To: Members of the WAC committee

From: Ed Shannon

Re: Minutes, WAC committee Meeting of Oct. 10, 2018

Date: Oct. 13, 2018

Present: Ed Shannon (SSHGS), Christina Connor (Library), Kim Lorber (SSHS), Diane Andronaco (TAS), Karen Wallace (ASB), Rebecca Leung (CA).

Not present: Tom Kitchen (CRW) chair/ ex-officio.

Todd Barnes (CRWT, ex-officio) and Monika Giacoppe (SIAH, ex-officio).

Barnes and Giacoppe communicated that they were obliged to attend a GECCo meeting, occurring at the time of our meeting.

Issues covered:

* Members thanked Christina Connor for calling the meeting in the absence of a regular meeting.
* Ed Shannon volunteered to take over as chair. The committee approved.
* Request from Lisa Cassidy (PHIL) to include PHIL 201 as WI.

The committee found no objections to the course itself. However, currently there is a proscription against including courses in the Arch General Education Program and in WI. Subsequent investigation led to questions about the authority and scope of the proscription. The chair is investigating and will report back to the committee.

Should it turn out that the course can be considered for WI, the committee will consider the course again, and deem it “submitted on time” for later consideration.

* Members were asked to communicate to their schools that all new WI requests for AY 2019-2020 needed to be submitted by 10/15/18 for consideration.
* One member forwarded the question as to how a course might eventually be moved out of WI, should a faculty member make that request. No policy was immediately cited. Perhaps the group should consider crafting one in the future.
* ARC Request:

The ARC chair forwarded to the committee a question on how some of the just how WAC policies were intended to be implemented for *WAC in the Schools*. Specifically the question of *revision* was raised. The question submitted is:

“There is some debate as to how the WI nature can be implemented in a course. Some faculty believe that that they must *give feedback on a draft of an assignment and then allow students to hand in a revised version of the same document/assignment*. Other faculty understood the WI policy to allow them to have students use feedback on a *sequence of different written assignments*--use feedback on first assignment to do better on second written assignment, and then use feedback on that second assignment to do better on third written assignment etc. (i.e., that it does not have to be the exact same document/assignment that students use prior feedback on).”

Following is our answer, based on language from the WAC documents as currently composed. This response was crafted after our meeting adjourned. *It was composed by the chair after seeking input from the entire committee. Eight of nine members responded, drafting the answer over the course of the week following the meeting. The final response was sent to ARC on Oct. 22, 2018.*

**Below is the pertinent excerpt from the *WAC in the Schools* description from the WAC website:**

“[T]he WAC committee recommends that courses included in the WAC in the Schools program follow these guidelines:

1. The course will emphasize the process of writing, including prewriting and revision.
2. Faculty will provide students with multiple writing assignments.
3. Students will be encouraged to revise their writing in multiple draft forms **after receiving feedback from the instructor**.”

Added to this we also consider language on the ARC form regarding Writing Intensive:

“**Writing will be integrated into the life of this course**. You will receive comments, direction, and support as you work on strengthening your writing skills. Your writing will be evaluated and returned in a timely fashion, **allowing you to incorporate my comments into your future work**. For help outside the classroom, please see me during my office hours and/or work with a writing tutor in the Center for Reading and Writing (CRW), Room: L-211, x7557, crw@ramapo.edu.”

(Boldface added for this memo.)

The Committee recognizes that there are many ways to achieve the overarching goal of “emphasiz[ing] the process of writing, including prewriting and revision.” We recognize that different disciplines and different instructors will solve this problem as they see fit.

Finally, our response is:

* Faculty feedback does not have to address the exact same document/ assignment for a course to count at WI. So, yes, faculty may “use feedback on first assignment to do better on second written assignment, and then use feedback on that second assignment to do better on third written assignment, etc.”
* **However,** we believe it is *best practice* for a faculty member to read and respond to ***at least*** one specific piece of student writing on more than one occasion. Currently, that model is ***not*** required under the current language of WAC/WI. We encouragefaculty to include this kind of feedback loop whenever possible. We believe this latter practice truly allows “**Writing [to] be integrated into the life of [the] course.”**

**FUTURE MEETINGS:**

Generally, this committee meets three times each semester. In the past, WAC used the “minor” group slot for those meetings. We agreed to continue that pattern, although some members may find that difficult. However, according to the FA website, there are no more “minor” slots this semester. So the group may need to seek another slot.

We agreed that given the confusion above regarding the general education Arch program’s relationship to WI and the questions about revision, the committee might want to revise or supplement the language on the website. Other projects for the committee might include conversations about pedagogy and other campus outreach to encourage a culture of writing at Ramapo.