

# WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) committee, comprised of unit representatives and the WAC Director as well as the Vice Provost, was formed in Fall of 2010 to address specific needs regarding the review of the current WAC program, and to make recommendations concerning any possible revisions to the WAC program. The WAC committee has concluded its initial investigation and is urging the adoption of the following recommendations:

1. That the WAC committee be a standing committee reporting to ARC and FA to address writing-related issues pertaining to the WAC program and WI designation, to oversee the state of the program, to provide support and guidance for writing initiatives, to advocate for resources for faculty and programs developing the writing aspects of the curriculum.
2. That the WAC committee be comprised of the members indicated in Appendix A, and be sub-divided into coordinating groups as indicated in Appendix A1 and A2.
3. That the Writing Curriculum be organized in the manner indicated in Appendix B.
4. That the WAC program reflect the current structure of the College be divided into two tiers: 1. WAC in the General Education 2. WAC in the Schools.
5. That the WAC in the General Education be comprised of three WI designated courses: First Year Seminar, Readings in the Humanities and College English (re-titled Critical Reading and Writing Program)
6. That, where appropriate, the WAC in the Schools program seek vertical design for writing objectives and learning outcomes by determining three WI designated courses in each Major program of study and/or School Core or a combination thereof. Or, where appropriate, that Schools adopt a document-based design covering multiple levels of the curriculum
7. That each school, in consort with the WAC committee, determine WI guidelines that are viable given the nature of the discipline.

## **RATIONALE:**

One of the cornerstones of any Liberal Arts institution is its writing program. Unfortunately, there is no cohesive writing program at Ramapo College. Rather, there are remnants of a once pertinent program that is poorly organized and lacks faculty oversight. The WAC committee attributes this disrepair to a series of institutional shifts at the structural and curricular levels that left the WAC program without proper oversight and its curriculum largely ignored. The current WAC program no longer resembles what it once was nor does it structurally reflect the College.

At this point, WAC neither functions as a program nor does it exist in practice (ie. proper graduation audit). Fortunately, the initial impetus regarding WAC and WI designations can be modified in order to restore a writing program. This proposal seeks to remedy this current situation by creating a writing curriculum that coheres to Ramapo's current academic structure, and by establishing an organizational structure to oversee the writing curriculum. By examining the series of recommendations offered by a variety of consultants over the last five years and undergoing a semester-long examination of the curriculum, the WAC committee strongly urges faculty assembly to adopt this proposal, and to charge the WAC Committee with overseeing its design, implementation and monitoring.

We believe that this proposal for a two-tiered WAC program reflects the current curricular design and organizational structure of the college. We believe that the proposed changes would encourage greater involvement in the writing program at Ramapo. In essence this proposal seeks to establish a framework where a writing program can take hold. We seek to programmatize the disparate, yet vital, elements of the WAC program, so that there is a cohesive approach to addressing our students needs.

Lastly, we believe that this proposed program honors programmatic diversity. By adopting this proposal, units and programs will be able to design guidelines and assignments that respect individual disciplines. Ultimately, the WAC committee serves to facilitate and advocate for writing on the campus, and this proposal is a step forward in addressing a variety of needs in this area.

## **BRIEF BACKGROUND:**

In the 1990's an all-college committee was formed to respond to the disparate writing elements that was the Ramapo writing experience. In 1999, that committee delivered to the Faculty Assembly a proposal for the current WAC program. It was adopted and implemented and a Director of WAC was hired to oversee the program.

Since the adoption of the WAC program in 1999, Ramapo has not undergone a thorough assessment, reflection or review of the WAC program. In part due to the absence of a well-monitored program and due to subsequent shifts in institutional structure (the dissolution of DBS) and curricula (CEP and Senior Seminar) as well as writing related

personnel changes have left this program largely unsupervised and a grave area of concern.

In recent years, faculty and consultants have remarked on the poor state of this program. In 2006, Edward Shannon delivered a report to then Provost Pfeiffer that outlined several problematic areas and recommendations to address these areas. In Spring 2010, former VPAA Sharon Rubin provided the college with a thorough review of writing at Ramapo and underscored areas of concern with the WAC program. In the same semester, the Writing convening group offered another report addressing all aspects of writing at Ramapo and highlighted the need to re-engage WAC. Interestingly, although these two latter reports differ in their recommendations, they both call for an all-college committee capable of addressing the state of writing at Ramapo.

### **WAC CHARGE and COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

Largely advisory to ARC, this committee has been responsible for:

1. Working with units to provide a definition for WAC and WI.
2. Researching the history and evolution of Writing at the college.
3. Investigating the design of WAC within schools and work with conveners at identifying WAC and WI at the program level.
4. Collaborating with faculty to identify what resources, if any, are needed to support faculty offering WAC related courses.
5. Analyzing reports and data, compare WAC programs at other colleges
6. Recommending to ARC and the Director of WAC specific procedural, curricular and co-curricular changes.
7. Providing models for ARC to consider for possible enhancement to WAC programs.
8. Serving as a working group and aid ARC in any Writing-related issues that ARC considers pertinent to this committee.

#### Current Committee Membership

One faculty member from each academic unit. This year, the committee will consist of:

Yvette Kisor, (Fall) Edward Shannon (Spring) AIS  
Theresa Hutchins, ASB  
Tobin Addington, CA  
Michael Bitz, SSHS  
Anita Brandolini, TAS  
Christina Connor, LIB  
Director of WAC, James Hoch  
Vice-Provost of Curriculum and Assessment (ex-officio) Eric Daffron

## **SPECIFIC DETAILS:**

### **WAC IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION**

#### **DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES**

WAC in the Gen Ed will be comprised of three courses: First Year Seminar, Critical Reading and Writing II (formerly CE) and Readings in the Humanities. Each of these courses will have distinct goals learning outcomes for student writing, but will overlap and reinforce one another. The guidelines for these courses will remain the same.

1. Students will be expected to write at least 10 pages over the course of the semester.
2. Faculty will provide students with multiple writing assignments.
3. Students will be encouraged to revise asome of the writing after receiving faculty response to the writing.
4. The course will emphasize the process of writing, including prewriting and revision.

#### **THE CRITICAL READING AND WRITING PROGRAM**

**CRWT 102: Critical Reading and Writing II: Argument and Research**  
(4 credits/Gen Ed requirement)

Organized as a course for students who demonstrate a level of higher proficiency as determined by successful course work in CRWT I or by an Accuplacer score of 6 or higher

Focused on more sophisticated argument and research strategies and the crafting of academic papers. (Modeled on our current ENGL 180: College English course).

Overseen by the Director of CRWT in collaboration with CRWT faculty. Partnering with CAS Director and WAC Chair.

\* This course is part of the new Critical Reading and Writing Program (see Appendix C)

#### **FIRST YEAR SEMINAR (4 credits) GENERAL EDUCATION Requirement**

As part of its learning goals, FYS will work on developing a specific focus to its writing objectives. The objectives should complement CE and RITH in its focus on revision and compositional strategies, but be distinct from those two groups in regards to both the kind of writing required and the goals of the writing objectives.

Focused on: tbd

Overseen by Director of FYS, partnering with CE Director, RITH Coordinator and WAC Chair.

## **READINGS IN THE HUMANITIES**

As part of its learning goals, RITH will work on developing a specific focus to its writing objectives. The objectives should compliment CE and FYS in its focus on revision and compositional strategies, but be distinct from those two groups in regards to both the kind of writing required and the goals of the writing objectives.

Focused on: tbd

Overseen by RITH Coordinator, partnering with CE Director, FYS Director and WAC Chair.

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## **WAC IN THE SCHOOLS**

### **DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES**

Each School will develop its own guidelines regarding WI. These guidelines would be worked out with the WAC committee and its members. The School Rep for the WAC committee will be in charge of steering this process and dealing with the WAC committee's review process and recommendations.

Each major program in each School will determine the writing objectives and learning outcomes for their major and designate at least three courses or a document-based design covering multiple course levels. Schools can utilize the School Core courses for these designations where appropriate. Latitude is given to programs where it is determined that these guidelines are counter-productive. Exceptions will be made where appropriate.

In addition to a coherent design of multi-level courses, the WAC committee recommends that courses participating in the WAC in the Schools program:

1. Provide students with multiple writing assignments.
2. Allow students to revise at least some of the writing after receiving faculty response to the writing.

3. Emphasize the process of writing, including prewriting and revision.

Some possible variables in WI courses:

1. Employing writing as a cumulative process
2. Assigning writing progressively
3. Combining writing with/part of oral or multi-media presentations

\* The recommended course cap for WI courses is 25. However, latitude is given to schools and programs where it is determined that these guidelines are counter-productive to the over-arching goal of improving student writing.

## **PROCEDURES FOR WI DESIGNATION**

The procedure for seeking WI designation will be the same as the current model and will proceed through ARC in the normal manner. However, the approval process will need the following adjustments:

1. All courses seeking WI designation must meet both the school curriculum guidelines as well as the WAC committee guidelines.
2. The WAC committee will review all requests and confer with unit representatives and faculty if greater clarification, recommendations or resources are needed in order to determine WI status prior to forwarding the course proposal to ARC.

## **FACULTY RESOURCES**

The WAC in the Schools program will work with the WAC committee to determine the handling of resource needs, tutorial support and strategies, and pedagogical considerations. In so doing, the WAC committee recommends the involvement of FRC and CAS in determining the appropriate professional development needs of and support for the WAC in the Schools program and its courses.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND PARTNERS**

The WAC in the Schools program is administered by Conveners and School Representatives to the WAC Committee.

**WAC in the Schools partners with The Library's Information Literacy Programs and CAS.**

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## **WAC MEMBERS AND ROLES:**

### WAC Chair

Oversees the charge and agenda for WAC  
Represents Writing-Related initiatives to the College Community as needed.

### Vice-Provost, ex-officio

### WAC/GEN ED REPRESENTATIVES:

(3 Courses in the General Education Program)

#### Critical Reading and Writing, Director/Coordinator

Oversees the Critical Reading and Writing program, its courses, faculty and learning outcomes.

These courses serve as the main “instructional” program for reading and writing. This program covers a broad range of compositional, argument and research-related skills in a sequence of courses mandated by proficiency levels. This program is WI designated.

#### First Year Seminar, Director

Oversees the First Year Seminar in the General Education, its faculty and reading and writing-related learning outcomes, curriculum and training. This course works with students on developing revision, compositional and documentation skills as they apply to specific areas of study.

This program is WI designated

#### Readings in the Humanities, Coordinator

Oversees the Readings in the Humanities course in the General Education, its faculty, reading and writing related learning outcomes, curriculum and training. This course works with close reading strategies as well as International or comparative perspectives in relation to “Great Books”.

### WAC/WIS REPRESENTATIVES

(3 or more courses organized at the 200,300,400 levels)  
as they reflect the ambition and nature of the discipline.

#### School Representatives to WAC/WID

CA, AIS, SSHS, TAS, Library, ASB

Oversee Writing Intensive and writing awareness courses in their school and majors. Identify resources to support the writing curriculum as well as information literacy initiatives.

DIRECTOR OF CAS: A Center for Reading, Writing and Content-Area Tutoring  
Oversees budget, programming and staff of CAS including the “Foundations”  
level Reading and Writing courses.  
Oversees Tutoring Programs in support of WAC.

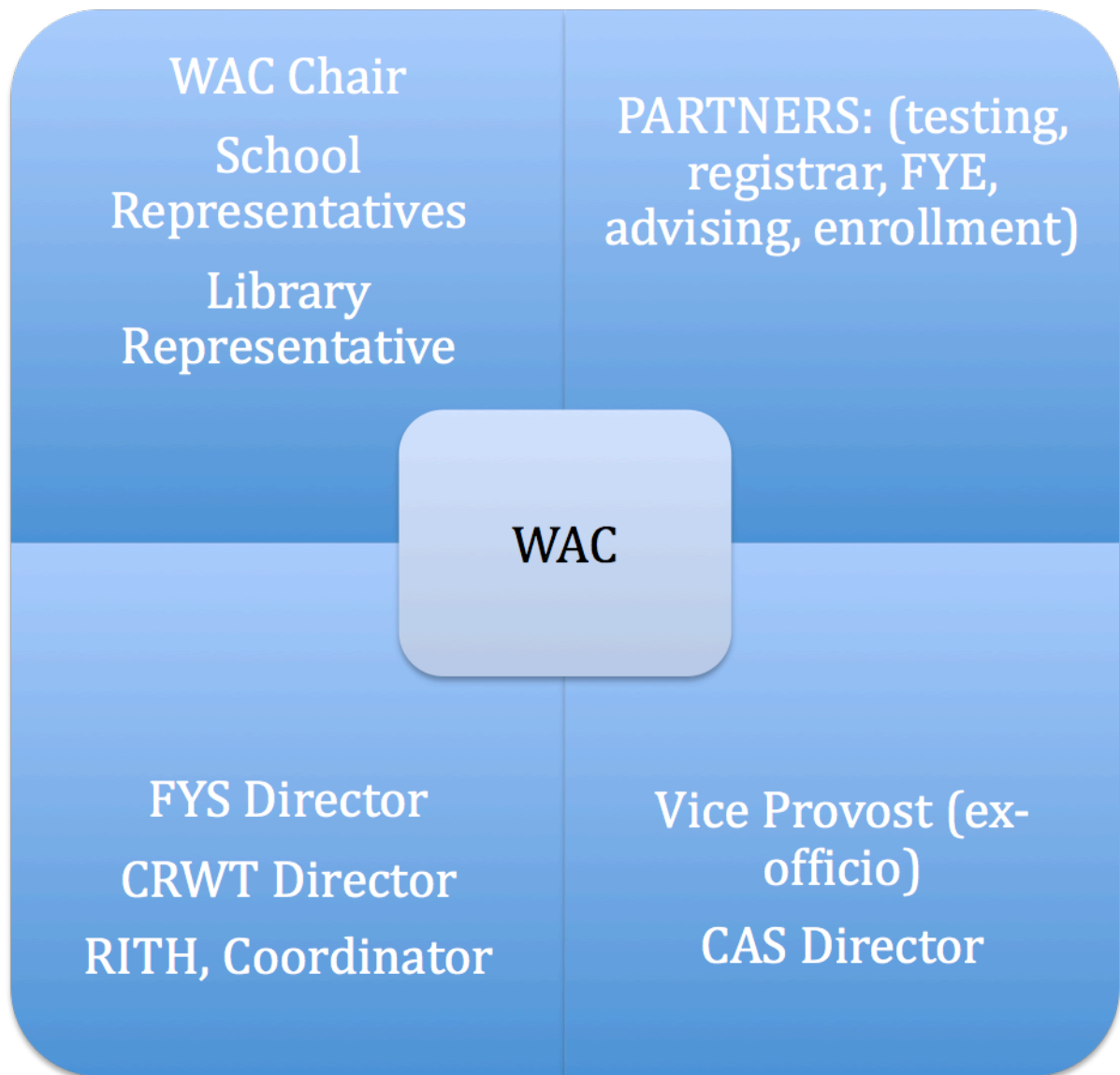
PARTNERS:

Testing, Registrar, Enrollment, Advisement, All-college committee  
(GECCO/ARC) reps as needed.

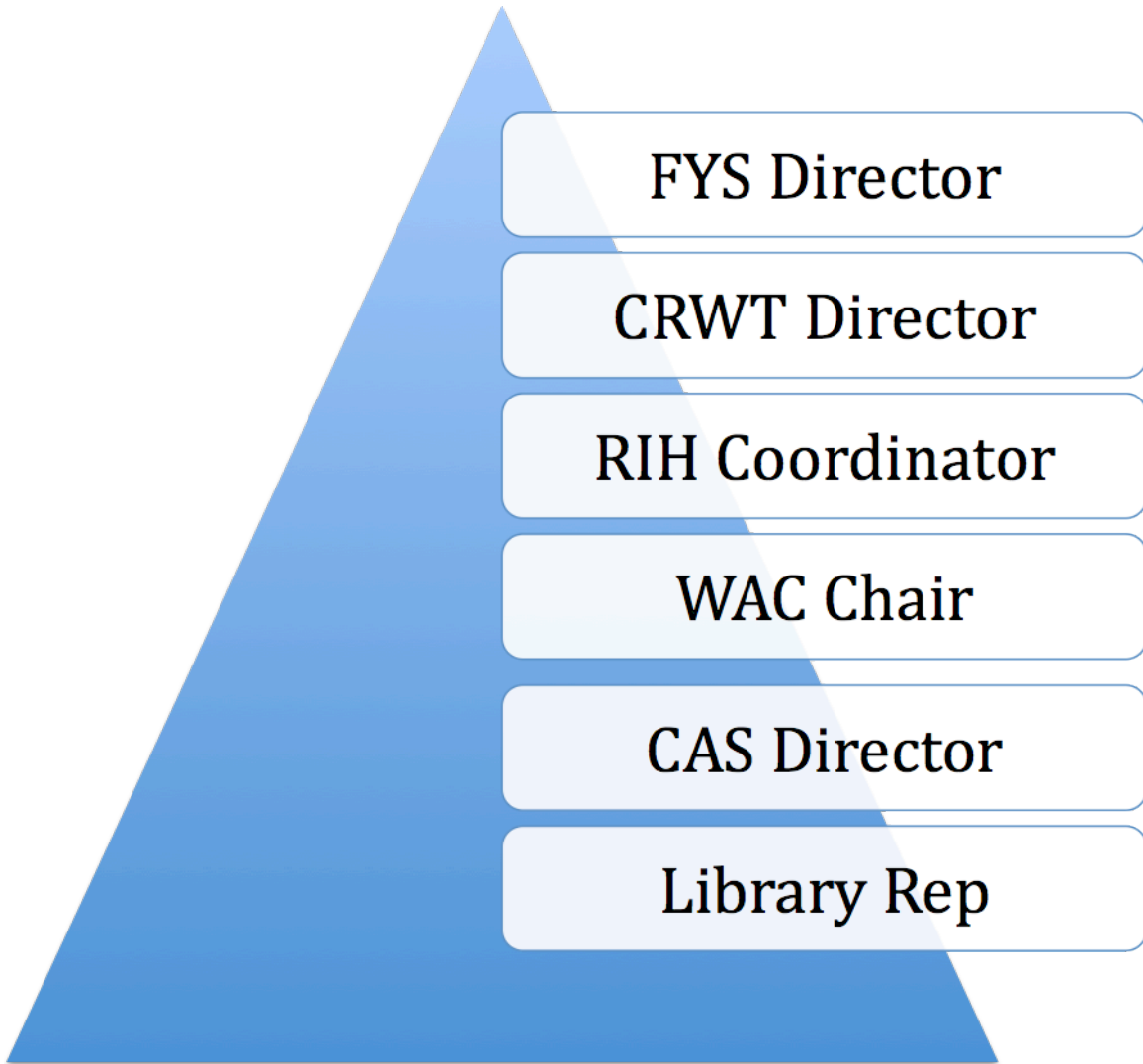
Both the WAC/Gen Ed and WAC/WIS Representatives will collaborate in their own  
Coordinating Groups with the WAC Chair and CAS Director. In addition, all  
representatives and members will sit on the WAC Committee.



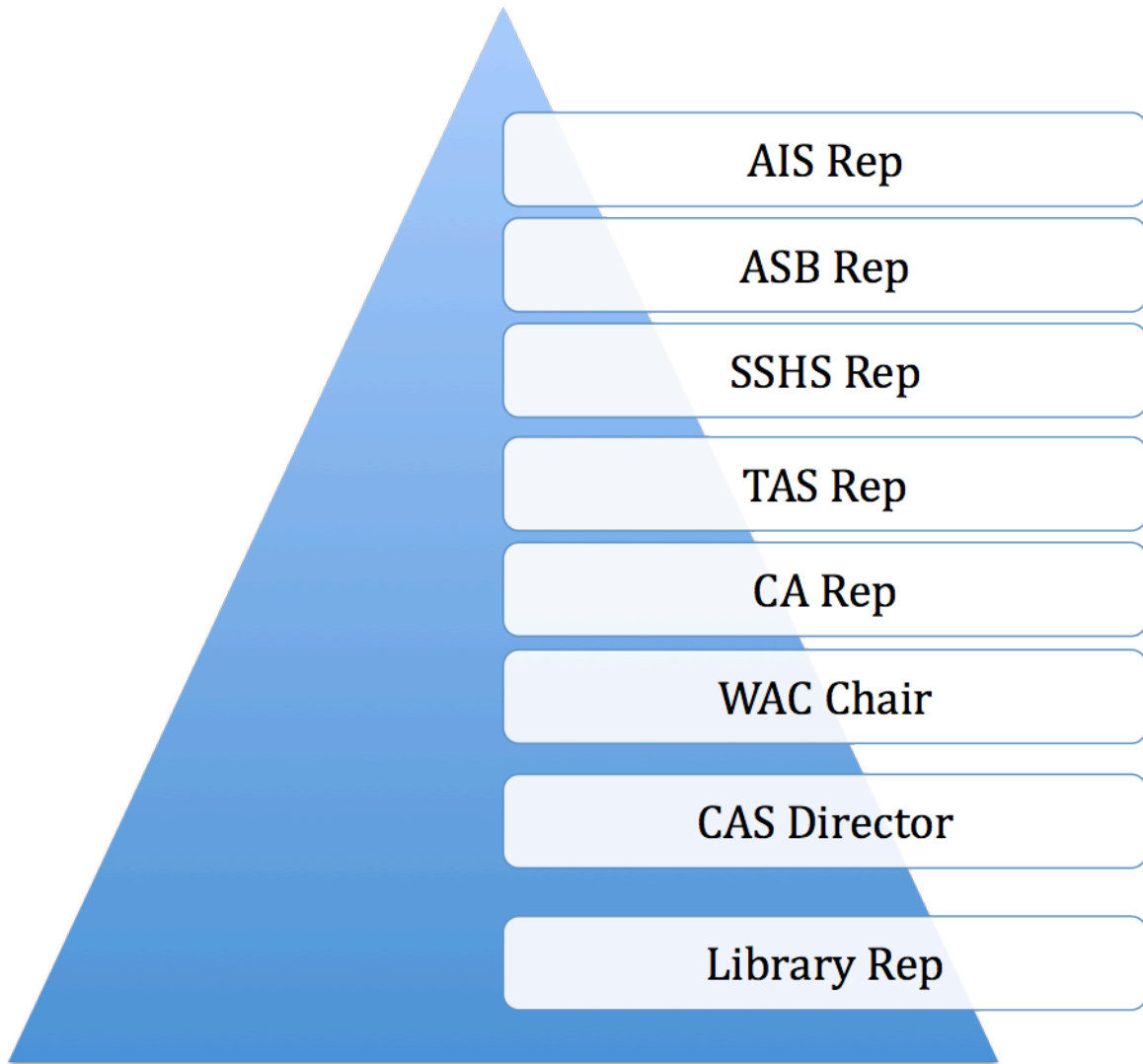
**APPENEDIX A: MEMBER CHART  
THE NEW WAC COMMITTEE**



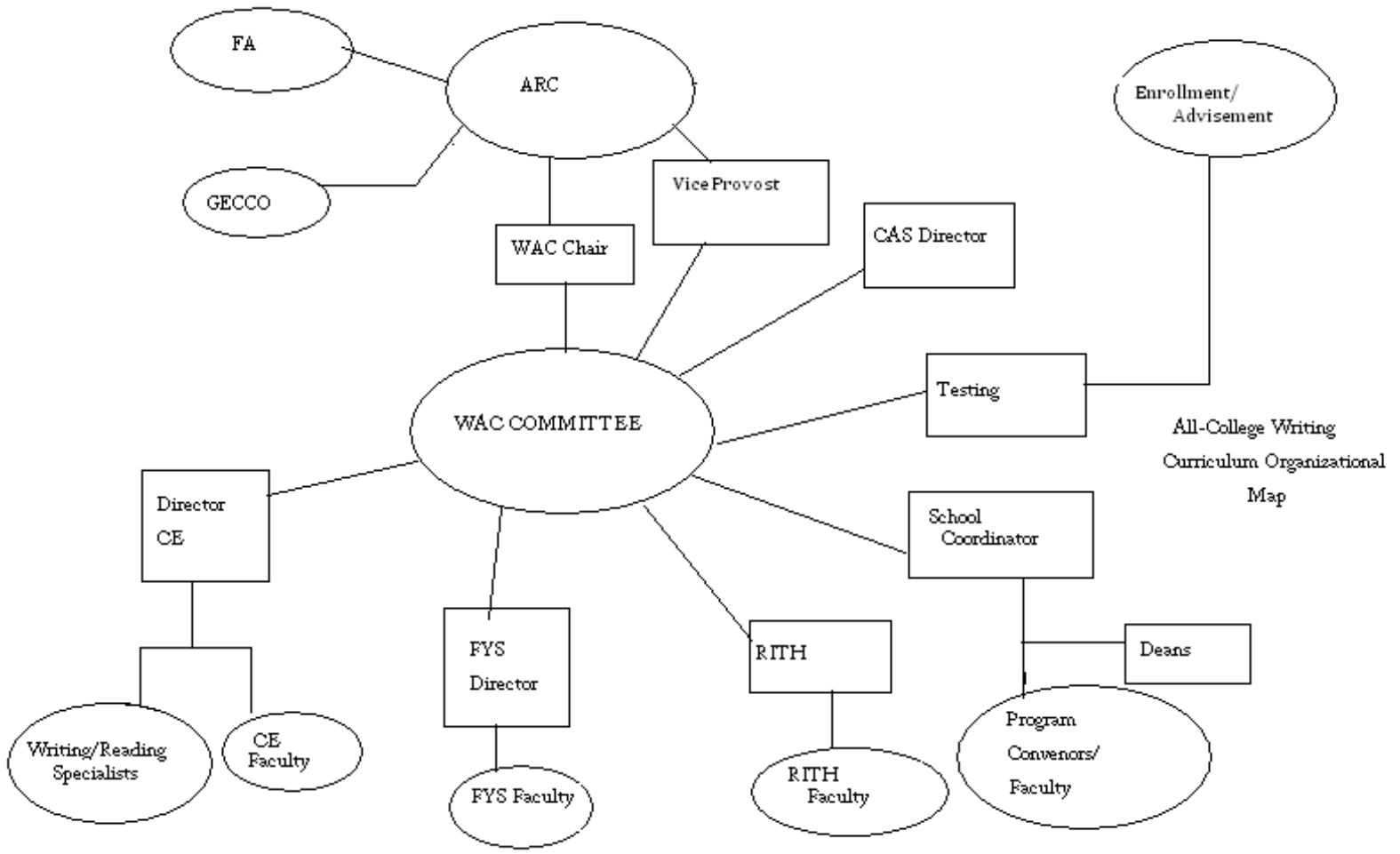
**APPENDIX A1: MEMBER CHART**  
**WAC in the GENERAL EDUCATION**



## **APPENDIX A2: MEMBER CHART WAC IN THE SCHOOLS**



**APPENDIX B: WAC CURRICULUM ORG MAP  
 ...NOT A LINES OF REPORTING/LINES OF AUTHORITY MAP.**



## APPENDIX C:

### THE CRITICAL READING AND WRITING PROGRAM

#### **CRWT 080: Foundations of Critical Reading and Writing** **OR**

#### **CRWT 090: Foundations of Critical Writing:**

(not for college credit) The “developmental” reading and writing program

Organized largely as summer courses or possible fall courses for students scoring in the lower end of the reading and writing spectrum:

If a student has a Accuplacer Essay score of 3 or 4, **AND** a Accuplacer Reading score below 80, the student shall be placed in **Foundations of Critical Reading and Writing**.

If the student does not score in the developmental range in reading, then the student shall be placed in **Foundations of Writing**.

Focused on basic reading, writing and study skills ranging from the writing process and grammar at the sentence level up to 2 pages, use of support and evidence in argumentative writing as well.

The Reading and Writing Specialists in CAS in collaboration with the Director CRWT will deliver these courses.

In relation to Critical Reading and Writing I and Critical Reading and Writing II, these courses will be woven into the assessment strategy overseen by the Critical Reading and Writing Director. The Director of CRWT will work collaborate with CAS staff in this process.

The courses will be housed and assessed through AIS, delivered by the staff of the Center for Academic Success.

#### **CRWT 101: Critical Reading and Writing I: Rhetoric, Reading and Composition** (4 credits toward graduation)

Organized as a semester long course for students scoring at a level not yet proficient for higher-level Critical Reading and Argument skills.

For students scoring 5 on the Accuplacer or successful work in the CRWT 080 or 090 course.

Focused on mid-range analytic, rhetoric and compositional needs as expressed through modes of writing, and mid-level argument, organization and documentation skills as they pertain to writing from papers 2-5 pages in length. Reading instruction will be dedicated to analysis and “close-reading” strategies.

Overseen by the Director of CRWT in collaboration with CRWT faculty and CAS staff.

**CRWT 102: Critical Reading and Writing II: Argument and Research**  
(4 credits/Gen Ed requirement)

Organized as a course for students who demonstrate a level of higher proficiency as determined by successful course work in CRWT I or by an Accuplacer score of 6 or higher

Focused on more sophisticated argument and research strategies and the crafting of lengthier academic papers. Modeled on our current ENGL 180 course.

Overseen by the Director of CRWT in collaboration with CRWT faculty. Partnering with CAS and WAC Chair

**Administration of Critical Reading and Writing Program:**

A search for a Director will occur in AY 2011-2012. In turn, the Critical Reading and Writing (current CE) faculty and CE coordinator and WAC Director will work to develop the courses and learning outcomes that the new hire can manage and execute. The Director should be a faculty member with a PHD in Rhetoric or English with some experience working with a composition program and be able to fulfill the responsibilities articulated in the job description.

**The Critical Reading and Writing Program partners with The Library’s Information Literacy Programs and CAS tutoring services:**

Each section of Critical Reading and Writing will be paired with a peer tutor who will work closely with faculty and staff regarding assignments and will hold hours at CAS for individual instruction on reading, writing and study skills.

Professional Tutors will serve the Foundations program in the summer and hold tutorial hours throughout the year.