

## MINUTES

GWAR Committee

1:30 – 3:00

### Meeting Number 2 - September 17, 2021 via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE: Lori Brown, Annel Estrada, Sarvenaz Hatami, Chris Padron Benjamin Perlman, Elizabeth Lindau, Alexandra Wilkinson

The meeting came to order at 1:43 p.m. despite doubts about whether a quorum had been achieved. Brown noted that two former committee members have ended their terms and have not been formally replaced. If the size of the committee is reduced to account for this, then the number of people present might technically constitute a quorum. Brown pledged to check the policy.

Golden moved and Wilkinson seconded **approval of the minutes** from the September 3, 2021 meeting. Those present voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Lindau moved, and Wilkinson seconded **approval of the agenda**. The agenda was approved by all present, with the caveat that if it is determined that a true quorum was not present, no decisions voted on during the meeting would not be binding.

Brown announced that the **GPE test** would be administered during the weekend to roughly 700 in-person and online testers. Many more testers chose to take the test online rather than in person. Testing planned to follow health and safety protocols for those who chose to test on campus.

Brown shared a written **proposal from BMAC** Associate Director Jessica Wood to allow remote student proctors for the GPE. Students served by BMAC need their own proctors because the remote proctoring systems used by the rest of the online testers can interfere with accommodations like screen readers. Respondus might also “flag” as suspicious students who are entitled to breaks or rest periods during and exam. And in general, it is best if the exam is overseen by trained staff who understand individual students’ needs. However, BMAC does not have enough people on its staff to meet the demand

for remote proctoring, especially on weekends. Trained students would potentially be able to fill in this gap, thus providing an online test-taking option for students served by BMAC. In addition to the written request, Brown reported on her meeting with BMAC representatives and John Hamilton from testing. BMAC asked for a more sweeping accommodation for its students: allowing them to delay taking the GPE. (Estrada helped review the policy: “native” students must take it when they have between 30-50 hours, while transfer students must take it within their first semester at the university.) Brown and Hamilton refused this request, arguing that it would constitute a change in GEAR policy and could delay timely graduation.

The committee discussed the proposal for remote student proctors. Lindau fully supported Wood’s proposal, trusting BMAC’s judgement of how best to serve their students. Wilkinson agreed, emphasizing that she takes BMAC accommodations very seriously in her own teaching. She and Golden briefly compared and contrasted potential student proctors with Graduate Assistants and TA-ships. The discussion turned to whether undergraduate student proctors could be considered skilled and trustworthy. Hatami argued that Zoom recordings of screens in the proposal would mitigate any temptation to allow unfair advantages. Brown expressed concern that students might lack the specialized training to understand individual students’ needs, but noted that such expertise is in BMAC’s “wheelhouse” rather than the GEAR committee’s. She also expressed concerns about student privacy, and shared that there was some pushback from testing regarding training and paying individual student proctors. Hatami asked whether BMAC needed to have one-on-one remote proctors for each exam, or whether a single proctor could oversee a group exam.

Lindau noted the irony of how increasing the number of testing dates and modalities has led to questions about disadvantaging students. That is, if we provide five options instead of one, a student with only four options will appear to be at a disadvantage. Brown noted the impossibility of 100% equity, and brought up the useful distinction between equitable outcomes and equitable opportunities.

Lindau moved to authorize BMAC to use student proctors for the GPE as the center sees fit. Golden seconded. The committee voted unanimously to approve the request (again, assuming that a quorum was present at this meeting).

Brown announced that a newly formed committee to review the GVAR had its first meeting with the Chancellor's office. (They are scheduled to meet a minimum of three times this semester.) A number of campuses in the system have interesting proposals for showing students' writing proficiency. Cal State Channel Islands is moving toward coursework rather than testing, and it seems inevitable that other campuses will have to discontinue using a test as the sole criterion to meet the GVAR. Our WI courses are make us well-poised to meet these coming changes.

The committee welcomed Chris Padron (Senior in Film), who introduced himself as our new student representative. Padron is also a senator from the College of the Arts. (woot!)

Brown thanked those present for their time, and agreed to look into the quorum question.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ann Lindau