University-level Advisory Committee for the General Education Curriculum

December 15, 2009
8:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.
156 University Hall

Summary Notes

ATTENDANCE

✓ Mr. Niraj J. Antani (USG, Philosophy, Political Science)
✓ Dr. Annette L. Beatty, (Fisher College of Business)
✓ Dr. Wayne E. Carlson, (Dean, Undergraduate Education, Academic Affairs)
✓ Dr. Alexis C. Collier (Academic Affairs)
✓ Dr. Prabu David (Communication)
✓ Dr. Esther E. Gottlieb (International Affairs)
✓ Dr. Peter L. Hahn (History)
✓ Dr. Christopher F. Highley (English)
✓ Dr. Mary Ellen Jenkins (Arts and Sciences)
✓ Dr. Thomas R. Lemberger (Physics)
✓ Daniel A. Mendelsohn (Mechanical Engineering)
✓ Dr. Edna A. Menke (Nursing)
✓ Dr. Myroslava M. Mudrak (History of Art)
✓ Dr. Mari Noda, (East Asian Languages and Literature)
✓ Dr. Sally V. Rudmann (Allied Medicine)
✓ Dr. Mark W. Shanda (Theatre), Chair
✓ Dr. Elliot E. Slotnick (Graduate School)
✓ Dr. W. Randy Smith (Academic Affairs)
✓ Mr. Zachary H. Usmani (USG, Sociology)
✓ Dr. Harald E. F. Vaessin (Molecular Genetics)
✓ Dr. John D. Wranzer (Enrollment services and Undergraduate Education)
✓ Dr. Carl R. Zulauf (Agricultural, Environmental and Developmental Economics)

Guests:

Dr. C. David Andereck (Natural and Mathematical Sciences)
Dr. Steven S. Fink (Provost Faculty Fellow)
Dr. Terry L. Gustafson (Associate Dean, Arts and Sciences)
Dr. Kathleen M. Hallihan (Arts and Sciences)

Mr. Jay V. Johnson (Academic Affairs)
Dr. Alan L. Kalish (University Center for the Advancement of Teaching)
Dr. Gene E. Mumy (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
Dr. Valarie L. Williams (Arts and Humanities)

NOTES

The Chair of the University-level Advisory Committee for the General Education Curriculum (ULAC-GEC) reported that he had given an update of the committee’s work to Faculty Council. He also distributed a paper from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering in which a case was made for a technological literacy requirement in computer science. The committee considered but did not approve the recommendation. The committee next reviewed and endorsed the December 4, 2009 revised Curricular Experience draft of expected outcomes. The majority of the meeting was spent discussing a draft template for general education (GE) template, labeled ‘Holiday Happiness,’ which had evolved from discussion at the previous meeting.
In the ‘Holiday Happiness’ template, proposed GE requirements were grouped into six potential categories: Expression, Analysis, Interpretation, Language, Expansion, and “0” Count within the above groupings. The Chair stepped through requirements in each grouping and received feedback. With some exceptions, requirements were considered as courses with ‘3’ units of credit.

The committee concurred that two writing courses, a literature course, and an arts course were appropriate for Expression. For Analysis, one math, one data analysis which could be taken within the major, one physical science, and one biological science course were proposed. One of the science courses should include a laboratory, raising the unit requirement from 3 to 5. Discussion ensued as to whether GE requirements should be distinct for B.A. versus B.S. degrees, as is currently the case. If so, higher level math and/or additional science might be required. In addition, consideration was given to considering two sequences with labs in one science area, either physical or biological, to accommodate the extensive physical science requirements typically required in engineering programs. The committee tended to support a single set of requirements without degree distinctions, and to recognize that exceptions in certain colleges may be needed. In the Interpretation area, one history and three social science courses were proposed. Whether one or two history courses should be required was raised. Given that most peer institutions have either no or a single history requirement, the committee recommended a single history course requirement. The three social science courses were proposed to be consistent with the Ohio Board of Regents guidelines, with students being required to take them from two of the current three social science subcategories: Individual/Groups; Organizations/Polities; and Human/Natural Resources. The committee determined that two rather than three social science courses from two of the three subcategories should be required as is currently done, and the remaining course should be student choice from either the history, social science, or current ‘cultures and ideas’ subcategory. For the proposed World Language requirement, current requirements of proficiency would be maintained and likely required only for Arts and Sciences students. Under Expansion, the committee favored increased student choice and recommend that students select two additional courses from two of the following options or categories: an additional course from any of the above categories of Expression, Analysis, Interpretation, or World Language; a service learning course which could be taken within the major; or a capstone/integrated seminar outside the major. In addition, the committee included a study abroad option. To incentivize this option, taking an approved study abroad would fulfill both of the expansion requirements. The committee did not have time to discuss the “0” count requirements that are currently required for diversity, but will do so at the next meeting.

Other general points which were raised and may be revisited were allowing upper level course work to count even if such courses do not have GEC status, and whether the ‘labels’ for the proposed categories adequately captured the groupings. An observer pointed out that whatever ULAC proposes will need to be examined and sanctioned by the Arts and Sciences Committee on Curriculum and Instruction before going to the Council on Academic Affairs.