reviewed for retention on the list of approved courses those in the areas of Arts and Literature. The reviews were conducted under the existing program, not the new program adopted by the Senate at the end of the the 2003-2004 academic year. Students may continue to graduate under the existing general education requirements for six years following the fall 2005 catalog that will contain the new program requirements.

Results of the review were communicated to the chairs of the appropriate departments. For the first time, reviews were sent directly from the Committee to each individual faculty member involved in the teaching of these courses. For the review, the faculty teaching each course were asked to provide syllabi and course materials and to respond to an “instructor’s questionnaire” discussing how the course, for example “provides an understanding of how people express through the arts their experience with the world.” The department chair was asked to complete a statistical questionnaire about the frequency of offering and enrollments. Copies of the guidelines and questionnaires are appended to this document. (See Attachments to October 31 minutes and Appendix C.)

The GEC again recognized a number of situations that were common for all courses under review this year. In concluding the Triennial Review the GEC communicated to the departments and the faculty the following requirements:

1. Every syllabus must include a statement to the effect that the course satisfies the appropriate General Education area requirement.
2. Explicit course objectives must be stated on the syllabus under separate heading.
3. Cross-collaboration between instructors should exist to ensure a degree of standardization in each course section offered.
4. That the department oversee every general education course to ensure that courses continue to meet the general education criteria.

Assessment. The Committee worked in conjunction with the General Education Task Force II and others to articulate a new assessment approach, which was adopted as part of the new program in general education by the Senate. GEC members also studied mechanisms for departments to assess and report their assessment activities for general education courses. The Chair of GEC was added as a member of the Executive Assessment Committee.

The results of the triennial review by field category are as follows:

### Arts

Retain: AH 100, AH 101, AH 104, CIN 150,  
Decision pending awaiting additional information: MUS 100, MUS 236, MUS  
338, THA 100, THA 301, THA 302, DAN 173, DAN 175  
Potential Removal: MUS 200, MUS 320

### Literature

Retain: ENG 100, ENG 105, ENG 111, ENG 112, ENG 234, ENG 241, ENG  
303, ENG 305, ENG 306, ENG 312, LIT 100, LIT 181, LIT 182  
Remove: None  
Probation: None

## **Problems and Concerns**

Assessment. The assessment of student outcomes for General Education has been a problematic issue for a number of years. Given the current articulation of the purposes and goals of assessment and the renovation of General Education itself the GEC committee did not conduct any assessment of general education. We did involve ourselves in development of the new assessment plan. Further, we looked into some specific ways to implement imbedded assessment for the general education program.

New Courses. The GEC did not encourage submission of new course proposals while the new program was under active development and adoption. However, a subcommittee of the GEC reviewed and recommended funding for those proposals submitted for development of new or revised courses. This was the second round of proposals for which a GEC subcommittee supplied the reviewers.

GEC asked for and received a report from OIRA showing how many sections per semester are offered of each GE course with enrollments for the past three years. The GEC will henceforth obtain this information from OIRA instead of asking for it from each department separately.

The Professional Advisor's Group representative to GEC fostered an exchange about what is needed on Petitions of Exception. A set of specific recommendations was developed (see attachment to February 9 minutes).

## **Development of new General Education Program**

- GEC worked on aspects of the document for the new program with which the Committee will be most involved in the implementation phase, including process for review of courses for approval, imbedded assessment, etc.
- The Committee made specific recommendations concerning the proposal as requested by the Senate. (See Attachment to January 12, 2004 minutes.)
- A syllabus template was developed to answer questions about what the GEC expects of a syllabus for an approved general education request. (See attachment to April 12 minutes.)
- Preliminary documents of instructions for obtaining approval of courses that fulfill the new program's general education requirements were developed (see attachments to the minutes of April 12).

## **Summary of Accomplishments**

- Triennial Review of 28 courses in Arts (15) and Literature (13) --
- Examination and decision on petitions of exception and course transfers for General Education field categories
- Participation in development of the new general education program
- Development of items to be used in the implementation of the new program

Appendix A  
Minutes of the General Education Committee  
2002-2003

**NO UPDATE IS MADE ABOVE THIS LINE**

**February 2008  
Updated by Debatosh Debnath, GEC Chair**

**The original version of this report is provided to the archivist of the Senate as a permanent record. An electronic copy of the original version is also saved with other GEC documents which is retained by the Committee chair.**

**The remainder of this report were primarily consisted of minutes of the meetings. They were deleted to prepare this version for posting at the Senate website. This is done by keeping FERPA in mind because minutes of GEC meetings contained name of students and information about their petitions.**