

Minutes
University Council on General Education
September 10, 2008 Meeting

In Attendance: Professors Brad Carter, Ken Hamilton, Victoria Lockwood, Mark McPhail, Pamela Patton, and Wayne Woodward; Associate Dean Robb Pocklington; Associate Dean Gary Moskowitz; University Honors Program Director David D. Doyle; Associate Dean Jennifer Haden; Associate Dean Dennis D. Cordell; and Assistant to the Associate Dean for General Education Julian Guevara.

Review of Council Minutes

Cordell asked the Council to review the minutes for the meeting of April 9, 2008. The minutes were approved as written.

Welcome and Council Review

Dr. Cordell welcomed new and returning members to the first meeting of the 2008-2009 academic year of the University Council on General Education. Dr. Cordell asked the members to introduce themselves by name and department/division. Dr. Cordell let Council members know that current members Joe Kobylka and Rick Worland have schedule conflicts for the fall, but will return in Spring 2009. They will be replaced for the Fall term by Brad Carter and Mark McPhail, respectively. We are waiting for confirmation for a new Student Representative. Other Council members are Professors Milton Gosney, Ken Hamilton, Victoria Lockwood, Pamela Patton, Brad Thompson (new to the Council), Pia Vogel, Wayne Woodward; and ex-officio members Rob Pocklington (Associate Dean for Student Advising), Gary Moskowitz (Associate Dean for Undergraduate Business Programs), Jennifer Haden (Associate Dean for Student Records), and David Doyle (Assistant Dean and Director of the University Honors Program).

Dr. Cordell mentioned to the Council that the Provost has announced that he will move ahead with a committee to review the General Education Curriculum this year. The aim is to produce a set of proposals by the summer and then get it to the appropriate bodies (such as Faculty Senate) for approval. Provost Ludden has asked Associate Vice Provost Tom Tunks and Dr. Cordell to co-chair this committee. Dr. Cordell mentioned that he is pleased that the Provost asked him to be a part of the review committee since Dr. Cordell has been a part of the Council for a good number of years. The review committee, which has not been named, may well ask the Council for input and involvement regarding the current GEC.

The Common Educational Experience (1980's-1996) was drastically changed because of staffing and budget limitations about a third of the way through. Council members that were also a part of the review following the CEE may recall that in certain areas there was a lot of hostility among colleagues who served on the committees that produced the current GEC. Disagreements are a normal part of the review process, but Cordell hopes that civility will be maintained. It is encouraging to see that the schools at SMU have found sufficient common ground to maintain a single general education curriculum over the decades. Other universities have not managed to do so.

One of the biggest challenges the current Curriculum has faced is a shortage of Cultural Formations (CF) courses, due to faculty availability and budget. Overall, however, we have managed to provide sufficient seats in these courses, in part because of CF offerings in the international programs, and in part because of the Formal Exemptions offered to transfer students and specific majors in SEAS and Meadows. Most of the Cultural Formations courses are taught by our tenured and tenure-track faculty, who enjoy teaching these courses because they are inter-disciplinary and often grow out of their research interests. We are in hopes that Cultural Formations courses in some form or another will continue to be a part of the general education curriculum. Following these introductory remarks, a lively discussion followed about Perspectives, Cultural Formations, Information Technology, and Written English offerings as well as about the courses offered this past summer as part of an introductory Bridge Program formulated by Dr. Vicki Hill of the LEC.

Course Proposals

A handful of Course Proposals were handed out. Dr. Cordell requested the Council members review the new course proposals and be prepared to discuss and vote on them at the next Council meeting.

Handouts:

Dr. Cordell shared a handout with the Council which gives a history of the UCGE, its activities, and the way it operates.

Dr. Cordell brought to the attention of Council members an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on 6/12/08, "Encountering the Middle Ages: Spain and the Meadows Museum," which is one of our Cultural Formations courses ((CF 3353) Medieval Ideas), coordinated by Bonnie Wheeler.

The Council adjourned its meeting at 4:00pm.

Council members received the following documents:

1. Agenda;
2. Minutes;
3. New course proposals:
 - a. Cultural Formations/Human Diversity: Genetic Determinism and Free Will, (CFB 3313), submitted by Teresa Strecker on 8/20/08 (course already approved as CF, now presented for Human Diversity consideration);
 - b. Cultural Formations: The Arts in their Cultural Context: The City of the Imagination, (MSA 1350/CFB 33XX), submitted by Greg Warden on 4/15/08;
 - c. Cultural Formations: Concepts of Evolution (ANTH 4336/CFB 33XX), submitted by Ron Wetherington on 9/8/08;
4. Distribution of handouts:
 - a. "University Council on General Education"
 - b. "Encountering the Middle Ages: Spain and the Meadows Museum," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 13, 2008. The article is an overview of CF 3353 (MDVL 3353) Medieval Ideas, coordinated by Professor Bonnie Wheeler