**Fall 2014**

As the Faculty Senate approved the change in membership proposed by the Gen Ed committee last spring, two new members were added to represent the occupational education programs and degrees: Lindsay Henning from BESS and Myra Whitt from SHPS. In addition, early in the semester Matt Pearcy replaced Steve Sparks as our science representative.

In the fall of 2014, the Gen Ed committee reviewed the following courses.

 SPA 135

 SPA 201

 SPA 202

All three were proposed as additions to the Arts and Humanities AGEC list, with a required writing assessment. The issue this brought up is that all 200-level A/H courses are automatically included on the list of intensive writing (IWR) courses as well, which necessitates an ENG 101 prerequisite. No Spanish class has that prerequisite, obviously. So the Gen Ed committee modified that rule to allow for 200-level foreign language courses to be added to the A/H AGEC list without being IWR designated. This exception will not apply to any course conducted in English. SPA, as a 100-level class, did not raise this issue and was also recommended.

The new Gen Ed assessment process continued apace. On Assessment Day in September, the Written Communication, Oral Communication and Historical Perspective groups met to discuss their on-going collection efforts. The Quantitative Literacy, Scientific Literacy and Behavioral Science groups met to finalize rubrics and review procedures for their collection process, starting this fall. And the Creativity, Critical Thinking and Arts and Humanities groups met to work on rubrics that will be used when they start assessing their respective outcomes in 2015.

The major issue tackled in the fall was that of restricted Gen Ed options, that is, programs that require students to take particular classes on the AGEC list to fulfill a gen ed requirement, but do not make those required courses prerequisites for courses in their program. This issue with this is twofold. First, students who complete their gen ed requirements before starting a program are either forced to retake a gen ed class, impeding their progress or that requirement is waived. The first is problematic in terms of time to degree. And the second indicates that the class is NOT crucial to a student’s successful completion of a program. And second, the Gen Ed committee feels strongly that General Education must be general. The purpose of the general education requirements are to allow students to explore key issues, ideas and skills that are the hallmark of a well-educated person, and that will serve them no matter what career they choose. In fact, they are what students will take with them as they change careers. General education courses stand on their own and are not an adjunct to any particular program. It is therefore problematic to restrict students to particular courses when those courses are NOT specifically and explicitly required for a program’s core classes.

To address this issue, it was proposed to the curriculum committee to create a new category of “recommended” general education courses. These courses would be suggested to students following a particular degree path as most useful or relevant to their education. But students who have already completed their gen ed requirements elsewhere would not be required to retake a class to meet a degree programs restricted gen ed requirement. The curriculum committee approved the proposal.

The following degrees currently have restricted gen ed requirements:

* Ag Tech AAS – AGS/BIO 103 Plant Biology (science)
* Pre-Engineering – MAT 187 Precalculus (math), CHM 151 General Chemistry 1 (science)
* Aviation – GEO 212 Intro to Meteorology (science)
* Diesel – BIO/ENV 105 Environmental Biology (science)
* Graphic Design – ENG 101/102 or 103/104 (writing)
* Health Information Tech – BIO 159 or BIO 181 (science)
* Industrial Machine Mechanic – BIO/ENV 105 Environmental Bioogy (science)
* Nursing - ENG 101/102 or 103/104 (writing), BIO 156 Human Biology Allied Health or BIO 181 General Biology I (science), PSY 245 Human Growth and Development)
* Paralegal - ENG 101/102 or 103/104 (writing),
* Rad Tech – ENG 101/102 or 103/104 (writing), PHI 204 Ethical Issues in Health Care (critical thinking), BIO 201 Human Anatomy and Physiology I (science), PSY 245 Human Growth and Development (behavioral science)
* Social and Human Services – PSY 101 Introductory Psychology (behavioral science)
* Viticulture – CHM 130 Fundamental Chemistry (science)

The Gen Ed committee will follow up with these various degrees in the spring to change restricted gen ed requirements to either prerequisites or recommended courses, as per the Curriculum Committee decision referenced above.