

# **MINUTES**

## **GWAR Committee**

**1:30 – 3:00**

### **Meeting Number 11**

**April 14, 2022**

**In attendance:** Joseph Aubele, Eve Baker, Lori Brown, Navdeep Dhillon, Annel Estrada, Noah Golden, Meghan Griffith, Elizabeth Lindau, Henry O'Lawrence, Chris Padron, Cynthia Pastrana, Benjamin Perlman, Loretta Ramirez, Alexandra Wilkinson

Aubele moved and Perlman seconded approval the agenda. The committee unanimously approved the agenda.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the meeting of March 18, 2022. They followed up on the discussion of student confusion among the GE, GPE, and GWAR policies. Griffith shared that attempts to clarify policy are underway. The minutes were amended to state that members moved, seconded, and voted to deny the student waiver request. Wilkinson moved, and Aubele seconded approval of meeting minutes for March 18, 2022.

Carol Nader from the College of Business joined the meeting at 1:45. The committee reviewed a WI Course Application from Business: IS 301: Business Communication. Golden praised the class as an “exemplar” of a WI course. Wilkinson and Perlman agreed. Golden moved, and Wilkinson seconded approval of IS 301. The committee voted unanimously to approve the course.

The committee read and discussed the Chancellor's Office Memo on GWAR dated March 24, 2022. Golden worried that something could be lost if writing assessment were tied to accreditation. Brown said that this would essentially eliminate all GWAR.

The memo also revived discussion of whether the GPE is high stakes. Perlman pointed out that the pass rate is very high: roughly 90% of test takers move on to WI courses. Brown spoke about the need to make the pass rate of the GPE more reflective of students' writing skills. Estrada reminded the committee that

students still perceive the test as high stakes as long as its results can require an extra course and delay progress toward graduation.

O'Lawrence asked whether Jody Cormack and other administrators had reacted to the content of the memo yet. Brown replied that Cormack had not, but that Kerry Johnson would be invited to the final GEAR meeting. Johnson suspects that CSULB will be pressured to give up the GPE.

Committee members discussed the possibility of eliminating the GPE and funneling all students directly into WI courses. Wilkinson shared her experience as an instructor, saying that it could be OK for less experienced students or students whose second language is English to go straight into a WI course without portfolio intervention. She said that many of them attend office hours or receive extra assistance. Perlman agreed. Both instructors thus advocated retiring the placement exam and "remedial" portfolio courses. Golden replied that this WI-only system might work if it was supported by the system of online modules discussed previously. In Golden's words, we need "WI+ with need for a large conversation about what the '+' is."

Aubele expressed surprise and frustration that administrators haven't simply declared that the GPE can no longer be given. He asked what administrators are willing to do to commit to helping students write well. GPE is not a great test, but we have been kept from improving it.

Brown asked the group for reasons for moving away from GPE. Are these equity issues? Issues with scoring? She also shared that a retired member of the English department who was a former GEAR coordinator recently contributed to a listserv about the Chancellor's memo, saying, in effect: If you can pass a test or pass a class, isn't a test *more* humane? Aubele concurred, saying that if the options were take a class *or* take a test, everyone would try to take the test. Students would perceive the test as an opportunity rather than a burden.

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ann Lindau