

**Academic Senate  
Santa Barbara Division**

**General Education Workgroup  
Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2003**

Members Present: M. Higa (Student Rep.), D. Kohl (Undergraduate Council; Chair, Student Affairs Committee), C. Lawson (AS President), H. Marcuse (Co-Chair, GE Workgroup; Undergraduate Council; Chair, Committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policy), , C. Michel (Co-Chair, GE Workgroup; Vice Chair, Undergraduate Council), D. Montello (L&S Executive Committee Rep.) , , A. Wyner (Dean, Undergraduate Studies, L&S), X. Zhao (Undergraduate Council),

Members unable to attend: R. Hecht (L&S Executive Committee Rep.), J. Heinen (nominated GSA Rep.),

Others Present: D. Blake (Analyst, Undergraduate Council), J. Love (Student Rep.) J. Love (Student Rep.), S. McLeod (GE Workgroup Consultant, Undergraduate Council, Director, Writing Program), D. Segura (Chair, Undergraduate Council), M. Zimmerman (GE Workgroup Consultant; Undergraduate Council; Chair, GE Task Force)

The first meeting of the GE Workgroup was called to order by Undergraduate Council Chair Denise Segura. She introduced the co-chairs of the workgroup and distributed the charge to members and consultants (attached). Following introductions all around, Ms. Segura requested that participants provide their full schedules via email, to find out whether a more suitable meeting time might be found to accommodate representatives who are unable to attend. Binders containing the current GE brochure, the workgroup's charge, the 2001 and 2002 GE Task Force reports, and some other documents were distributed. The meeting was turned over to GE Workgroup Co-Chair Harold Marcuse for presentation of a proposed plan for completion of the workgroup's charge (attached).

Mr. Marcuse reviewed elements of the charge, noting that the workgroup's proposal will be forwarded to the faculty executive committees for comment prior to submission to the Undergraduate Council. Following potential revision and approval by the Council, the finalized proposal will be submitted to the Faculty Legislature.

The General Education Program section of the UCSB General Catalogue was reviewed with regard to the mission/vision and the requirements of the current GE Program. It was suggested that reviewing the currently approved GE courses for compliance with current policy would get us considerably closer to a set of courses that represents the GE vision we are trying to achieve.

There was discussion of the apparent differences between the GE requirements completed by students admitted as freshmen and those completed by transfer students who follow the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC). In comparing the number of courses, the group was reminded that almost all community colleges are on the semester system and thus have more hours per course, which must be taken into consideration when comparing the two programs. Of the Fall 2002 entering class, 3825 were freshman, while 1350 were transfer students, of whom approximately 65-70% completed IGETC to satisfy the GE requirements.

The group reviewed a side-by-side comparison of the components of the current GE Program and the program proposed by the GE Task Force. The workgroup was made aware of the problems faced by the former General Education Committee in making course approval decisions, based on the descriptions of the criteria for the various discipline areas.

Mr. Marcuse presented the following list of seven major problems associated with the current GE Program, which have been studied in the course of previous revision deliberations.

1. Number of approved courses on list: too many, selection opaque, unmanageable
2. Suitability of courses on list: should target non-majors and be accessible to all
3. Existing category descriptions not adequate; no explicit place for interdisciplinary courses or comparative courses
4. GE program does NOT apply to all students (BA, BS, BM, BFA, colleges)
5. Some departments cannot offer sufficient courses to non-majors
6. Chancellor's charge: investigate possibility of expanding the ethnicity requirement
7. Preparation in writing not adequate; inadequate definition of special requirement writing courses [1800 words in no more than 3 assignments]

With regard to the list of courses being "unmanageable," it was suggested that the term be changed to "unmanaged." It was acknowledged that an effective operational structure has not been in place to properly manage the proliferation of courses or monitor whether all the approved courses are appropriate to remain on the list. The previous Senate committee structure did not adequately support the needs of the GE Program. The new Committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policy does not have the capacity to manage the workload that such monitoring would entail.

It was noted that GE courses offered by some departments have prerequisites that make them unsuitable as GE courses. In discussing resource issues related to availability of courses, it was acknowledged that departmental standards regarding teaching workload are a more significant measure of impact than faculty/student ratio. There was a question as to how we should communicate with departments in order to facilitate effective discussion of these topics. Representatives of BS-granting departments and the College of Engineering will need to be part of our discussion on total number of units to be included in the program (*action item*).

It was suggested that a possible expansion of the ethnicity requirement to two courses might include one course that must be US oriented and one that could also include international comparisons. There was fairly strong sentiment that a rethinking of the content of the current Area E is needed, and that the use of more globally oriented language might be better aligned with UCSB's status as a world-class university. It was suggested that it seems time to take a leading role with a "signature" GE program that embodies the unique features of our school.

Concern was expressed regarding inability to monitor quantity and quality in courses approved for GE writing credit, due to instructor turnover and constantly changing syllabi. UCOP is considering the establishment of a UC-wide standard. This is only in the beginning stages and not immanent, and should not affect our deliberations. The possibility of an "exit exam" and alternatively a junior year "diagnostic exam" were discussed.

Mr. Marcuse presented the following list of recommendations from the GE Task Force report:

Reduce the total number of required courses so that BS, BM, BFA & colleges can/will join

- Create a position of "faculty director of GE" who will facilitate and coordinate creation of courses, monitor availability, etc.
- Introduce new disciplinary descriptions of core areas C-G
- Remove "Western Civ;" leave ethnicity at one
- Integrate writing requirement into core, specify new content

It was agreed that we need to collect updated information on the requirements of other GE Programs and how they are managed, particularly within UC (*action item*).

There was considerable discussion regarding the prospect of appointing a "faculty director" who would be charged with administering the GE Program. Although it is considered to be quite relevant to the potential success of the GE Program, this issue might best be proposed separately from the GE Program proposal, so as not to compromise acceptance of and ability to legislate the proposed program. The appropriate administrative process for proposing a position of this type should be researched simultaneously with drafting a GE proposal (*action item*). However, the position could be established after a revised GE program is legislated. Discussion of this topic will be folded into a broader discussion of issues of implementation and management at the end of the work group's overall agenda.

A model was suggested for implementation of a revised program wherein each incoming freshman class has the requirements in place when it enters as a kind of contract, and thus has a right to complete that GE program. Thus the current program would persist in some form until the last person who comes in under the current program has graduated or left. This poses the question of whether there should be a "transition phase" of several years when students could choose between programs. It was stated that, from an administrative standpoint, it would be better to announce the new system, take one year to implement it, and then declare the new system binding for all incoming students from then on. Regardless of whether or how the GE Program is revised, the senate could decree a "sunset provision," according to which ALL courses currently on the GE list must be resubmitted and reapproved, or they would be removed by a specified date. Of course it would be expedient to review the resubmitted courses under the reformed program.

It was agreed that the next meeting will be devoted to determining a "cookbook" list of criteria for core courses in the overall GE Program. Some criteria proposed by the GE

Task Force can be found at the top of page 8 of its May 2002 report. We will also determine which individuals need to be consulted for each established area of concern and which workgroup members will be assigned to these areas.

A separate meeting on the disciplinary descriptions will probably not be necessary. Dan Montello suggested that the social sciences' description could be augmented to note that they include mathematics. It was agreed that a forum and follow-up meeting on the Western Civilization and ethnicity issues should take place. It was suggested that we publish position papers in advance and start the forum with brief presentations of positions. It was also agreed that a separate meeting to discuss the writing requirement will be necessary.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 1/31, from 2:30-4:00 in Girvetz 1245.

After the meeting Mr. Marcuse clarified that official documents regarding GE reform will be posted on the Senate web site at: <http://www.senate.ucsb.edu/ge/>. Additionally, he will maintain a semi-official repository of documents to facilitate discussion within the work group and between the work group and the campus community, at: <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/ge/index.html>

Attest: Harold Marcuse and Claudine Michel