

MINUTES
General Education Committee
September 16, 2025
1:00pm-2:30pm
Montecito Room

Members present: Michelle Hardley (Secretary, Registrar), Heather Keaney (Professor of History), Jana Mayfield Mullen (Director, Library & Information Services), Tatiana Nazarenko (Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness), Dave Wolf (Professor of Kinesiology), Telford Work (Chair, Professor of Religious Studies)

Absent:

I. Prayer – Heather Keaney

II. The minutes from April 22, 2025

The minutes were approved with minor corrections.

III. Committee’s responsibilities

Tatiana reviewed the committee responsibilities found in the faculty handbook. We will have some time as a committee in the next Faculty Meeting to review the handbook language and discuss if we want to propose any changes.

IV. Election of the Committee Chair

The committee discussed who was in the best position to take on the leadership role this year. Telford was elected chair of the committee.

V. COM-138 – International Rhetoric – Add to Common Skills and Emphasis: Justice Reconciliation and Diversity

The committee discussed the proposal. All of the required elements have been accounted for.

The committee voted to approve the course, effective Spring 2026.

VI. COM-087– Writing for the Media – Add to Common Skills and Emphasis: Writing Intensive

The committee discussed the proposal. There was some concern noted on the length of the writing assignments against the certification criteria for a Written Communication course. The new certification criteria look for a minimum of 4,000 words and we do not see that amount of writing outlined in the syllabus. The

additional word count might be covered by the in-class writing assignments, which don't outline a minimum word count in the syllabus.

Telford will reach out to Paul to confirm that the students will be writing at least 4,000 words (possibly amending the syllabus with a notation that the in-class assignments will be at least 2,000 words). He will need to do some small modifications to the syllabus to cover both the Writing Intensive (old GE category) and the Written Communication (new GE category) GE requirements.

The committee voted to approve the course pending Paul's certification of at least 4,000 words written and the changes needed in the syllabus. This change will be effective Spring 2026.

VII. The 2025 GE Senior Survey: Discussion of Findings

Tatiana gave a background on the changes made to the report since the last time the committee reviewed the survey. Committee members are encouraged to read the report again and suggest any changes to the Google document. This document will be included in the WSCUC self-study report.

We need to determine how we are going to approach the findings and how we will structure our time in the October 9th faculty forum to solicit broader faculty feedback. This faculty feedback will help us craft the final draft of the report.

The committee discussed some general thoughts on the report. As a whole, students seem to be ok with the GE curriculum. The PEA requirement was the most frequently noted concern. Other concerns centered around courses in the Common Context GE area. This makes some sense, as all students complete roughly the same 5 courses, making them more salient to the entire senior class over other courses which might be one of many options within their category. There is a sense that it is big, but committee members would have expected more criticism of size than what appeared in the data. The highest percentage of an area to cut was only shared by 15% of the respondents.

For the faculty forum time, the committee agreed that a short presentation of the findings (maybe three key takeaways) and leaving a larger time for table talk and large group sharing of those discussions would be ideal. The goal is to process the overall results but not the specific comments in the report. On each table we could have handouts with specific questions where they could note their discussion responses. We could collect those at the end for use in further refining the report.

Telford asked that we send suggestions to him for specific points to raise. He will consolidate those ideas along various themes and we can determine which topics we want to include in the presentation and on the table handouts.

A few questions that were suggested towards the end of the meeting were:

1. Are you satisfied with our GE (why or why not)?
2. In the current day, what do we want our GE program to accomplish?
The response may be different in 2025 than it was in 2006.
3. What direction do we want to move in this season of higher education?

Committee members should read through the report and send suggested topics to Telford prior to the next GE Committee meeting.

VIII. The JRD Student and Faculty Survey: Discussion of Findings

This item will be discussed in a future meeting.

IX. Other Business

None.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Hardley