

# GEOC Meeting September 9, 2011

*In Attendance: Murphy Sewall, Anabel Perez, Xae Alicia Reyes, Mike Young, Elizabeth Jockusch, Richard Jones, Peter Kaminsky, Rosa Helena Chinchilla, Robert Stephens, Tom Deans, Eric Schultz, Françoise Dussart, Alex Shvartsman.*

*Not Present: Tom Roby, Olivier Morand, Suresh Nair, Robert Cromley, John Ayers, Wally Madych, Sarah Winter, and Erin Eighan.*

Meeting called to order at 11:10am.

## 1. Minutes of the April 25, 2011 meeting.

**Motion to approve the minutes as presented. Motion seconded.**

**Motion carried.**

## 2. Announcements

- *Membership.* GEOC is in need of two new members to co-chair the Writing Competency and Second Language subcommittees. Senate Nominating Committee is aware of our need and is working to appoint two new members.
- *CLAS C&CC Chair.* Murphy Sewall is scheduled to meet with new CLAS C&CC Chair, Bob Michel, later this week. The main topic of this meeting will be study abroad courses that transfer back with general education credit without UConn course equivalency. Current transfer rules dictate that study abroad courses accredited as a UConn equivalent carry the gen ed attributes of the UConn course and appear on the transcript with the UConn number.

## 3. Reports and Discussion

### Course Alignment

- *Summer Pilot Group.* The pilot group consisted of 4 departments: ARE, ART & ARTH, GSCI, and NURS; all departments submitted Course Alignment Forms as requested. The following GEOC content areas and competencies were represented in this group: CA1, CA2, CA3, and W.

Murphy Sewall asked that the relevant GEOC subcommittees review the CAFs to establish whether the questions on the form elicit the kind of information subcommittees wish to see to determine how courses are continuing to meet criteria for the General Education curriculum.

- *CAF and Cover Letter.* A revised letter and form draft were circulated in advance of this meeting. The changes in wording reflect conversations Murphy Sewall and Anabel Perez had with some of the participating departments and seek to soften language to better reflect that the goals of this project are to determine how, not if, gen ed courses continue to meet gen ed criteria and to seek out best practices that can be shared with other faculty.
- *AY12 Round.* Once the subcommittees have reviewed the revised CAF form and cover letter, we will begin with the round 1, the AY12 group.

### Discussion:

- *Computer Technology Competency.* Because CTC designations are not assigned to courses, and the Course Alignment process is course-based, Computer Technology Competency is not represented.
- A suggestion as made to perhaps do away with the Computer Technology Competency altogether as it is relic of the old gen ed system, not an academic requirement in the same way as Second Language, W and Q, and is a competency that is impossible to govern.
- It was agreed that both the Information Literacy and Computer Technology competencies were set up in an unmanageable way.

#### 4. Subcommittee Reports

##### CA3 Science and Technology

The CA3 subcommittee recommended **that the GEOC not approve** the proposal to revise the following CA3 course:

GSCI 1052 Laboratory Earth and Life through Time

Note: GSCI 1050 Earth and Life through Time with Laboratory is a CA3 Lab course. GSCI 1051 Earth and Life through Time, a CA3 non-lab course, is the lecture portion of GSCI 1050. GSCI 1052 Laboratory Earth and Life through Time, when a student has taken GSCI 1051 in an earlier semester, can be used to meet the CA3 lab requirement.

The proposal seeks to add GSCI 1051 as a prerequisite to GSCI 1052 to ensure that students enrolled in GSCI 1052 have already taken the lecture portion of the course.

The CA3 report states:

“The CA3 Committee supports the desire to add GEOS 1051 as a prerequisite for GEOS 1052. However, after correspondence with the instructor, Jean Crespi to clarify the technical issues that led them to conclude that instructor consent is necessary, it emerged that they do wish to prioritize students in ways that violate the following GEOC principle:

**c. No academic unit may set enrollment bars or priorities for their own students for any General Education course, with the following exceptions.**

**(1). An academic unit may reserve any percentage of seats for its own students in a 2000+level W course that is not also approved for a content area.**

**(2). An academic unit may reserve a maximum of 50% of capacity for its own students in any section of a 2000+level course approved for Group IV (Diversity and Multiculturalism) as long as it is not also approved for any other content area.**

Here's the email from Jean:

The idea is to prioritize enrollment to three groups: (1) students who have waited the longest and (2) students who are planning to become Geoscience majors and (3) students in the Environmental Science major, who are using 1050 as a requirement for that major. One of the main reasons the course was created was to deal with group (2). The course has a huge waiting list as there are only 20 seats available each semester. Our program assistant keeps a manual waitlist from semester to semester, and allows in the students who have waited the longest, in some cases several semesters. Right now we have waitlist of about 26 to 30 students for 1052.

A good number of our majors come via the 1051 course and so need 1052. If we can't prioritize them, then they will lose a year or more (since they are circumvented by seniors) or need to switch to another major. On group 1, we do a balance between students who have waited the longest and a senior who absolutely needs it to graduate. We work back through to the oldest waitlist. I don't know if this is kosher with you, but the idea is to be as far as possible.

Thus, the CA3 Committee is unable to support this proposal in its current form and recommends that it be returned to the department for consideration of whether they wish to maintain the instructor consent (and thus drop GEOS1052 from the general education curriculum) or resubmit the proposal eliminating instructor consent.”

Discussion:

- There are **serious** enrollment pressures in lab courses that fulfill the CA3 lab requirement.

- GEOC should ask OIR for data about these enrollment pressures; specifically, we should ask what percentage of CA3 lab seats are empty this semester in order to get a sense of how heavy the demand is for Ca3 lab courses.

Anabel Perez will contact the GSCI department to notify them of this recommendation; Elizabeth Jockusch and John Ayers will be cc:ed.

#### Writing Competency

The W subcommittee recommended **approval** of the following course for inclusion in the W competency:

HDFS 4181W      Early Childhood Development and Education

**Motion seconded.**

**Motion carried.**

#### Arts and Humanities

The subcommittee reviewed the two CAFs-- ART 1000 and ARTH 1137 -- in the webCAF and thought highly of the information that was received.

### **5. Other Matters**

#### GEOC's "image problem"

Peter Kaminsky raised the issue of perceptions toward GEOC by the University at large.

Discussion:

- One member asked whether the faculty Peter Kaminsky has spoken to about GEOC are disputing points of process or philosophy: is a question of timing or is GEOC viewed as a group that is meddlesome in academic freedom?
- Several faculty noted that general education is not what is rewarded at research institutions; this becomes a major strike against GEOC as it tries to do its work.
- One member suggested that the image of the GEOC and of gen ed in broader terms could be softened by focusing attention on seeking out best practices.
- Another member suggested that GEOC could try to increase outreach to new faculty about gen ed.
- One member asked why GEOC did not encourage more of a dialogue between itself and the faculty. It could be beneficial to have an asynchronous dialogue with faculty, or perhaps have a GEOC page about our philosophy.

Meeting adjourned at 12:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anabel Perez  
GEOC Administrator