General Education Council
Minutes: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 Meeting
7:30-9:00 a.m.
Nessmith Lane Building, Room 1909


Absent:  H. Altman, M. Cawthorn, J. Langdon, H. Samawi, J. Zhang, K. Albertson

Minutes
Minutes of the March 22, 2011 meeting were approved with one correction: J. Simons was present at the meeting.

Report to Senate
Dr. Bartels updated General Education Council members of her report to the Senate the previous week. She had shared the Council’s formation with the Senate and had assured the Senate that the Council is representative of all colleges and faculty invested in the Core Curriculum. She added that the Council’s work will be faculty driven and faculty monitored and will report to the Senate. Through its work with the Undergraduate Committee and Senate reports, faculty will have opportunity for feedback and discussion of the Council’s work.

Review of General Education Council’s Role
Dr. Bartels then reviewed the General Education Council’s purpose, adding that through its work, Georgia Southern will get the General Education experience it deserves. She suggested that the process will need to begin with self-education and the Council’s helping to define what General Education is. The Council will be a conduit for campus-wide dialog to enhance understanding of General Education and its role at Georgia Southern University. She added that General Education will be reported separately during SACS accreditation, so creating the General Education Council is a starting point; the work of the Council will be on-going and will become increasingly important.

General Education and Institutional Effectiveness
Steve Zerwas gave a brief overview of the history of General Education and how it has changed since the 1800s. He also explained different approaches to General Education, adding that General Education should be a set of common elements, not compartmentalized in specific areas or courses. Once the General Education Council helps define those common elements, then the common elements can be more effectively assessed. He added that conversations have to take place between General Education providers and major programs to ensure that General Education courses are fulfilling the University’s promise to its students and meeting program expectations.

Dr. Bartels explained that it is important for the student to become the center of the General Education learning experience. At Georgia Southern University, she added, we’ve become faculty focused and students no longer understand the purpose or necessity of General Education.

Dr. Bartels then responded to questions, beginning with John O’Malley’s asking how students’ will come to understand General Education. Barry Joyner, former Chair of the Core Curriculum Task Force, spoke about the possibility of “branding,” adding that Area B, formerly known as Institutional Options, had become Global Engagement, something that students can better understand. Bill Levernier added that
departments need to be involved throughout. Caren Town advised that an understanding of General Education has to begin at SOAR, continue through advisement, and be reinforced by faculty. Fred Rich agreed, adding that advisement centers need to be involved and that faculty have to understand and value the CORE and teach toward the value of General Education.

Lorraine Gilpin asked about changes to the Core Curriculum, followed by Elizabeth Edwards’ asking who determines curriculum and what’s important in General Education courses. Dr. Bartels proposed that Barry Joyner give an overview of the Core Curriculum Task Force’s work at the next meeting. Documents stemming from that task force have been distributed and are available on Sharepoint. Dr. Bartels then suggested subcommittees and a timeline as starting points.

**General Education Council Chair and Subcommittees**
Jake Simons agreed to serve as Chair for the General Education Council. Council members also agreed to serve on subcommittees as follows:

- **Committee on Policies, Procedures, and Communication** – J. Simons, C. Town, B. Levernier, E. Brooks
- **Curriculum Committee** – L. Gilpin, J. O’Malley, A. Boyett, L. Smith, H. Altman (by email), H. Samawi (by email)
- **Assessment** – E. Edwards, M. Cawthorne (by proxy), J. Langdon (by proxy), B. Lee, Y. Li, and F. Rich

Ellen Hendrix volunteered to contact J. Zhang, H. Altman, and H. Samawi before the next meeting to see if they had a subcommittee preference.

The meeting was adjourned.

**Next Meeting:**  **Tuesday, April 5, 2011, 7:30-9:00 a.m., TBA**