

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
General Education Council
Minutes for March 3, 2025

PRESENT: Marie Bourgeois, Chair (PH), Joanna Burchfield, Vice-Chair (EN), John Abresch (LIB), Karen Atwood (AC), Lauren Braunstein (EU), Sara Callahan (AC), Shane Combs (UGS), Michael Cross (JGHC), Madeline Domino (BU), Jane Govoni (EU), Sara E. Green (AC), Morgan Gresham (AC), Manisha Joshi (BC), Jennefer Karnegie (EU), Daniel Marlin (BU), Jay Michaels (AC), Elizabeth Miller (AC), Jason Nethercut (AC), Lindsay Peterson (CBCS), Gauri Pradhan (AC), Richard Smith (AC), Walter Silva Sotillo (EN)

ABSENT: Emily Mann (LIB), Natasha Zurcher (NR)

GUESTS/EX-OFFICIO: Candi Ashley (EU), Scott Besley (BU), Kyna Betancourt (UGS), Maureen Chiodini-Rinaldo (EU), Mary Collins (UGS), Mazhab “Mazi” Ferguson (OCE&P), Colin Forbes (UGS), Rebecca Gibbons (ODS), Natasha Gilkey (NR), Lorene Hall-Jennings (UAA), Jessica Harris (ODS), Timothy Henkel (UAA), Lisa Landis (CBCS), Jennifer Lister (CBCS), Lynn Lynch (RO), Ali Mrani Alaoui (UGS), Kelly Pearson (AC), Catherine Rogers (CBCS), Jennifer VanDeWoestyne (UVPSS)

Meeting Commenced – 3:00 p.m.

1. Welcome and Announcements

Council members were welcomed to another General Education Council meeting.

2. Approval of February 17, 2025 General Education Council Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as is (no revisions).

3. Informational Items

1. Discussion on Council on Racial Justice – Marie Bourgeois

The Council on Racial Justice (CRJ) presented the council with a document drafting their concerns about how the new general education process had been facilitated and recommendations on how this disconnect between faculty and relevant parties can potentially be mitigated in future. If endorsed, the CRJ requests that these guidelines are enforced by the Faculty Senate. Three points were noted regarding faculty responsibility and transparency, broad and general education, and multiple perspectives and viewpoint diversity.

Faculty Responsibility and Transparency: Noting their fear towards an event where USF administration may have the potential to side-step faculty governance in curriculum-relevant decisions, the CRJ recommends more transparency in processes such as the general education overhaul, stating that faculty are “the subject matter experts who know what particular knowledge and skills are required for student success”. Any approval or removal of courses should have

their rationale clearly explained, and communication and consultation with instructors should be paramount.

Broad and General Education: Concerns were expressed in reference to the removal of “highly popular, high enrollment” courses from the general education slate, as doing so deprives students of opportunities to equip themselves with foundational and shared knowledge that is essential for their academic and personal enrichment. Examples within the Geography department were mentioned, such as GEA 2000 – World Regional Geography, GEO 2200 – Introduction to Physical Geography, and GEO 2400 – Human Geography. Likewise, sociology and anthropological courses were brought to the council’s attention. The removal of these courses, the CRJ states, “unnecessarily limits the learning opportunities for students and undermines the stability of the respective degree programs.”

Multiple Perspectives and Viewpoint Diversity: Referencing USF’s Strategic Plan Goal 4b, to “[e]nhance academic programs and curricula to be inclusive of diverse perspectives” and increase “general education courses designed to address diverse perspectives”, the CRJ stresses the importance of providing students with a broad range of perspectives and cultural histories. Critical thinking is crucial for students to understand their fields in a globalized world, and enrollment numbers of many removed courses are evidence that students are attracted to these forms of curriculum.

Various concerns were brought to attention when this document was discussed amongst the General Education Council (GEC), beginning with the clarification that GEA 2000, GEO 2200, and GEO 2400 *were* approved to retain their general education attributes. Additionally, as courses are first vetted by the General Counsel (GC) and decisions made there are not circumventable, some councilmembers believe the onus of transparency and greater communication should fall more on them, and not the GEC. Approving the letter with the current language in place carries the potential of putting the council’s charge at risk, as the GEC is a subcommittee of the wider Faculty Senate.

Conversely, a councilmember mentioned that having the GC be the first step in the process then dampens the reach of the GEC, as the GEC would no longer be reviewing the full scope of general education curriculum. After some conversation, the idea was posed for both councils to simultaneously review courses. In this process, any changes or rejections made by the GC would be notified to and tracked by the GEC. In an informal vote, the GEC agreed this was good practice.

At this time, the GEC does not endorse the CRJ's letter and requests that the document is revised based on the guidance discussed.

2. Update on General Education – Marie Bourgeois

The final list of approved courses was received the week of February 24th, and the catalog has been reflected to match from 25-26 onward. Curriculog has reopened for 26-27 gen-ed course changes (to add a general education component to an existing USF course) and new course proposals. The deadline for launching requests has been set for Friday, June 13th, with council review to be conducted throughout the summer. For assistance with this process, please contact the Undergraduate Studies Curriculum Team (UGS-DOCurriculum@usf.edu). The calendar of dates and deadlines has been updated on the [Curriculum Team website](#).

4. Old Business

Course Change Proposals – (Proposals Needing Reviewer Assignment)

1. PET 4941 – Internship in Exercise Science (**eff. 25-26**)
(requesting change to APK prefix, title, course hours, description, requisites, and objectives) (MARIE BOURGEOIS) **APPROVED**
Course Attributes: TGEH, INT

Meeting Concluded – 3:47 p.m.