

CSU Chancellor's General Education Advisory Committee Meeting
March 17, 2015
Notes

Members: Mark Van Selst (Chair), Mary Ann Creadon (Vice), Elizabeth Adams (absent), ~~Joseph Bielanski (absent)~~, Terri Eden (phone), Robert Collins, Steven Filling, Susan Gubernat, David Hood, Kathy Kaiser, ~~Chris Mallon (absent)~~, Catherine Nelson, Ken O'Donnell, Barry Pasternack, ~~Mark Wheeler (absent)~~, ~~Sara Sanders (absent)~~, ~~Jeff Spano (absent)~~, John Stankas, Bill Eadie

Guests: Debra David, Dolores Davidson, Emily Magruder

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A) Pilot Projects

We had a report out on an update to the online oral communication pilot project. The pilot projects are progressing well. We expect them to continue evolving in a positive direction and to produce some data to inform future decision-making. The expectation is that GEAC will produce an update to the CSU Guiding Notes to specify learning outcomes that may separately or jointly define our expectations for what in-person and online oral communication courses should produce.

We had a report on the STATWAY project. The January 2015 approval of STATWAY to meet quantitative requirements for IGETC by BOARS means that statway is now permissible to meet IGETC requirements until FALL of 2016, which is the expiration of the CSU GEAC pilot recommendation (IGETC is shared by UC and CSU and thus follows the most restrictive analysis). GEAC will be looking for California student based data at our SEPTEMBER 2015 meeting to better inform future action by GEAC.

Both of these pilot projects may yield decisions for the future that will influence SB1440 degree templates.

B) EO 1100

The new Executive Order for GE has been published as EO1100. The changes were as documented earlier, which include the removal of area D subareas in EO 1067, grade minima in GE, and formalizing GE for STEM. The possibility of upper division GE transfer from the community colleges have not been reflected in the updates as the relevant language is unchanged from prior Executive Orders (it was noted that as some point the EO just needed to be published and updated later).

C) AP Seminar

The AP Research follows up on the AP Seminar. GEAC has previously recommended that AP Seminar be awarded 3 units of university credit but not be associated with a particular GE area given the breadth of possible coverage within the seminar. No decisions were made vis-à-vis credit for AP Research.

D) Upper Division General Education

There is an emerging need to better define both a distinction between upper division and lower division credit (the domain of the Academic Affairs Committee of the ASCSU) and, in particular, to make clearer the GE expectations for upper division GE. There is a first reading item on the MARCH 2015 ASCSU agenda on the definition of Upper Division GE.

E) ITL

The new arrangement replaces a transient faculty appointment as the ITL director to a permanent MPP position of ITL director supported by transient faculty partial assignment in support of ITL, where the faculty with the partial assignment will not be full time ITL nor full time at the CSU CO.

F) GEAC-Affiliated project updates

Give Students a Compass

Final meeting was in FEB 2015 at Sacramento

Sustainability Minor

The possibility of a “system minor” in sustainability was discussed prior to the Give Students a Compass meeting. The current thinking of that initial group is an opt-in general framework, possibly consisting of modules (a shadow of a Bologna-type model) that a campus could opt to include as a minor in “California sustainability” or similar other such title as would differentiate it from any existing sustainability-oriented minors.

WICHE

A long discussion on the virtues versus costs of involvement in WICHE projects generally and the PASSPORT project specifically. A resolution in first reading will be presented to the ASCSU for its March meeting that recommends against “signing off” on bulk PASSPORT articulation agreements.

AAC&U Faculty Collaboratives

Several faculty members (CSU and CCC) have been selected as AACU faculty collaborative members. Part of their role is to assess the strengths and weaknesses inherent in various national initiatives (AAC&U and otherwise). The faculty collaboratives project is largely in its infancy.

G) CSU San Bernadino Exemption request (one of the Engineering Programs)

CSU San Bernadino has forwarded a request for GE exemption to the CSU CO. GEAC has been invited to respond to the request (March 27 deadline for GEAC commentary). We did not have time in the meeting to cover the request in adequate depth and deferred the item to email discussion and summary within the next week. One option is to suggest that if the program is presenting as covering the GE content within the degree, then that a waiver would not be appropriate since assessment within the major could meet the required competency.

[note: the “waiver” request allows transfer students to apply to the CSU without the otherwise-required critical thinking element to be completed. The response to the Chancellor includes some reactions and future suggestions]

On the need for lengthy or short notes:

Ken: We don't need long notes for any implementation. Brief notes are fine.

Kathy: We need long notes when we vote at least.

Susan: We need to think about being accountable for our discussion and actions. Maybe something in between long and short notes would be right.

Mark: Maybe something that follows the bulleted agenda items would be good. So we will work that way.

REPORTS FROM PILOT PROJECTS

Ken: Oral communication and online delivery. We have said this should happen face-to-face, not online. Price is that people who live in rural areas or can't make the times could be left out. We were willing to accept that price, but asked a set of community colleges to test out online delivery. They have another year and a half for the test. There has been a conference call with the piloting schools, with notes and reports. Right now, bottom line is that it sounded like typical prep for a new course. No meaningful data or conclusions yet; need to have a second run-through before that can happen.

Mark: In conference call, learned that instructor and course instructions must be very explicit about the policies and rules for assignments in the syllabus.

Bill: All information must be upfront, instead of making adjustments as the course goes along. Big problem will be how to give presentations. But instructors are energetic and working hard to find solutions.

Kathy: at Chico, Sociology used some oral presentations with slide sets that worked well. Since Comm is one of the TMCs that is still out, maybe they can include it.

Catherine: what about same instructor problem?

Mark: one problem is the completion rate, which right now is about 5% lower.

Kathy: We need to worry about data sets from different instructors being compared.

Catherine: asks Bill to explain the feedback process, when you're observing the audience.

Bill: speaker must learn to look at audience and adapt as they look confused or quizzical, etc. Online, Bill says, should never replace FTF, because you need this element.

Mark: Need to have no more than 5 faces on the screen, so their looks can be observed.

Susan: clearly this limits the number of the audience, and should not. Also, will this online class self-select with students who avoid large audiences?

Bill: online does not help the problem of speaker paralysis. Those people will drop the course.

John: students self-select for a number of reasons, but main argument for trying it is to have it for the students who have a difficult time getting to campus. Some CCs use low residency courses, but then they don't bond with their classmates and show up infrequently to do the presentations and that doesn't work well.

Kathy: this should be driven by content of the course, not what students it will serve.

Susan: more worried about the people who want to avoid public speaking; will the availability of these courses attract the wrong people, those who need FTF interaction.

Barry: differential dropout rate not surprising for the first offerings. We should not compare better or worse of the two deliveries, but if we need it for some students.

David: is this an action item?

Mark: what we have right now looks like maybe a report that says this looks good so far, and we need more study. So not an action item. This should return to GEAC for recommendation eventually.

Bill: there are some in the C-ID process right now who are reluctant for the same reasons—how to meet the need to do a presentation in public in the face of anxiety, and how to gauge the audience response.

Mark: trying to figure out what next GE response should be. Perhaps work on revised Guiding notes for Area A, including oral comm. We could say we would have these ready in a year, by Spring of 2016. This could help us clean up our standards.

UC Irvine “Free and Open Education”

Barry: where did this idea emerge of offering free and open education come from? Putting his union hat on, what are the implications of this? Academic issues should be determined by academicians, not staff at the CO.

John: there is nothing in what we were given about units or credits.

Kathy: yes, this sounds like the Khan Academy—lots of help but not credit. Just extra help.

Mary Ann: this sounds like co-curricular help for low-success students in Chemistry.

Catherine: this still looks like the slippery slopes we always see where this eventually becomes credit for this “free and open” education.

Kathy: could safely say that this is good for the high schools.

Susan: quotes Hanley that these are part of the solutions for “higher education.”

Mark: can we add this item to AA tomorrow?

Kathy: is this a precipitating question, making them think of something they haven’t thought of themselves?

Bill: his impression was that this was not a be-all and end-all.

STATWAY

Ken: UC has said it will work for transfer. Now in IGETC standards we can say this works for transfer. Carnegie Foundation emailed to ask, if UC likes it, then CSU will, right? Ken said no. Purpose of pilot was to see how students did. At first, data not enough. Ken told Carnegie that we’re still looking for more data from them. Carnegie wants to take it off pilot status.

Kathy: UC says it examined it 3 different times (the Carnegie course) and noted it meets the standards of GE transfer (not for STEM majors). They praise the course. We need a clear framework for what we expect to see. No expectation that there will be no required follow-up course for many majors.

Ken: initially looking for greater success in the course, and in other courses after transfer. The sequential courses that follow will only be taken by a handful of students, so must look for success at CSU school in upper division or other subsequent course related.

Kathy: if student never has to do a stats or research methods with stats again, then we'll have to ask for something else when tracking these students.

Mark: difficulty of finding a student who will take a subsequent course that is reliant on the STATWAY course.

John: yes, the problem is the pool of students from whom we can get data.
Mark: so we're waiting for data.

Kathy: successfully pass STATWAY and then transfer in and are retained.

Mary Ann: but if they take no subsequent or reliant course, what does retention tell you?

Ken: publically, technically, we say that the four basic courses are predictors of success, in which case retention would tell us something.

Susan: don't forget Atlantic article dismissing need for algebra.

John: it's not the retention of particular knowledge, but the retention of the kind of logic and mental processes that go with those courses.

Mark: for URMs, this increases accessibility of CSU to these populations. Opposite argument is that you lock those students out of STEM disciplines by allowing it.

Kathy: big debate on Jeff Coons sculpture at Chico shows that disciplinary arguments won't help us. Remember also that many URMs don't want to do STEM. We should ask Carnegie to demonstrate what we ask of other Golden Four, and not burden it further. We don't ask for anything more, except GVAR, from Golden Four.

Barry: we could do the disciplinary needs argument for any discipline; question is what is it in algebra that we want educated citizens to know.

Ken: will disadvantage the disadvantaged. Kathy says it advantages the disadvantaged. Puts URMs in a cul de sac; but ultimately the question is Barry's:

does STATWAY contain what we want an educated person to know, or does it leave that out?

John: we have asked that they provide more data, and we should have an open mind about what they come up with.

Susan: there may not be a relationship between the success in algebra and the success in critical thinking.

Mark: SJSU data will be a little late; also, Math Chairs met in emergency meeting in January about STATWAY and he knows nothing about that meeting.

Mark: pilot CCs will go mainly to SDSU, SJSU, and SFSU.

Ken: question is about CC transfer students, right? Shall we compare native students with CC students? That would be good.

Mark: deadline for pilot is Fall 2016. May have to give them less than a year. We have to know: show us how they do after transfer.

Mark: so Carnegie comes in May, along with faculty from San Diego and LA District.

Steven: Will try to get this on agenda for ICAS, but what did the UC use for data?

Ken: they didn't use data, they just looked at the curriculum for the four-semester curriculum and decided. Given that, their evaluation might be different than ours. We want to know about student success.

Kathy: UC must be using Common Core standards to confirm the soundness of the curriculum.

Catherine: so let's make the meeting happen in September.

Mark: We will ask for a meeting in September.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS (COMPASS, WICHE, AAC&U COLLABORATIVES)

Debra: last conference focused on where we're at now, and the future. One recommendation: an annual GE intersegmental conference. Other main outcome of Compass project is Debra's report coming: why we did it in the first place, what initiatives are scalable and sustainable.

Kathy: who was the energizing guy—Diego Navarro. People very touched by him, and so maybe make his presentation more widely available.

Debra: he worked with the most basic, basic people, people with traumatic life histories. Gets them to transfer level with intensive summer work and one semester.

Mark: he deals with a medium-size cohorts, and works on emotions; however, it is based on data, and is scalable. Portable to other places, too. So success is not just due to him, but to the structure of the project. This may be more appropriate to APEP, but it is important work.

Barry: would be good to have had a video of this; look for this in the future.

Debra: WICHE and Faculty Collaboratives—explicit again that we are there for the conversations about what students should be able to do after GE. Point was to identify learning outcomes for Emergent Cultures and Natural Sciences. In the end, they want to identify proficiency criteria. On hold right now for Round 2, Critical Thinking and Creative Expression in April in Boulder. Still need some faculty for that meeting.

Dolores: only a small number of students would be part of the cohort who would transfer in the West. Also, proficiency criteria are not for courses, but for areas.

Catherine: how did we get into this in the first place, because appearances matter? Are we, by participating, giving the impression that we will abide by these criteria?

Dolores: we have made abundantly clear that we are only in on the dialogue, and not speaking for the system or any campuses.

Debra: we are not formally involved. We initially were doing a favor to WICHE to be in on the conversations, and always said that the faculty governance would have to make any decisions about participation.

Catherine: who contacted whom?

Ken: WICHE person in Colorado, Pat Shea, called Ken first of all. At about the same time she got in touch with Jeff Spano. Ken said minds were open, but only interested in the conversation. This outreach happened a couple of summers ago, and then made its way into reports to GEAC the following fall. Ken does not think their website overstates the case for CSU participation.

Catherine: it says “participants.”

Mark: and PowerPoint uses the term “signatories” as though it includes the “participants.”

Steven: faculty involvement is unclear. We need a written document that says we are not participating.

Ken: That document can come from me. I'll bring it up at the plenary.

Susan: Remembers Diana saying that we should not participate in something. Concern about ASCSU representatives participating in WICHE, given its talk of proficiency. Also, transfer from other Western states does not mean much for us.

Rob: Dialogue was important. Reassured him that CSU was doing the right thing. Also helped him understand what CCs were doing. Thinks it's great to be at the table, because it gives us ammunition to say that we do have a stake and we know what is happening.

Barry: website says ELOs taken from LEAP, which is not very realistic or adequate in its outcomes.

Kathy: thought that partly we were spying in the room to see what was going on. There must be other proficiencies on our campuses (CLEP, exams, etc.). So we should be at the table.

Mark: asking Ken to write up a document stating our concerns. A GE problem is that we are currently dealing with critical thinking, which CSU has trouble with. That's what's up next in April with WICHE. We have more experience articulating GE, but we aren't necessarily better at coming up with outcomes. One problem here is timeline; how to use WICHE for critical thinking.

Susan: website looks like we're developing their outcomes, Passport Learning Outcomes.

Mark: April 7 is Critical Thinking and Creative Expressions meeting, to be discussed a week later on April 14.

David: Peter Ewell developed WICHE, and he is [generally not trustworthy]. Steven is correct that we need to stop this and make sure we gain control of anything connected to this.

Ken: I will write up a document draft to send to WICHE. Would like to be able to write this draft after the plenary.

Susan: like David, does not trust this process.

David: Gates and Lumina gave 2 million to WASC. People at WICHE do not have a university; they are using us to do their research. Same thing happened at WASC.

COLLEGE BOARD AND AP RESEARCH

Pam: here as resource. New AP courses: AP Seminar and then AP Research. Can research for both STEM and for Dance Choreography—broad set of cross-curricular skills.

Kathy: question—any connection to IB degree?

Pam: looking for global perspectives, and theories of knowledge. In that arena.

Kathy: question—when you're selling an AP or IB program to a school or to the families, usually you say, this will get you college credits. But nice clean label isn't here. So how to sell to families and back to university?

Pam: good question. Schools realize this is a big selling item to schools, but: is there a course equivalent at the college level? Sometimes, at small liberal arts colleges, or at Stanford where they begin with freshman seminars. But how in the CSU?

Pam: she has noticed that some schools are using it for interdisciplinary electives. UC recommended that it go for review to writing and composition faculty. Wonders if it can work for Area E.

Susan: not sure about writing as a home for these credits. Certainly doesn't seem to work for Area E. How to fit into GE then?

Ken: do we want a slot that looks like this interdisciplinary thing? Maybe change the EO for this as a lower division GE breadth capstone?

Kathy: question to Debra—anything in the innovative GE programs for which this could work?

Pam: likes the idea of undesignated 3 units, which could be added to later by way of work with a department.

Catherine and Mark: no mechanism for the units to be variable by area. Hard to say, here are some units, figure out the GE area.

Catherine: what are the implications of taking the results of an AP exam and giving credit, as opposed to giving the credit for having taken this year-long course.

Ken: we say to CCs, look at Assist.org and if you see something give it credit. Also told CCs to use their best judgment. So we do have a precedent.

Pam: CCs would not do a pass-along because they would not want to designate an area, either.

Susan: each student defines their own area of research. We would be requiring a campus to go one-on-one when presenting these units.

Mary Ann: why not use this for critical thinking?

Mark: Guiding Notes are pretty strict, and include logic.

Kathy: IGETC has a course that works for critical thinking plus writing. What about that?

Pam: CSU needs to be the first to come out and say that we will give credit for both AP Seminar and Research, and then you will get those students in your system.

Mark: Back to WICHE—summary: document from Ken.

Ken: does not have a presentation for plenary; just expecting a Q&A.

Debra: AAC&U Faculty Collaboratives. This is also about learning proficiencies. Very faculty-centered. Faculty looking at initiatives. What are the core concepts in the disciplines?

Susan: why is Lumina Foundation interested in learning proficiencies? We get together to discuss why we do what we do and how to teach better. What is their interest? We have been doing active learning for a very long time. Why tell us we need it now? What is their agenda?

Debra: Not sure that we do it as much as we should. Proficiencies defined can help us with GE Breadth, especially.

Susan: so much of what we do is not quantifiable in articulated proficiencies. Does Lumina care about the whole person?

Barry: Gates's point of reference is not ours.

Debra: I would go to bat for Faculty Collaboratives. Wants to have conversations about what it is we really do feel students should understand.

Mark: Description on draft handed out feels ITL-like.

Rob: a good project for faculty to have input in how we understand pedagogy. How do we explain to everyone what we do and why it is important? This helps us do that.

Kathy: students excited because the wicked problems don't have an answer.

Emily: this kind of thing is great for faculty development. Faculty should be able to articulate their discipline's threshold concepts. This helps with that.

Catherine: Marxist in her: you cannot separate the project from the context, speaking to Susan's point. Postmodernist in her: you create the context relative to the moment and the need.

CSU ITL

Emily: where she thinks ITL is right now. Goal during her interim tenure is to continue projects Wayne had underway and help new initiatives get going.

Mark: Wayne saw the connections he could make with GE, and that was a good thing.

Emily: that will be the case for me, too.

Susan: we need to be careful to make sure lecturers get compensated for faculty development.

CSU SAN BERNARDINO REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION

Let's do this by email next week.