

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes – April 9, 2008

The General Education Committee met on Wednesday, April 9, 2008, from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. in the Administration Building, Room 244.

Present: Ex-Officio: Sue Jones (Official Publications), Sam Oswald (Academic Planning and Assessment), Valerie Paton (Provost Office).

Members: Dorothy Chansky (Visual and Performing Arts), Ray Desrosiers (Engineering and Chairperson), Gary Elbow (Honors), Ernest Fish (Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources), Miles Kimball (Arts & Sciences, Faculty Senate), Tom Kimball (Human Sciences), Linda Krefting (Business Administration), Comfort Pratt (Education), Roger Saathoff (Mass Communications), Ben Shacklette (Architecture), Doug Smith (Engineering).

Members Not Present: Frank Durso (Arts & Sciences), David Lamp (Arts & Sciences).

I. Announcements

- **Next GEC meeting:** Wed, April 23, 12 – 12:50 p.m., ADM 244.

II. New Business

1. **Clarification of item #9** under GEC Criteria for Including Courses in the Core Curriculum:
 - The wording of this item on the web site (<http://www.gec.ttu.edu>) has been augmented to clarify the intent and a link has been added to the TLTC site listing a Handbook for writing learning outcomes and assessment methods.
 - The committee felt that detailed examples are still necessary, as starting in the Fall, learning outcomes and assessment methods must be paired. To assist the committee in composing effective examples, Andrea McCourt, who has expertise in the assessment area, will be invited to address the committee.

2. **Review of categories A-G and MC** for prerequisites and enrollment restrictions:
 - Lists of problem courses for each category were prepared by subcommittees. Courses which were majors-only, had multiple prerequisites, or were upper-division were explicitly listed as these could be considered inappropriate for the Core by THECB guidelines.
 - All Deans and Assoc Deans were emailed, requesting that they encourage department chairs to address these issues regarding the listed courses. (See the appendix for a copy of the text of this email.)
 - The following courses (as of 4/14) are removed from the Core at the request of the hosting department: **Category D: AGSM3303/4302; Category E: ANTH3346; Category G: PSY4300/4325/4330.**
 - Not all departments have responded. Any additional course deletions requested by departments will be reported in the minutes of the Apr 23 meeting.

Appendix to the GEC Minutes of Apr 9

Email sent on Thursday, Apr 10:

To all Deans and Associate Deans: please distribute this email to all department chairs as soon as possible.

TTU received a report from the Coordinating Board in the Fall of 2004 (the General Education Committee did not receive the report until Spring 2008) stating that the university was not in compliance with their policies. The report addressed two issues.

1. The TTU Core Curriculum includes courses which may not be appropriate since they are majors-only courses or have other enrollment restrictions, have an inordinate number of prerequisites, or are upper-division courses.
2. TTU failed to link assessment methods to the THECB exemplary educational objectives.

The second item is being addressed as part of our response to the SACS accreditation issue. Core Competency teams composed of faculty from affected disciplines have formulated core competency statements and learning outcomes which have been adopted by the General Education Committee (GEC) and published on the GEC web site (<http://www.gec.ttu.edu>). All future course reviews and new course applications processed by the GEC will require that these items be included in syllabi and that assessments are designed into each course. Such course reviews will begin in the Fall of 2008.

This email is concerned with item 1 of the THECB report. Vice Provost Paton must submit a report to the Coordinating Board by May 1, 2008, stating clearly what TTU has done to address the item of inappropriate courses in the Core Curriculum. The GEC has been assigned the task of reviewing all categories of the Core Curriculum and either eliminate or justify any courses that violate the THECB principles.

An email was issued to all colleges in March requesting that each department cull as far as possible upper-division courses and courses with prerequisites. The College of Visual & Performing Arts was the only one which submitted a significant response. Now it is time for all the other colleges to do the same.

At our meeting on Wednesday, Apr 9, the GEC identified the following courses as having one of the issues mentioned, i.e. they have enrollment restrictions, multiple prerequisites, or are upper-division courses:

Categories A. Communications, B. Mathematics, C. Natural Sciences, F. Visual & Performing Arts: **none**.

Category D. Technology and Applied Science

**ADM 3305; AGED4302; AGSM3303/4302; ANSC3402; ART 3362; C S 1412/3368;
FDSC3301; GEOG3353/4301; GEOL3323/3428; HONS3302; I E 3351/4363;
ISQS3344; MATH3420; M E 2322; MUSI3341; PHIL3330; PSS 2432/3323; THA 3304**

Category E. Humanities

ADM 3312; ANTH3346; HIST4327/4374; JOUR3350

Category G. Individual or Group Behavior

ADRS3325; JOUR4330; NS 4380; PSY 4300/4325/4330; WS 4302/4399

The report due on May 1 to the THECB must merely state clearly that the GEC has reviewed these courses for appropriateness. The GEC will not delete any course whose presence on the Core can be justified. In some cases, departments are under pressure to reduce their degree plans to 120 hours. Some courses were placed on the Core to enable some departments to meet that requirement. Some courses in one discipline are used by other departments in their degree plans. It is the obligation of the GEC to settle the issues involved with the listed courses.

Finally, here is the request to department chairs: if one of the listed courses is in your department please email me a BRIEF response by Tuesday, Apr 22, at 3:00 pm which

1. States clearly that you agree to having the named course deleted from the Core Curriculum or,
2. Justifies keeping the course in the Core Curriculum.

Do not send syllabi. Just send a brief email informing the GEC of your department's decision regarding the affected course.

If no response for a course is received by the deadline, that course will be deleted from the Core at the Wed, Apr 23 meeting of the GEC. The new policy adopted at the March meeting of the Academic Council may soften the blow somewhat: although additions to the Core will take effect as soon as the GEC minutes are published, all deletions will be queued and not take effect until the next catalog. If a decision is made to delete a course, that deletion will not be effective until April 2009, giving departments time to adjust to any changes in the Core.

I plead for your patience and compliance in this matter and apologize for the imminent deadline and the length of this email. I tried to be as brief and clear as possible.