

General Education Committee Minutes: 1/13/2022

Present: Victor Piercey (Director), Kathryn Wolfer (Senate Liaison), Monica Frees (RSS), Katie Kalata (COB), Rachel Foulk (CASE), Sheila MacEachron (CHP), and Michele Harvey (CET).

Absent:, Angela Ryan (Academic Counselors), Andrew Peterson (EIO), Paul Zube (FNTFO), Mari Kermit-Canfield (FLITE), Peter Bradley (Interim Assessment Coordinator), and Leonard Johnson (Academic Affairs).

11 am – 12 noon, Zoom

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved unanimously

2. Announcements

The International Baccalaureate Diploma pilot proposal was approved by the Senate.

3. Consent Agenda

- Minutes from 9 December 2021

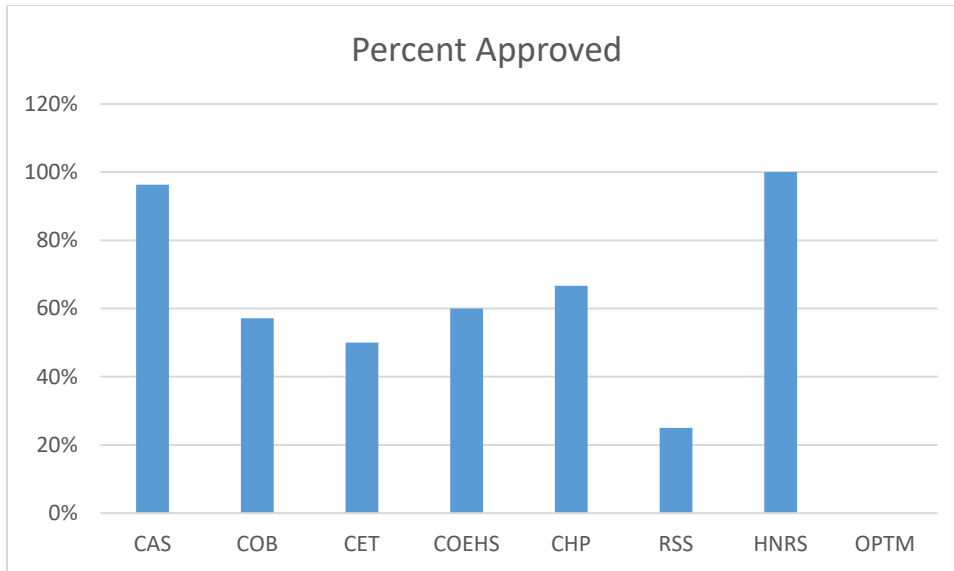
Approved unanimously

4. Proposals:

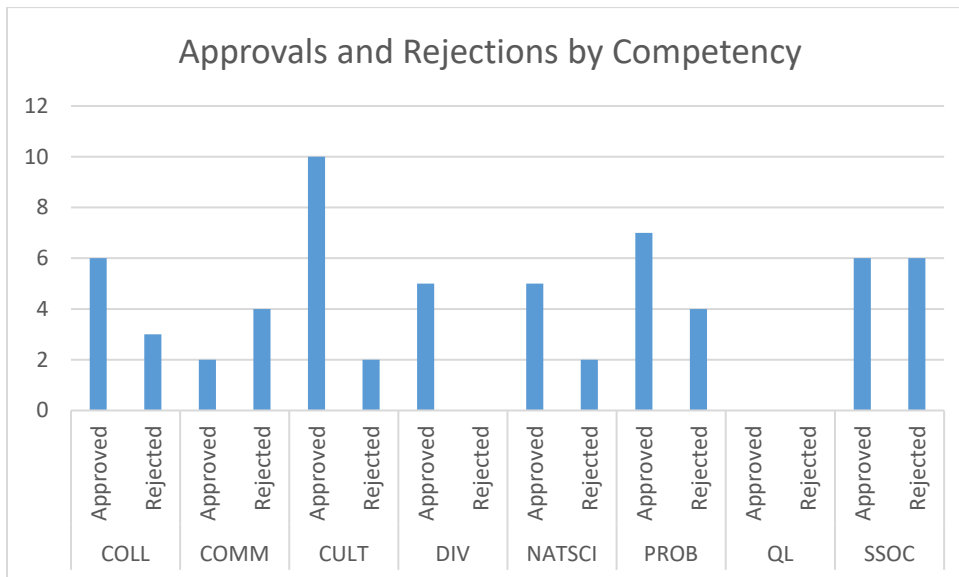
- None

5. Discussion: Subcommittee Composition Proposal

The DGE collected data concerning approvals and rejections of proposals by academic year, college, and competency. Overall, CAS (now CASE) has been more successful in getting proposals approved and have proposed the largest number of proposals.



Looking at approval rates for COLL and PROB in the figure below indicates that there are substantive conversations regarding the quality of the proposals, as those competency areas are not tied to discipline's turf nor student credit hours.



A likely explanation for the disparity in success rates among colleges is the involvement of CAS faculty in general education provides CAS proposers with knowledge of what subcommittees are looking for allowing them to tailor their proposals accordingly. This is another indication about the communication gap between evaluators and proposers that a working group is hoping to fix.

Other comments noted (a) turnover in subcommittee membership and leadership may lead to inconsistency, and some onboarding and offboarding for members could be very helpful, and (b) it would also be interesting to find out how many non-CAS faculty considered submitting proposals and chose not to do so.

Concerning the proposed changes to the subcommittee structure (see below), the UGEC felt that we should send this to the Senate so that we can have the proposed minor changes (giving the School of Education an opportunity to serve on subcommittees) in place for the next academic year.

The proposal was approved unanimously.

Proposed Changes to General Education Subcommittees

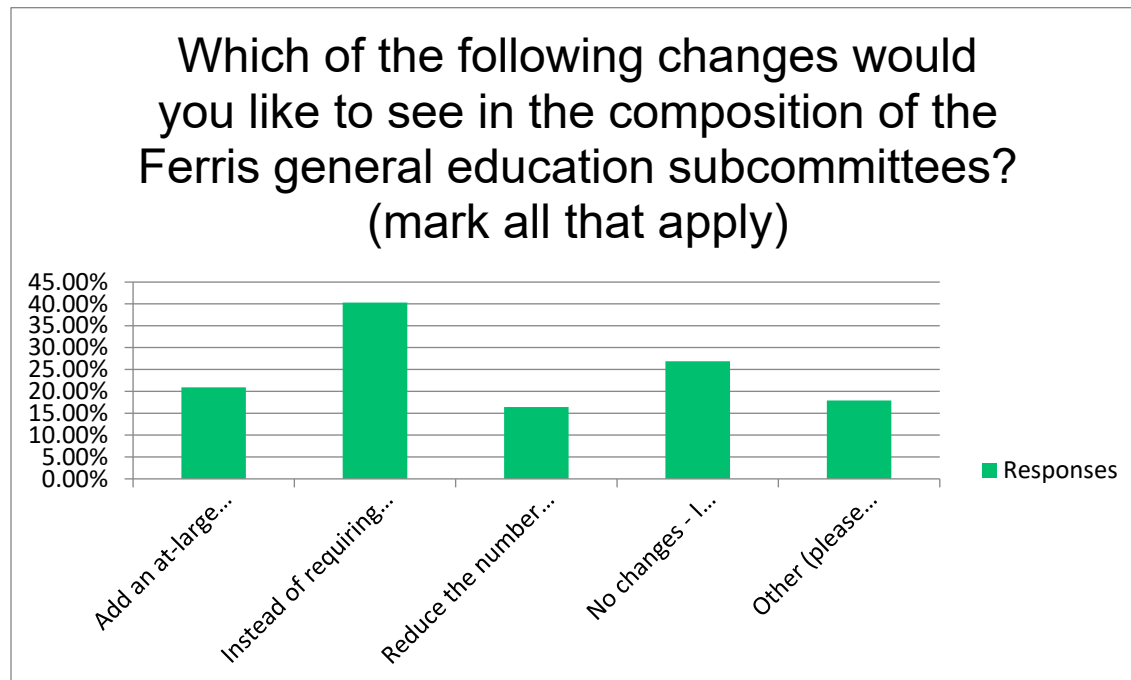
Background

Starting in the Fall 2020 Semester, the College of Education and Human Services was disbanded, with the School of Education (SOE) joining the College of Arts and Sciences (becoming the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education – CASE) and the other units joining the College of Business (COB). As a consequence, those faculty from the former College of Education and Human Services no longer have specific representation on the general education subcommittees and are represented by CASE at-large representatives where they exist (for SOE) and by any representatives from COB.

In the Fall 2021 Semester, the University General Education Committee (UGEC) was approached by the Director of SOE with a request to make adjustments to the subcommittee composition so that they can have a voice in general education governance. The UGEC came up with several possibilities and conducted a survey. The options were (in the same order in the chart):

1. Add an at-large representative from CASE to each subcommittee where none currently exist.
2. Change the subcommittee composition to 1 representative from each undergraduate college.
3. Reduce the number of representatives from specific CASE departments.
4. No change
5. Other

The results of the survey ($n = 67$) were:



The “other” entries, along with general comments from a comment box (not required to complete the survey) are attached as an addendum.

Most of the qualitative responses indicated a tension between the role of representation across colleges and the role of subject matter experts in general education governance.

Recommendation

The first table below represents current subcommittee compositions, and the second table contains proposed subcommittee compositions. Non-trivial changes are highlighted in yellow in both the current and proposed tables (trivial changes are deletions of references to COEHS and changing CAS to CASE).

Current

Competency	Composition
Collaboration	1 representative from each undergraduate college and FLITE (CAS, COB, COEHS, CET, COHP, and FLITE)
Communication	2 representatives from ELWL (CAS), 2 representatives from Humanities (CAS), and 4 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE.
Culture	1 representative from Humanities (CAS), 1 representative from ELWL (CAS), 1 representative from CAS, and 3 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Diversity	1 representative from ELWL (CAS), 1 representative from Humanities (CAS), 1 representative from Social and Behavioral Sciences (CAS), 3 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE, 1 representative from the Senate International Education Committee, and 1 representative from the Senate Diversity Committee
Natural Science	1 representative from Biological Sciences (CAS), 1 representative from Physical Sciences (CAS), 1 representative from CAS, and 3 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Problem Solving	1 representative from each undergraduate college and FLITE (CAS, COB, COEHS, CET, COHP, and FLITE)
Quantitative Literacy	3 representatives from Mathematics (CAS), 3 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Self and Society	3 representatives from Social and Behavioral Sciences (CAS), 3 representatives from non-CAS undergraduate colleges or FLITE

Proposed

Competency	Composition
Collaboration	1 representative from each undergraduate college and FLITE (CASE, COB, CET, COHP, and FLITE)
Communication	2 representatives from ELWL (CASE), 2 representatives from the Speech Communication area within Humanities (CASE), 1 at-large representative from CASE, and 4 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE.
Culture	1 representative from Humanities (CASE), 1 representative from ELWL (CASE), 1 representative from CASE, and 3 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Diversity	1 representative from ELWL (CASE), 1 representative from Humanities (CASE), 1 representative from Social and Behavioral Sciences (CASE), 1 at-large

	representative from CASE, 4 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Natural Science	1 representative from Biological Sciences (CASE), 1 representative from Physical Sciences (CASE), 1 representative from CASE, and 3 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Problem Solving	1 representative from each undergraduate college and FLITE (CASE, COB, CET, COHP, and FLITE)
Quantitative Literacy	2 representatives from Mathematics (CASE), 1 at-large representative from CASE, 3 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE
Self and Society	2 representatives from Social and Behavioral Sciences (CASE), 1 at-large representative from CASE, 3 representatives from non-CASE undergraduate colleges or FLITE

Rationale

Given the results of the survey, the UGEC noted an interest in potential major changes to the subcommittee compositions, but not enough to provide us with a mandate for large-scale reform at this time. We intend to continue discussions over the coming years about potential major moves. But in the interim, the UGEC wanted to address the SOE concern over representation.

Regarding the other units of the former COEHS, the UGEC believes that they can make their voices heard by serving as a representative of COB. Likewise, the UGEC believes that where an at-large representative of CASE exists, the SOE can make their voices heard by serving in such capacity. Accordingly, the changes we propose involve adding an at-large CASE representative where none currently exist together with other changes to address the balance.

Specifically, the rationale for each change is:

1. Communication – oral and written communication is uniquely critical to the mission of Ferris State University and as such there is a special role for expertise in the teaching of communication that is not present in the other subcommittees. Accordingly, we do not propose reducing the number of representatives from ELWL and from Humanities. Additionally, we clarify that representatives from Humanities should come from the Speech Communication area. We propose adding an at-large CASE representative through which SOE has an opportunity to participate and add an additional non-CASE representative to rebalance the subcommittee.
2. Diversity – the slots for Senate international and diversity committees often go unfilled, and it is difficult to fill them due to a mismatch in the timing between general education subcommittee assignments and Senate committee assignments. Accordingly, we propose eliminating those positions and replacing them with an at-large CASE representative and a non-CASE representative. Those interested in global affairs and diversity are likely to serve in both capacities, and we recommend that the diversity subcommittee continue to collaborate with those Senate committees.

3. Quantitative Literacy and Self and Society – in both of these subcommittees, we recommended adding an at-large CASE representative and removing a department-specific CASE representative (Mathematics in Quantitative Literacy and Social Sciences in Self and Society) to maintain the balance between CASE and non-CASE representation.