

## DRAFT

### Minutes of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Committee Meeting Wednesday, October 1, 2014

Members Present: Tobin Addington, Todd Barnes, Amanda Beecher (Chair),  
Eric Daffron, Stephen Larson, Thomas Kitchen, Robert Mentore,  
Paula Straile-Costa, Frances Shapiro-Skrobe (Recorder)

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

I. Requests for WI Designations: Chair Amanda Beecher reported that three new courses and one existing course had been forwarded to us for Writing-Intensive (WI) designation. The three new courses are:

- a) 300-level *Immunology*, proposed by Rena Bacon
- b) 200-level *Practicum for Reading and Writing Consultants*, proposed by Tom Kitchen
- c) 300-level *Mobile Journalism*, proposed by Edna Negron.

In addition, the existing 300-level *Gender and Sexuality* course was presented by Susan Hangan to have a WI designation added.

Amanda distributed the CA Writing-Intensive Checklist for the *Mobile Journalism* course. Todd Barnes corrected the title of the pre-requisite course to read *Critical Reading and Writing II*, not *Foundations of Critical Reading and Writing*. The committee then voted to approve all four requests.

II. Committee Membership: Amanda noted that two SSHGS faculty members currently serve on the all-college WAC Committee, but neither represents the entire unit. (Paula represents Readings in the Humanities while Todd represents the Writing Program courses.) A discussion ensued.

III. Review of WI Policy: Amanda reviewed the College policy of requiring students to take three WI courses within the General Education Program and three WI courses in the major or school core. Unfortunately, she noted, this doesn't happen in all of the majors.

The issue is that this is the first catalog year in which this policy will be enforced. A discussion followed.

Amanda asked unit representatives to check every major within their schools to ensure that each major does, in fact, offer at least three WI courses. (This can be done online.) We agreed that there should be some framework for ensuring that all students meet this requirement.

WI courses have a cap of 25, but only if the faculty member proposing the course and designation specifically requests it. He emphasized that it was not automatically applied to a WI course.

#### IV. Results of the CLA-Plus and the National Survey of Student Engagement:

Working with a PowerPoint, Eric then presented some of the results of last year's measurements of 100 incoming first year students and 100 graduating or eligible-to-graduate seniors, all of whom were native to Ramapo.

A detailed review and discussion followed, with the question as to whether we are challenging our students enough. The data for our first year students matched the GECCO results.

Eric then presented some results from the national Survey of Student Engagement, all of which was self-reported. The data indicated that we are "on par with our peers" in terms of the number of papers, pages, and drafts that we require of our students. A lively discussion ensued.

V. Visiting Authors: Todd reported that he had invited the two authors of Writing Analytically to present two workshops on campus: one for all faculty on how to incorporate writing into their respective disciplinary courses, and the other specifically for faculty teaching courses in the College Writing Program. We tentatively agreed to hold it on either October 22<sup>nd</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup>. Todd will send out posters and information, and will email us as to the exact date.

#### VI. The General Education Task Force:

Amanda emphasized that our role is to support faculty re: writing on campus, but writing within General Education may look different when the task force has completed its job. It is too early to tell yet. However, she asked that we have a discussion on this at our next meeting, for the WAC Committee has never done an approval process for General Education.

Amanda suggested that we invite Ed Shannon to one of our meetings. The consensus was that it would be better to have him at our November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Then we can discuss how we will proceed with the new General Education system.

#### VII. Topics for Spring 2015 Workshops:

Amanda has been speaking with Nick Salter about holding workshops as part of the Faculty Development Center's programs. We would also consider holding free-standing workshops. Members made a number of suggestions for the focus of workshops, including: a) writing in the disciplines, b) designing effective writing assignments, c) implementing effective strategies for giving useful feedback to students on their writing, and d) building on the data that we have already obtained.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.