**Council on General Education Minutes**

**February 15, 2018 – 3:30 p.m. – Stipes 501**

**Spring 2018 CGE Membership**

Steve Bennett Geology (Math/Natural Sciences)

Krista Bowers Sharpe Library (At-Large)

Ute Chamberlin History (Humanities)

Jonathan Day Political Science (Social Sciences)

Gary Daytner Educational Studies (At-Large)

Keith Holz, Chair Art (Humanities/Fine Arts)

Bob Intrieri Psychology (Social Sciences)

Kishor Kapale Physics (Math/Natural Sciences)

Mike Lukkarinen RPTA (Human Well-Being)

Kathleen O’Donnell-Brown English (Basic Skills/Writing)

Betsy Perabo Liberal Arts & Sciences (Multicultural)

David Zanolla Communication (Basic Skills/Public Speaking)

Colton Markey Student Government Association

Kyle Mayborn College of Arts & Sciences (Ex-Officio, Deans’ Council Rep.)

Nancy Parsons Office of the Provost (Ex-Officio, Provost’s Rep.)

Michelle Yager Advising Center (Ex-Officio, COAA Rep.)

##### GERC Members

Marjorie Allison English (Past Chair, CGE)

Cheryl Bailey Communication (Fine Arts & Communication)

Kristine Kelly Psychology (CAGAS)

Martin Maskarinec Computer Sciences (Business & Technology)

Gordon Pettit Philosophy (Arts & Sciences)

Diane Sandage Sociology & Anthropology (Past Chair, CGE)

Emily Shupe DFMH (Education & Human Services)

**CGE Members Excused/Absent**: Lukkarinen

**GERC Members Excused/Absent:** Sandage, Shupe

**Ex-Officio Members Excused/Absent:** None

**Visitors:**  Lori Baker-Sperry (Liberal Arts & Sciences, Provost’s Office Intern), Billy Clow (Dean, COFAC), John Cooper (Music), Anita Hardeman (Music), Buzz Hoon (Chair, Broadcasting and Journalism), John McMurtery (Music), John Mindeman (Music), Moises Molina (Music), Terry Solomonson (Music), Tammie Walker (Director, Music)

#### Call to Order and Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Chairperson Holz called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Several changes and amendments were made to the minutes of February 1, 2018, and they were approved as corrected. A verbal roll call was taken of members and guests.

**Announcements**

Chairperson Holz introduced new CGE member Bob Intrieri, Psychology, who will be placed on the Social Sciences subcommittee when they reconvene.

##### New Business

Provost’s Office Report – Associate Provost Parsons sent out the assessment information for Fall, Spring, and Summer 2016 and is working on Spring/Summer 2017. Gen Ed data is due to be returned to her tomorrow.

College of Arts and Sciences Report – Dr. Mayborn had nothing to report.

University Advising Report – Ms. Yager had nothing to report.

Faculty Senate Report – Dr. Perabo had nothing to report.

CGE Report: Chairperson Holz visited the Council for International Education (CIE) on February 5. They were interested in where CGE/GERC stood vis-à-vis any forthcoming recommendations on Global Issues courses. He told CIE that nothing has been resolved but two proposals are on the table, one of which underscores the importance of FLGI and advocates to keep it while the other recommends that it be eliminated. CIE told Chairperson Holz to “think big” and advocated for the greater goal of enhancing international education University wide. They reminded him that President Thomas has set a goal of enrolling 1,000 international students at some point in the future. Chairperson Holz invited the CIE chair to attend a CGE/GERC meeting. Dr. Perabo asked if CIE has been asked to review FLGI; Ms. Hamm responded that the Provost requested reviews of curriculum, Gen Ed, and Teacher Education but not of FLGI at this time.

Chairperson Holz was also invited to attend the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council meeting; Drs. Kelly and Pettit joined him there. The A&S Faculty Council is concerned about a proposal to change the Natural Sciences and Mathematics category to Natural Sciences and Quantitative Reasoning and have submitted a brief resolution asking that the name of the category not be changed. The resolution passed by a unanimous vote. Dr. Kelly spoke with the Faculty Council Chair the following day and told him that CGE/GERC has not voted on the Natural Sciences/Mathematics proposal. Dr. Pettit explained that the Council wanted CGE/GERC to have their input before any vote is taken on this topic in future. Chairperson Holz stated that CGE/GERC should factor the Faculty Council’s statement into its decision making process and advised that it should be taken seriously.

#### Old Business

Dr. Perabo’s Essential Skills and Core Knowledge General Education Proposal:

Dr. Perabo believes that CGE/GERC needs to make decisions about the writing requirement and making Humanities and Fine Arts separate categories. Dr. Perabo had proposed strengthening writing specifically in the Humanities because she served on the College of Arts and Sciences Essential Academic Skills Committee and saw that the Humanities did a substantially larger amount of reading, writing, and critical thinking than some of the other categories. She thinks it makes sense to separate the Humanities and Fine Arts categories because the work being done in them is substantially different.

Chairperson Holz suggested that the different definitions of the two categories and writing requirements for each side could be clarified a bit more. He observed that the Humanities/Fine Arts subcommittee in Fall 2017 recommended that the category be left as it is, although there was some strong dissent. He pointed out that in 2007, before the change to the current flexibility of 3 s.h. from Humanities and Fine Arts each and an additional 3 s.h. from either, the Registrar’s office was beset with over 60 requests per year to allow Fine Arts majors to take a Fine Arts class instead of a second Humanities class; those exceptions were granted in order to prevent Fine Arts majors going even farther above 120 s.h., but it created an onerous task to process those requests. Chairperson Holz quoted another statistic from the Registrar who in Fall 2017 told the Humanities/Fine Arts subcommittee that 540 students took two Humanities and one Fine Arts class to fulfill this requirement, while 258 took two Fine Arts classes and one Humanities. Chairperson Holz also pointed out that there are only 11 Gen Ed Fine Arts courses and 32 Humanities Gen Ed courses on the books, as well as 23 language classes which all count toward Humanities, so there is a much larger number of classes and faculty in Humanities than Fine Arts. Dr. Day asked how many of the 55 Humanities courses are actually taught, noting that just because they are on the books does not mean that they are actually offered.

Ms. O’Donnell-Brown pointed out that the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) specifies one Humanities, one Fine Arts, and the third a choice for the student in terms of this Gen Ed category. Chairperson Holz agreed this is another reason to keep the category together. Dr. Pettit observed that although IAI recommends this structure, this is not the way it is done with a number of WIU’s peer institutions, many of which have separate categories or require 6 s.h. of Humanities. He added that although there may be only 11 Fine Arts courses on the books, in any given semester there are a number of sections of these courses offered, which is not the case with Humanities courses in general.

Dr. Kelly suggested that Humanities and Fine Arts could remain one category, but students could be required to take two courses from a list of courses that require more writing and one course from a list of those courses that require less, regardless of which department the courses are from. Dr. Allison thought that writing was a separate issue from either overarching proposal because there was consensus that writing is extremely important but that some areas are not following through on what CGE/GERC expects of them. Chairperson Holz thinks that the topic of writing can be set aside and dealt with separately. Dr. Maskarinec agreed with Dr. Allison that writing supersedes categorization; if the writing component is removed, it removes the justification for the separation of the two parts and Dr. Perabo’s recommendation boils down to one Fine Arts and two Humanities courses without justification for that change. Dr. Perabo thinks there is a different set of skills and knowledge required for Humanities than for Fine Arts, so she would still want to have them separated. She agrees, however, that the writing component reinforced her desire to separate the two because Humanities does much more writing than most Fine Arts courses, except for Art History.

Associate Provost Parsons believes that writing across the curriculum is the ideal rather than focusing on one particular category or subcategory and would like to see the benchmark that shows that more writing is occurring in Humanities because different kinds of writing occurs in Gen Ed classes and CGE/GERC needs to verify that this is true. Dr. Perabo does not have statistical data for her claim; the College of Arts and Sciences Essential Academic Skills Committee surveyed every department in the College, but Dr. Perabo does not mean to suggest that other departments do not require writing. Associate Provost Parsons pointed out that a survey of one college does not look at how much writing is done in the other Gen Ed categories and thinks before CGE/GERC thinks about writing issues, there needs to be something benchmarked to see where writing is happening and where it needs to be beefed up. She pointed out that if CGE/GERC says that writing is going to occur with X number of required pages in each area, it should not be just a Humanities requirement.

Dr. Allison pointed out some departments are surprised by the fact that there is supposed to be a writing component and opportunities for revision. She believes that the vast majority of writing does occur in the Humanities; anecdotally, she can report that the Humanities are grading a lot of writing assignments, and she is not sure that statistics are needed to support that fact. Chairperson Holz agrees that people generally do not know the Gen Ed requirements, but stated that CGE cannot tell chairs what those requirements are while the Gen Ed Review is ongoing. Associate Provost Parsons disagreed, stating that the charge to GERC only specified that no new courses can be considered during the review process; it did not say that CGE/GERC cannot communicate with or educate the campus community nor that courses could not be changed for assessment. Chairperson Holz will send a reminder to chairs about the Gen Ed requirements.

Chairperson Holz opened discussion for guests from the College of Fine Arts and Communication to address their concerns. Dr. Walker related that a major skill in a lot of Music courses is critical listening; when Music students are doing program reviews and concert evaluations, they are using critical listening skills as they are writing about these events, but critical listening is not assessed in any Gen Ed courses. She asserted that if the Humanities/Fine Arts category were set up so that students could not choose a second Fine Arts course, Music majors would be at a major disadvantage; Music majors take MUS 190, but they would not be able to take a Theatre or Art class, which she thinks goes against the Gen Ed philosophy of broadening core knowledge. Music offers sections for their majors and Gen Ed sections, and when either group takes MUS 190 it fulfills the Fine Arts requirement for Gen Ed. Dr. Walker explained that typically Music majors do not have a lot of room to take extra courses, such as Art History or Theatre, which is a shame and was one of the rationales for the change to the current requirement. Dr. Perabo asked if Music majors have any electives. Dr. Walker replied that they have directed electives, and they have to take MUS 190 as a prerequisite course.

Dr. Kelly reported that CAGAS gets a number of requests for course overloads from Music majors – sometimes five or more every week – because they cannot finish their degree in a reasonable time if they do not take 22 credit hour semesters. Dr. Molina stated that other universities tell students they can graduate in four years but have hidden prerequisites and other factors that are not explicit, while WIU tells its Music majors that they cannot graduate in four years unless they attend every summer. He explained that Music Therapy students need licensure, and the National Association of Schools of Music requirements for accreditation include participation in ensembles, and these requirements are not hidden at WIU. Music had to raise its total s.h. to 128 to fulfill the requirements of national standards. Dr. Molina told CGE/GERC members that Music is already at the bursting point, so anything they can do to alleviate that would be appreciated.

Broadcasting and Journalism Chair Buzz Hoon served on CGE and GERC in the past and appreciates the work the current members are doing. He resisted when individuals wanted to eliminate the former W requirement but conceded the point because writing should be incorporated into every Gen Ed class. Dr. Hoon requires writing in all of his classes in the same fashion and believes that writing is important across the curriculum and that everyone needs to be reminded of this requirement.

Dean Clow observed that the discussion does not take into account the varying forms of writing that can occur in any course or writing environment. He noted that critical listening and thinking involves teaching students to listen, see, and write. Dean Clow believes that CGE/GERC would be doing a disservice to students by taking away their ability to choose in the Humanities/Fine Arts category because it allows students the opportunity to explore different things that they may not get to experience in any other way. He finds it very hard to accept that all that is required is 3 s.h. of Fine Arts in a world where student need to be able to expand their knowledge of all kinds of beauty and critical thinking. He believes the change will take away those options and remove the opportunity for students to expand their world knowledge and their base.

Mr. Markey pointed out that if Choral Music Education requires 145 s.h. to graduate, this change would increase even longer the time needed for these students to graduate. He remarked that students consider how many years they will have to spend at an institution when making their choices about college, and when more is required of certain majors it makes students not want to come to WIU. He stressed that it is everyone’s responsibility to recruit students, and when students have to complete so many semester hours, with the accompanying increase in costs, it makes it harder to do that job.

Dr. Hardeman observed there are philosophical differences between Humanities and Fine Arts where Humanities seems to be defining itself as the study of culture, but Fine Arts is the expression of culture, sometimes in a written form, sometimes in a different form. She believes that to separate the study of culture into a written only form is to neglect the essential importance of communication between those areas. She pointed out that the valuation of writing can also carry with it a devaluation of these other modes of communication, which is concerning. She pointed out that Studio Art students may express their understanding of culture through products that they make, and while those courses can and should include writing, to say that is not as rigorous or demanding does a disservice to the important work that is being done. Dr. Hardeman believes that creativity is a core value that should be engendered in all WIU students. As CCPI Chair, she has heard department representatives talk about the breadth of the WIU education. She believes that students should be encouraged to take different, non-congruous areas because that is where creativity arises, and separating Humanities and Fine Arts the would be doing a disservice in regards to that creativity, which will be an important skill for students to have in their pockets.

Dr. Day asked if a Music student can graduate with 120 hours. Dr. Molina replied that they cannot if WIU is expected to meet the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music; currently 128 s.h. minimum is required for an Applied Performance major. Students that must meet the requirements of the National Association of Schools of Music and Teacher Education must take a group of courses that are non-negotiable. Dr. Day thinks this issue needs to be addressed if certain majors require a much higher number of credits to graduate to the point where Music students have to request overloads. Dr. Day related that the Music students he has worked with are stressed because of the number of hours they must take, and he thinks CGE/GERC should address this concern. Chairperson Holz remarked that Education majors have to complete about 130 s.h. to graduate. He does not, however, think this necessarily needs to fall on Gen Ed to address; Associate Provost Parsons stated this would fall on CCPI. Dr. Day observed that if students have to complete a certain number of credits to be certified from outside organizations, then they do not have the flexibility to change the number of courses they require; the flexibility cannot come from them but must come from other parts of the degree requirements – Gen Ed or other electives or University requirements – so it does partially fall on CGE/GERC.

Dr. Pettit said he has not heard that Fine Arts is not as rigorous as other areas, but that the distinction is that Fine Arts courses develop skills, such as critical listening, that Humanities do not. He thinks that is the kind of distinction Dr. Perabo was relying on in separating the two categories and making the emphasis on writing part of that discussion. Dr. Perabo stated she does not want to have a conversation about Humanities as better than Fine Arts, but stressed the skills of the two areas are different. Chairperson Holz remarked that Dr. Perabo’s proposal is heavily weighted to prioritize writing over critical viewing, listening, or reading skills. He thinks CGE/GERC needs to find ways to accent those other skills in the proposal language as well.

Dr. Pettit pointed out that the council does have to restrict students’ options because judgments have to be made; completing a certain amount of Math/Natural Science, for example, eliminates students’ options to take a different kind of class, but that is what CGE/GERC is required to do. Dr. Allison remarked that recently issues were discussed at Faculty Senate that resulted in some students thinking that faculty are anti-student, but faculty are charged with talking about what they think students need to do; it is not about driving students away but about what faculty think are the principled choices that need to be made on students’ behalf. She stressed that CGE/GERC is not anti-student and does not want to make students stay longer than necessary. Dr. Allison stressed that what is being discussed are only proposals; she agrees that it would be great for students to take more than 3 s.h. of Fine Arts, but she also thinks it is a tragedy if students only take 3 s.h. of Humanities before they graduate. Dr. Allison wonders why 9 s.h. is required for Social Sciences and 10 s.h. for Natural Sciences and Math.

Dr. Molina pointed out that in order to remain accredited, Music must follow guidelines from the national associations in addition to Gen Ed and other University guidelines, which is challenging to negotiate. He related that Music has pared down its curriculum to the bare minimum; Music Theatre would like for students to take more piano, but it is not part of their curriculum because it cannot fit, although students choose to take lessons on their own. Similarly, chamber music is not part of the Music curriculum because there is no room, but Music students do it anyway. Music majors love ensembles and will take three or four beyond what they need, even though they are discouraged from doing so. Dr. Molina stated that Music students must do much more than the bare minimum that is required in order to be competitive after graduation; there is some controlled flexibility, but many things are non-negotiable. He pointed out that Music is a skill-based degree, but their students have very high academic standards. Music majors basically have to be fully-formed musicians by the end of high school, not unlike athletes, so the School of Music recruits when students are high school freshmen or earlier and establishes a relationship with their parents as well. He said that when Music faculty talk to potential students about how many credits they will need to graduate, they assure them that they will love it and that their professors will make it fun for them, but anything that would help these efforts to balance University requirements with requirements from outside agencies would be appreciated.

Dr. Chamberlin remarked that her department has the same problem with its History Teacher Education program; they tell students up front that they will be unable to graduate in four years, but in general do not encounter any resentment about this. The last semester is student teaching, and in the end students receive a double major – History and teaching certification – so there is the understanding that students get added value from the additional time. Dr. Chamberlin asserted that everyone is trying to be as compact in the requirements of credit hours as possible; she does not want to torture students with extra classes, but she also wants to turn them out into the professional world with all the skills they will need to succeed and for them not to graduate with an inferior education. Dr. Chamberlin observed that if a student could get an education in three years, he/she would be unable to compete with students that obtain a four-year degree. She would like for students to graduate as fully rounded individuals. Dr. Chamberlin warned that CGE/GERC needs to avoid language that says “more or less rigorous” because that creates two levels of courses; instead, the council needs to acknowledge that there are different types of critical writing that occur in different contexts.

Mr. Markey clarified that he does not think that faculty are against students or that GERC hates students. He noted that when some degree plans require 145 s.h. and part of those hours are Gen Ed, to debate whether students should take 3 s.h. of Fine Arts rather than 3 s.h. of Humanities seems ridiculous. Mr. Markey pointed out that Eastern Illinois University has the same structure for Humanities/Fine Arts, and other institutions have Gen Ed requirements change based on the degree – B.B., B.S., B.A. He noted that when students use critical listening skills and then write papers about what they have been listening for, they are still working toward writing requirements. Mr. Markey thinks student writing at WIU is subpar in general, but he also thinks there are better ways to go about addressing this issue and supports improving writing in general rather than just assigning writing to the Humanities.

Dr. Solomonson asserted that when writing addresses cognitive skills as well as addressing aesthetics, it forces students to think critically rather than to just regurgitate. Dr. Cooper pointed out that currently Fine Arts students can choose to take a Gen Ed Humanities course, and Humanities students can choose to take a Gen Ed course in Fine Arts, and there is no need to make a value judgment between what whether Fine Arts or Humanities are better for students academically. Dr. Perabo pointed out that the Humanities as a category includes more varied courses than Fine Arts; she does not necessarily think this is better, but Humanities seems to offer a broad range of studies, certainly as broad a range as Social Sciences or Natural Sciences. Dr. Perabo does not like that Humanities and Fine Arts are shoe-horned together, and she wonders why CGE/GERC is not having conversations about why Social Sciences and Math/Natural Sciences are seemingly more important than Humanities/Fine Arts in that they require more credits. She thinks the problem is that the categories were determined a decade ago.

Dr. Pettit asked why CGE/GERC could not consider 6 s.h. of Humanities, 6 s.h. of Social Sciences, and 6 s.h. of Fine Arts, which would seem to be pretty reasonable and equitable. Dr. Perabo responded she has no problem with that. Dr. Allison stated this suggestion is as logical as what is currently being discussed. Chairperson Holz stated that when CGE/GERC turns to Dr. Maskarinec’s proposal the council can talk about shifting things around to possibly make this work.

Chairperson Holz thinks the writing portion of Dr. Perabo’s proposal needs some clarification which could be done productively outside the meeting – whether or in what way writing requirements should be extended to other subject areas or Gen Ed assessment categories; then questions of credit hour issues could be discussed in relation to Dr. Maskarinec’s proposal. Dr. Kelly pointed out that the Gen Ed form asks how the proposed class will meet the writing requirements, no matter what category it is in, so every course should have that writing component. She wonders if CGE/GERC has looked at peer institutions regarding the separation of Humanities and Fine Arts; the University of Illinois has combined the two areas since 1989, and she does not think that is unique. Dr. Baker-Sperry related that during the last Gen Ed review they spent the first year talking about how they would like for Gen Ed to look if they could do whatever they wanted; then, they realized that there were issues related to IAI so some of what the members wanted could not happen. She does not know the degree to which IAI is still problematic, but when the decision was made to combine Humanities and Fine Arts that change was in keeping with IAI. She added that when UNIV 100, Human Well-Being, and Multicultural were added, those were deviations from IAI which have been in some ways problematic.

Dr. Maskarinec told the guests from the College of Fine Arts and Communication that previously he had not thought of possible Gen Ed changes from their perspective. He asked how many Music Gen Ed courses students in the Fine Arts, particularly Music majors, must take to graduate. Dr. Molina responded that, they are encouraged to fulfill Gen Ed and other requirements as much as possible by double dipping; Music students have a choice of 6 s.h., which they can choose to make a Music course. Dr. Maskarinec asked if the guests from COFAC have seen both overarching proposals; Chairperson Holz will send them to Dean Clow.

Dr. Perabo asked COFAC representatives if they require a certain number of page numbers as the writing requirement for their Gen Ed classes. She wonders if they use in-class essays, reports in class, or writing as a percentage of the grade, and if Fine Arts Gen Ed classes would be comfortable incorporating some of these aspects. Dr. Hardeman replied that COFAC professors already do all of these, but no one has actually asked Fine Arts Gen Ed professors about their writing requirements, assuming instead that writing in the Fine Arts is minimal. Dr. Hardeman reported that for her MUS 195 class students write three essays – a concert review in class, a take-home essay, and a final essay and class presentation. In her MUS 190 class, Music majors must complete two research papers and two to three different reports. While all of these are designed in conjunction with CGE guidelines, those do not actually give a limit for pages or suggest a requirement for the number of words; students do not write a 15- or 20-page paper because at the 100-level that kind of writing would not be appropriate, but this amount of writing is required for Dr. Hardeman’s 300-level courses. Dr. Perabo asked if Dr. Hardeman would be comfortable if CGE/GERG were to require that 25 or 40 percent of the class involve writing; Dr. Hardeman responded that she would.

Dr. Walker asked why the proposal to separate the Humanities/Fine Arts category is on the table if IAI dictates that students can take 3 s.h. of Fine Arts, 3 s.h. of Humanities, and 3 s.h. as their choice of the two; she wonders if there is some other issue that led to this being brought forward. Dr. Pettit responded that IAI does not dictate, and WIU does not strictly follow IAI anyway, such as in the categories of Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Human Well-Being, or Multicultural. Dr. Baker-Sperry agreed that WIU deviates but pointed out that what the University requires in most categories is close to IAI guidelines. Dr. Solomonson observed that in the time that has elapsed since IAI came out, COFAC has negotiated 2-plus-2 agreements with other institutions that are based on WIU’s current General Education standards. He asked if Music representatives will have to go back to Lincoln Land Community College, for example, and say that they can no longer continue the agreement. He noted that they are currently negotiating three other agreements. Dr. Allison remarked that CGE/GERC was given a charge by the Interim Provost to consider what Gen Ed should look like, and that is what they are doing.

Chairperson Holz asked if it is possible for different degree programs to have slightly different Gen Ed requirements since that is what is done at some other universities. Associate Provost Parsons observed that this is already done at WIU for the Economics degree: the B.B. follows the Gen Ed requirements of the College of Business and Technology, and the B.A. follows the extended College of Arts and Sciences Gen Ed requirements.

**Motion:** To adjourn (Kelly/Maskarinec). Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.