

General Education Committee

Minutes, May 13, 1999

Present: Dressen, Lee, Lund, Walters, Werlock, Wilson

Also present were newly elected members for next year's committee: Beth Abdella, Susan Bauer, Gerry Hoekstra, and student Todd Sorensen

Chair Abby Werlock welcomed the newly elected members to the meeting.

1. Minutes: The minutes were approved for the meeting of May 6, 1999.
2. Eric Lund brought a request for our consideration from a student intending to enroll in Religion 262, an interim abroad in Germany, which currently is approved for HWC credit. The student has asked if, with some additional work, she might have the course count for BTS-T. After some discussion the committee ruled that this could not be done, primarily because the general education attribute for a course must remain attached to the unique content of the course, and single exceptions or alterations to the understandings for the course as a whole should not be allowed.

3. Course Proposals:

#754 Soc/Anthro 264: *Mass Media, Youth, and Society* HBS:Approved

For this course the committee requests that Jim Tallon, Chair of the Department, continue in the fall to work with the visiting professor who will be offering this course to assist him in developing the syllabus and reading list.

#750 Environmental Studies 201: *Topics in Global Environmental Politics*

Approval will be carried over to September because the additional information sought by the committee has not come in.

4. The committee approved the request for retroactive approval of ORC credit for Professor Kathleen Shea's course in the 1998 program in Australia. In the fall she will submit a full written proposal for on-going ORC credit for the course.
5. The committee denied a request from a student for EIN credit for a University of Minnesota course on medical ethics. The student had not taken the required prerequisite course for EIN study, and the course in question did not contain sufficient attention to normative perspectives and to Christian ethics.
6. The committee engaged in some further discussion of its activities in monitoring the general education curriculum. It was noted that department chairs should be kept informed about the need for monitoring specific courses in their department and about other monitoring activities

undertaken by the GEC. Several specific suggestions were discussed, for example, that with regard to the EIN objective we should especially provide clarification about the meaning of "normative," and that we should investigate other areas of need for clarification (e.g., the need to clarify what is "western" to mean in the requirement of Historical Studies in Western Culture).

7. For its final order of business the committee turned to a discussion of the draft report prepared by the secretary and chair of the committee. Several suggestions were made for editorial changes or slight revisions in the document. The committee approved the report, with the understanding that these changes would be incorporated into the final version. This report will be posted on the Web along with the minutes and other records of the committee. The Secretary will send an e-mail message to the faculty at large letting them know that this material will thus be available.

8. Prior to adjournment, the members thanked Abby Werlock for her service this year as Chair of the Committee. Appreciation and thanks were extended all around for a productive year of work on the committee and for a most positive and collegial atmosphere within the committee.

9. The members of next year's committee held a brief caucus to elect their Chair. They elected Eric Lund to chair the committee in the first semester and Beth Abdella to chair the committee in the second semester.

Ronald J. Lee, Secretary