

**MINUTES**  
**General Education Committee**  
**November 9, 2021**  
**2:30-4:00 p.m.**  
**GLC 103**

**Members present:** Stephen Contakes (Professor of Chemistry), Michelle Hardley (Registrar), Steve Hodson (Professor of Music), Jana Mayfield Mullen (Director of the Westmont Library), Tatiana Nazarenko (Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness), Greg Spencer (Professor of Communication Studies)

**I. Prayer** – Steve Contakes

**II. Approve the Minutes of October 26th**

The meeting minutes were approved.

**III. TA-142 – Global Theatre – Add to Common Inquiries: Thinking Globally**

The committee discussed the course proposal and whether it covers the needed certification criteria.

The course was approved and will be effective Spring 2022. Steve C. will inform the Theatre Arts department of this approval.

**IV. Consideration of the PRCs Response to the GE Report**

The GE Committee reviewed and discussed the Program Review Committee's (PRC) response to the annual GE report. The PRC indicated "developed" and "highly developed" scores in all categories.

Steve C. will send a memo to the PRC reviewers thanking them for their hard work and feedback.

**V. Written Communication ILO Assessment Recommendation**

Sarah Skripsky has submitted the final version of the Written Communication ILO assessment results and suggestions for next steps. She is recommending that we decouple the Writing and Speech Intensive GE areas as they focus on two different skill sets and should have separate learning outcomes appropriate to the skill set. The underlying concern is that we are not targeting the Written Communication and Oral Communication ILOs effectively given the current GE structure and the large class sizes found in some of the Writing Intensive courses.

The GE Committee discussed these this concern and possible ways to move forward. If the GE areas are decoupled then attention needs to be paid to the ramifications of this decision on the Speech Intensive courses, overall faculty load and departmental presence within the GE requirements. If we move forward and

don't account for these issues then we could be creating bigger problems for departments, teaching loads and the college budget.

Tatiana noted that there is a meeting scheduled in early December to discuss the findings of the Written and Oral Communication ILO assessments. The thoughts and ideas from this meeting will be discussed in the December GE Committee meeting.

## **VI. Continued Discussion on the Serving Society GE Area**

The GE Committee continued to discuss the current status of the Serving Society GE area. Topics included the overall purpose of this GE area, whether service learning was something we wanted to continue (is it important and aligned with our mission?), and where it might best be placed in the academic curriculum (GE requirement, major requirement, graduation requirement?). It is clear that some change needs to be made, as the area is not able to be assessed as it has no Student Learning Outcome (SLO). So either an SLO needs to be developed for the category or it needs to move into a major or graduation requirement.

Tatiana thinks that the serving society GE area should not be a part of our GE and consequently assessed as part of our GE. Citing Steve Hodson's research on service requirements at other institutions, she noted that most other institutions do not include service learning in their GE curriculum but make it a graduation requirement. She strongly recommends we do the same. Steve Contakes noted that this might be a reasonable step to take, given that we do not actually offer academic instruction in connection with this GE, even he and other members of the committee were conflicted since the ideal of service is deeply-embedded in our institutional ethos as well as laid out explicitly in our mission statement.

A poll of the committee revealed the GE Committee members do think that this was an important requirement to have for students, as it calls for them to get off campus and out into the world (for most experiences). There was some concern over a potential loss of status or importance if it was moved to a major or graduation requirement.

The GE Committee acknowledged that the current status of the Serving Society GE area is concerning and that if it was important, then it was important enough to do well. Since the GE area currently has no SLO and has not been assessed it is difficult to say if it is achieving its goals. The language in the combined document for the GE area may also not reflect the current status of collaboration between the Student Life division and the Academic division in curricular areas. A first step may be to create an SLO and then assess whether what we are doing is working against the SLO.

The committee discussed the bigger issue of what we want to see happen in this area, and how we might be able to reframe/reword the area to fit those goals and a

possible Student Learning Outcome. One member noted that they would be happy if students got off campus, met people in the community and engaged in service.

To help decide whether or not the Serving Society should remain in the GE the committee decided that next time they would consider what it might look like to retain it as a GE requirement or make it a graduation requirement. To do that Steve C. proposed two questions to guide our continued discussion:

1. If we leave Serving Society in the GE, how do we communicate its value in a GE SLO and assessment cycle?
2. If we remove it, how do we communicate its value in its new area and how can it be properly supported?

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Hardley