Minutes: University General Education Committee Meeting
December 14, 2018
9:30 am
HCC 307

Present: Nicole Crowder (CAS; chair), Brooke DiLauro (CAS), Lance Gentry (CoB), Chris Musina (CAS; secretary), Kelly Perkins (CAS), Farhang Rouhani (CAS), Marie Sheckels (CoE), Debra Schleef (ex officio), Rita Dunston (ex officio), Brian Ogle (ex officio), Tim O'Donnell (ex officio), Nina Mikhalevsky (guest), Jeff McClurken (guest)

Absent: John Morello (ex officio)

Meeting Began: 9:34 am

The Provost shared some words with the committee to thank us for the work we are doing, recognizing the dedication and focus we've given this responsibility. She noted that every time we change our curriculum we are changing the lives of our students down the road. She encouraged the committee to understand the concerns of other faculty, and specifically noted the Committee Chair's hard work. She discussed the timeline going forward, and the importance of a legitimate approval that feels non-rushed and lets faculty contribute along the way, looking for feedback from all departments. Continue to look at examples that other institutions are doing and learn from that too. We will need to be able to identify, explain, capture what our Gen Eds are saying about us at the end of the process. Reflect our strategic vision. Make clear how the Gen Eds are implementing our strategic vision. She said that we need to hear the worries of other faculty and departments, but we also must recognize that curriculum decisions are based on what we believe our students need to learn. This is difficult, but it is unethical to make decisions based on anything other than what our students need to learn, as our primary responsibility is to our students.

Upon her departure from the meeting, the committee further discussed Nina's conversation.

1. Minutes from Dec. 5, 2018
Approved as submitted.

2. The committee briefly discussed the language requirement as it relates to the Transfer Council for Community Colleges, and the perception that it is an impediment to transfer students. We discussed the need to keep transfer students in mind as we move forward.

3. Jeff McClurken joined the meeting to discuss incorporating digital fluency at UMW into the gen eds.
   The report discussed with the committee is available at http://umwdtlt.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/FinalDigitalFluencyReport.pdf

President Paino feels strongly about integrating tech into the liberal arts experience as he made it one of his 4 goals. Making a priority of digital fluency fits with our liberal arts model and makes our students engaged citizens. This is something that comes up in his conversations with lawmakers and the governor as well. There was further discussion of the importance of our relationship to the region as Amazon HQ2 moves in.

While students have the opportunity at UMW to gain knowledge in Digital Fluency, it is not embedded in Gen Eds. However this is something that has been discussed for the last 10 years. The notion of a focus on digital fluency makes us stand out, but not for long, as other schools catch up. Some of what differentiates us is how widespread digital engagement is compared to other schools. If you make this focus in the Gen Ed, we can make the case that every student will be exposed to this.

In discussion with the committee we asked how many courses could be designated DI (Digitally Intensive) if we added this next year? The answer was that 50 classes were submitted to Digital Studies, or count for the minor, and some others would work that weren't submitted. For example - History has a 2 semester methods class that does extensive digital work in the 2nd semester of that course.

The document mentioned above offers avenues for departments to take a look at what they are doing and find ways to bring that to the forefront. This is part about bringing our faculty along, but much is to highlight what we are already doing and framing it in an academic way. We discussed the idea of transitioning into having a DI course in each major, but some are there, others are not, and there would need to be curricular support. The power in spreading this across the curriculum is that it embeds Digital Fluency throughout the student's experience.

4. The Committee discussed new models, to come up with 2 - 3 models.
Over break members were assigned to come up with rationales for anything we're proposing, working with learning outcomes as a starting point, editing if they need editing.
Assignments were made to develop rationales and learning outcomes for each specific Gen Ed requirement to be discussed at the Jan. 16th meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:30 pm