Committee on General Education
September 10, 2019
Notes on Meeting

Present: Sue Abbotson, Becky Caouette, Stephanie Costa, Joan Dagle, David Espinosa, Sharon Galloway, Dragan Gill, Harielys Jerez-Nolasco, James Magyar (presiding), Chris Marco, William Martin, Michael Michaud, Silvia Oliveira, Sue Pearlmutter, Maureen Reddy, Holly Shadoian, Earl Simson, Jiyun Wu, Joe Zornado.

1. Welcome back COGE Members 2019-2020. We have a student member of COGE this year, Medical Imaging major Harielys Jerez-Nolasco.

2. Report on Summer Assessment – Maureen Reddy

   COGE had an extended discussion of the Report. What follows comprises a summary of key points and conclusions, such as they are, and not a transcript.

   1) We concur that the primary concern in our reflection should be the student experience.

   2) There was strong consensus that the chair should contact instructors of Connections courses proposed for Spring, 2020, and exhort them to revise the syllabi to clearly identify the ways in which the course meets the goals of the category and, if necessary, to modify the method of instruction and assignments to meet those goals. The voice of Chairs and former Chairs was heard: the request will go through the chairs, not directly to the instructors. In order to have an impact on scheduling, the deadline for responses will be set to mid-October. (Does Friday, October 18, sound reasonable?)

   3) While there is reasonable consensus that Connections courses should be taught by full-time faculty, there is less certainty about how to move to that goal, and how quickly. The chair feels that a combination of conversation and attrition would work better than a fiat.

   4) A coordinator for Connections courses is a reasonable and acceptable proposal, but the position becomes tangled up in the designation of the courses. Here is an attempt to summarize a complex discussion. The visibility of Connections courses to students (and instructors) would be enhanced if they had their own code, CONN 2xx for example. Since they are individually approved courses, each one would have a number, in contrast to the multiple sections of FYS 100. This designation would allow the coordinator to control what was offered and to evaluate the delivery of the curriculum in the courses, including classroom visits. However, for bookkeeping purposes, the courses would then be removed from the credit-hour count for departments, and in a time of potential cutting back on programs, departments could be adversely affected. Several possibilities were considered. One suggestion would be to tag the courses with codes like ENGL-C or HIST-C and thus have the courses operated under the coordinator but accrue to the department for statistical and fiscal purposes. Further exploration is needed. There was some feeling that absent effective control, there would be no point in having a coordinator. Several of us will pursue possible solutions.

   We also considered (briefly) issues of articulation with CCRI and URI and began to consider ways to accept incoming students' programs as a whole rather than on a course-by-course basis. We need a little more information on the status of the CCRI revisions, but may not be able to wait until their reform is completed.

Reports posted but not discussed:

   A. List of Connection courses including original proposals

   B. Writing in the Discipline (Mike Michaud)

   C. Course Enrollments Fall 2019

   D. Enrollment Comparison Fall 2018-Fall 2019

See http://faculty.ric.edu/organic/coge/ for the latest documents.

James G. Magyar
September 11, 2019