

University of Mary Washington
University General Education Committee
Minutes
October 23, 2023
4:00 p.m. hybrid: over Zoom and in Farmer 243

1. Call to order.

The meeting began at 4:01 p.m.
Present: Michael Reno (chair), Paul Fallon (secretary), Kelly Perkins, Angela Pitts, Marc Williams; and Debra Schleef (Institutional Analysis), Melissa Yakabouski (Admissions), Rita Dunston (Registrar)
Guests: Marcel Rotter (Chair, MDFL), Ana Chichester (MDFL), Betsy Lewis (Assoc. Dean & MDFL)
The Chair moved to first consider the agenda item 5 on the foreign language requirement.
2. Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday, 4:00 pm Nov. 27th.
3. Review of course proposals.
 - 3.1. AMW ENGL 401 Professional Identities

The General Education Committee approved AMW designation for ENGL 401 and expressed admiration for this as a model proposal.
 - 3.2. AMW MDFL 201Q Preparation for Professional Language Exams

The Gen Ed Committee returned this proposal because it needs SLOs on the syllabus and found that SLO 2 was not clearly met in the proposal.
 - 3.3. AL DGST 302 Creative Coding

The Gen Ed Committee rejected AL designations for this course because AL is intended only for 100- or 200-level courses.
 - 3.4. DGP ECON 382 International Trade

The Gen Ed Committee returned this proposal to the instructor, encouraging them to resubmit with explicit reference to the student self-reflection aspect of the SLOs in the final project/paper assignment.
 - 3.5. QR Economics 361A Introduction to Econometrics

The Gen Ed Committee rejected QR designation for this course because it is a 300-level course with prerequisites and QR is meant for 100- or 200-level courses.
4. Requests for Re-Evaluation.

Bio 107 from Quinnipac to count for UMW Bio 121
The Gen Ed Committee returned this proposal to the student with a request for greater details and specifics on what the student learned in their course.
5. Motion to remove the option for “4 years of high school language” as one of the waivers for the Foreign Language Requirement.

Background Note: this motion was considered on 12 April 2023 by the UFC, which then referred it to the General Education Committee to determine its merits (Draft Minutes New Business 7.a.vi). This year’s Gen Ed Committee is therefore following up on that directive, with several documents related to the motion.

 - 5.1. The motion is to remove option 10 (completion of Level IV in HS language course) as one of the 11 waivers of the foreign language requirement. The Gen Ed Committee considered:

- The original text of the motion presented to the UFC
 - Dr Rotter's 2019 email on the matter in the context of the most recent general education revision
 - Data from Dean of Admissions Melissa Yakabouski on students who chose not to attend UMW.
 - A statement in support of the motion from Classics Professor Liane Houghtalin
- 5.2. Dr Rotter also presented a set of slides arguing in favor of this motion. Among the main points were that the Virginia standards are no longer based on course level (Language 1-5); school districts also vary on level numbering. Dr Rotter also addressed concerns previously raised, and provided some comparative data from other schools.
- 5.3. The above presentation and subsequent discussion lasted approximately 45 minutes. Among the items discussed:
- 5.3.1. Angela Pitts of Classics and Gen Ed Committee member affirmed the Department's support of this motion (both Greek and Latin also fulfill the language requirement).
- 5.3.2. Melissa Yakabouski raised some concerns about the possible effect of this on enrollments. After relating her own experience at MWC, she asked about ways for students who want to continue foreign language in relation to the test, and asked about alternatives.
- 5.3.3. Ana Chichester stated that MDL has reviewed various language tests over the years. Many students would get credit for 102 and need just one more course to meet the UMW requirement. UMW's language experience can be different from that in many high schools.
- 5.3.4. MDL sensed that approximately 25% of students get exempt, but Debra Schleef is running UMW's numbers and the situation may be more complicated than that.
- 5.3.5. Rita Dunston stated that the Registrar's Office and the Admissions Office have made strides in coding and finding how students are placed. She also noted the need to consider how many UMW students fulfill the language requirement outside UMW (historically it has been about 10-15% from 2020).
- 5.3.6. One committee member noted that it is a bit unusual to make an educational policy based on projected enrollment and felt that the policy should be made more on the basis of our general education policy.
- 5.4. A proposal to vote on the motion was discussed, and the majority of the committee wished to table the motion in order to have time for additional data to be prepared, reviewed, and discussed.
6. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 5:37 PM.

[These minutes were unanimously approved by the committee on 1 Nov. 2023].