Minutes of the October 27, 2009 Meeting

(This was a special meeting called to continue discussion of the University General Education program begun at the October 13 faculty meeting.)

I. President Baker called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

II. Invocation was offered by Dr. Margaret Cullen.

III. Unfinished Business:
   a. Dr. Baker provided an update on the status of influenza cases on campus. To date, one case of Influenza A has been encountered at the campus health center. Due to the high volume of cases seen at testing labs, it is not known whether this is H1N1 or not, but it will be treated as such. Two additional cases have been reported to the University by individuals who were diagnosed by their personal physicians while at home. Those individuals will not return to campus until the quarantine period is over.
   b. The October 13 faculty meeting ended when it was determined that a quorum was not present. At that time a motion had been made by Dr. Person to approve the documents that had been provided by the University General Education Committee (provided as attachments to the agenda of that meeting). Therefore the first order of business was consideration of that motion. Dr. Person noted his intention to withdraw the previous motion – which indicated approval of the general education documents - in order to make a substitution which simply indicated support for the work of the committee. His purpose in withdrawing the previous motion was a desire to avoid setting the precedent of requiring approval of subsequent reports from the general education committee. Objections were made to withdrawal of the previous motion, requiring a vote by the faculty. The motion to withdraw was approved by voice vote.
   c. Dr. Person made the following motion: “I move that the university faculty commend the members of the University General Education Committee for the good work that they have done in implementing the criteria for tagged courses as approved by the university faculty in May.” As a result of the ensuing discussion, Dr. Person indicated that he intended a vote in favor of this motion to also be a vote supporting the position that the documents in question were implementations of a policy that has already been approved (at the May 2009 faculty meeting) and that no further approval by the faculty was necessary. Dr. Lomax stated the opposing position that the General Education committee is unique in that its decisions are final, rather than being suggestions to another committee, to the administration, or to the Board of Trustees. In his view the wording of the course approval criteria was significantly different from the language of the document approved at the May 2009 faculty meeting. Further discussion supported each of these two positions. A hand vote was taken, resulting in failure of the motion (37 yes, 52 no).
   d. Dr. Lomax moved approval of the documents that were attached to the agenda of the current meeting. The General Education Committee amended the documents slightly to include suggestions made during the October 13 faculty meeting. Dr. Lomax argued that changes in the phrasing of the October 13 documents made the documents attached to the agenda of the current meeting acceptable. During the ensuing discussion, Dr. Hurtig answered several questions from the faculty:
      • Q: Will any feedback be provided to instructors who submit courses that are not approved?
      • A: The committee will work closely with instructors to improve course development for resubmittal. The purpose is to strengthen the general education program, not to inhibit the development of courses for general education.
      • Q: What is the definition of a general education course?
      • A: Any course for which a general education tag has been approved will be a general education course. Courses may be at any level, inside or outside of the major, may include distribution requirements, capstone, etc. This allows a great deal of flexibility in identifying courses to satisfy the general education requirements.
      • Q: How will tags be tracked?
      • A: Dr. Hurtig has been working with Mr. Carpenter to use Banner for tracking completion of general education requirements. The instructor will need to indicate that a student has submitted satisfactory artifacts when entering grades, since just passing the course does not indicate completion of the general education requirement. One issue still to be developed is how to provide student access to their own progress.
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- Q: Will students be able to appeal if an artifact is deemed unacceptable?
- A: The instructor will have the authority to determine acceptability of artifacts. The existing grade appeal process may be used by the student to appeal an artifact that was not accepted by the instructor as satisfactory.
- Q: If a student receives a grade of "D" on an artifact generated in a class for which they are required to achieve a minimum course grade of "C," will the artifact still be acceptable for meeting the general education requirement?
- A: Yes.

The motion to approve the documents submitted by the General Education committee was approved by a clear majority as determined by a show of hands of those in favor.

IV. The meeting adjourned at 4:47 pm.

Submitted by,

Dr. David R. Sawyers, Jr.
Secretary