

General Education Committee Minutes: 4/7/2022

Present: Victor Piercey (Director), Kathryn Wolfer (Senate Liaison), Monica Frees (RSS), Rachel Foulk (CASE), Mari Kermit-Canfield (FLITE), Katie Kalata (COB), Andrew Peterson (EIO), and Angela Ryan (Academic Counselors).

Absent Michele Harvey (CET), Paul Zube (FNTFO), Sheila MacEachron (CHP), Peter Bradley (Interim Assessment Coordinator), and Leonard Johnson (Academic Affairs).

11 am – 12 noon, Zoom

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved unanimously

2. Consent Agenda

- Minutes from 17 March 2022

Approved unanimously except for one abstention

3. Discussion: Advisory Board

In Spring 2021, APRC recommended:

“Since the program does not have a traditional advisory board with external stakeholders, we encourage the program to consider creating an advisory board or substitute method for obtaining feedback and information that an advisory board typically provides to help inform the impact of general education on student success”

This was discussed in a UGEC meeting on 3/18/21, and the following options were identified:

- Forming an advisory board
- Close relationship with external organization (like Association for General and Liberal Studies), similar to Honors
- Adding gen ed questions to surveys (internship supervisors, alumni)
- Adjusting the UGEC composition

An advisory board is different from internal governance in that external stakeholders can participate

We discussed stakeholders and came up with:

- Faculty who teach gen ed courses
- All academic programs (majors, minors, certificates)

- Note: all programs give up a lot of credit hours for gen ed
- Employers
- Students
- Alumni

Then we discussed advantages/disadvantages of options:

- A disadvantage of an advisory board is that we don't get continuous feedback the same way we do when we have representation on the committee. Advisory board often only meets annually for a "check-in" – often more of a formal meeting.
- An advisory board adds another layer of governance that may not be necessary.
- An advantage of adding stakeholders to the UGEC is that we get immediate feedback on important questions as we need it. We could add a student rep and an alumni rep to the UGEC.
- Maybe add multiple students from across campus to reflect diversity of programs. Maybe 2 or 3 total students, find some way group programs/undergraduate college. Or one from each undergrad college? (voting or non-voting members?)
- Could be helpful to have an external advisory board though: advantage is that (a) employers hire from across programs, (b) could provide regular input from outside of Ferris. Not just employers, also community members. Provide a different perspective. Plus alumni (1 or 2) – often don't appreciate gen ed until you have been out of college for a few years. Could also include CC reps.
- Need to think about what we are asking UGEC members/external advisory board members to do.

The UGEC converged on adding students in some form to the UGEC. For external stakeholders: options include

1. An external advisory board consisting of employers, community members, alumni, and community college representatives that would meet annually.
2. Ask programs/departments/schools to pose gen ed questions to program advisory boards. This would take less effort, provide more data, can include other orgs on campus (OMSS for example). We would make this a small ask – just one or two questions and rotate them by year.

Advantage of advisory board – can get in depth knowledge, have some back-and-forth to get at heart of responses.

Another advantage of advisory board – an advisory board represents a commitment to our gen ed program, represents value that they see in gen ed.

Could do both in conjunction and have them play off each other. For example, meet with an external advisory board and select questions based on that meeting. Then bring responses back to advisory board.

More generally – we can triangulate. Send out survey to other advisory boards, then do something with alumni as a secondary discussion.

Disadvantage of advisory board – how do you select employers to represent 180 different programs?

We should note that alumni typically have the most useful feedback.

The UGEC converged on a hybrid of the two (with fixed advisory board). An advantage of discussions with external stakeholders is that we can educate them on the value of general education, and what it means.

We could pilot the broader data collection at the end of Fall 2022. If time permits at the next meeting, we can come up with some initial questions.

The DGE will write up a proposal for consideration in Fall 2022.