

MINUTES

GWAR Committee

Meeting Number 2

September 16, 2022

1:30 – 3:00

In attendance: Eve Baker, Lori Brown, Navdeep Dhillon, Jason Deutschman, Meghan Griffith, Sarvenaz Hatami, Henry O’Lawrence, Benjamin Perlman, Loretta Ramirez, Alexandra Wilkinson

Brown called the meeting to order at 1:44pm

The committee reviewed the agenda: Dhillon moved to approve, Perlman seconds, and the committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the GWAR meeting on September 2, 2022. With minor changes, Dhillon moves to approve the agenda as amended, and O’Lawrence seconded. The committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

Announcements

Brown will hold off on announcements until the GWAR roster is complete. As the committee does not have an official chair yet, Brown will call the next meeting and will continue running the meetings until a new chair is found.

Officer Elections

The committee did not have a quorum in the previous GWAR meeting, so officer elections occurred in GWAR meeting number 2.

Chair

Brown asks if we have nominations for the Chair of the GWAR committee for this academic year. However, no chair was able to be confirmed at this committee meeting.

Vice Chair

Ramirez is willing to serve as the Vice Chair and is approved unanimously.

Secretary

Wilkinson is willing to serve as secretary and is approved unanimously.

Summer GWAR Work Group

Brown discussed the workgroup at the previous GWAR meeting. This group included several people from the 2021/2022 GWAR committee, and they gathered four times over the summer. The summer work group committee was created to devise an alternative plan or plans for

CSULB students to meet GEAR requirements without having the GPE in place. Three plans arose from the group and will be provided to CEPC as options.

Plan 1: Two WI Course Path

Originally this plan had hopes of keeping the GPE, but as the summer work group continued, this option did not seem feasible. The second part of this proposal remained as the base of the plan. Essentially this proposal hopes to offer students two WI course options. The first option would be 301B. Students can self-place into 301B, and it also can be recommended to them by a department, college or counselor. This plan would also limit the class size of 301B to 12 students, allowing for more instructor attention and student support. Students can also choose to self-place into a traditional writing intensive course. The writing intensive course would also be limited to a class size of 15 students.

A discussion of the top requirements for all plans began. Regardless of the plan, what concepts do we want to emphasize to CEPC? These cannot be overlooked. It is agreed upon that there needs to be something in place for the students who would not have passed the GPE to support their writing skills. Strong resources need to be available for all students.

Furthermore, the committee understands that lowering the class cap is in the student's best interest. The writing intensive class size is 35 currently. Additionally, some type of training needs to be provided to faculty. The writing center also needs to be supported and expanded.

Deutschman states that reducing the class cap of current writing intensive courses to half, when students are already struggling with getting into WI courses, would hinder this further. Also, the cost is a significant factor. Brown states that the ramp-up would take time to have enough courses.

Overall, plan 1 eliminates the high-stakes testing element and the fee associated with taking the exam. This plan also allows for student choice in their writing course.

Questions to ponder include how will students decide which course to take (301B or other WI)? The advising centers will have to be involved in making the decisions or suggestions. The college or department the student is enrolled with may also have a recommendation or make the choice for their students.

Plan 2: Portfolio Path

This plan includes the use of an electronic portfolio. As a writing composition instructor, Ramirez's plan emphasizes using comp throughout students' experience at the university and bridges freshman comp and the WI course together. Essentially, throughout a student's time on campus, they will collect writing samples and other writing artifacts and store them in an electronic portfolio. Students will collect writing samples from various classes in which they earned a C or better. After collecting a certain number, perhaps 2 to 5 pieces, a student can enter a WI course with the portfolio serving as their ticket in. During the WI course, students can reflect on past writing samples and even select a previous assignment and build upon it. This plan also would require online writing modules to support students, and students can receive

badges for completing them. Digital badges gamify the experience and encourage engagement and completion. Workshops would also be helpful for students to set up these portfolios.

Questions include: will transfer students be awarded the same opportunity? The campus cannot require or guarantee that transfer students will have access to previous writing assignments at other colleges. Potential solutions include having students work on the portfolio during the WI course. Therefore, instead of their ticket into a WI, it will rather be the student's ticket out of the WI course. This allows more time for a student to collect writing samples. Other questions include assessing the online module material and the portfolio. This plan would also require training for other non-WI instructors so students could have/use writing samples for the portfolio.

Discussion: Hatami states amazement at the detail of this plan. However, because of how extensive this plan is, it may run into problems. There is value in the portfolio part, but at the very least, include online modules. The difficulty might be in the implementation of the plan.

Brown states that transfer students would not have CSULB's composition class to prepare students for the portfolio piece. O'Lawrence states as much as he enjoys this plan, it is very broad and a bit intimidating. O'Lawrence suggests that we find a way to categorize the plan so departments can implement it more efficiently.

Brown also suggests that simplifying this plan for the policy portion but use the bulk of this plan for the implementation process. Another thought includes that assessing and storing the electronic portfolios would require a fee. Although this is an excellent plan with sound teaching methods, this may not be feasible to implement throughout the university. But at the very least, this committee needs to make it clear that having students go straight to a WI course alone is not a good idea, but it may be where we are headed.

The committee agrees that online modules should be required and request that writing modules should be implemented somewhere at the college level for all majors. Ideally, this committee is hoping for some compromise between adding a class (which may not be feasible) and just going straight to a WI course.

Plan 3: WAC Path

Brown favors bringing back writing across the curriculum (WAC). A case can be made that it works, essentially, as WI courses are a form of WAC. CSU Chico is one of several colleges that have a campus writing requirement. This plan can be found here:

<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/2017/17-009.shtml>

Implemented in 2017, they created justification in support of WAC. A WAC program would also cover many points in Ramirez's plan. Note that Chico calls their WI courses "W" courses. Furthermore, they require four "W" courses by the time a student graduates. This could be regulated in some way by the college or department. Brown believes this could be implemented without requiring additional classes on our campus or new unit requirements.

Furthermore, this plan would bridge composition and the WI course. The goal would be to convert existing classes into WI classes to meet the need for 4 WI courses. This would make

writing a series of coursework throughout a student's time on campus. Side note: this plan could also implement online modules or a portfolio component. Our campus also does not need to have four courses. Instead, we could have a second WI requirement, one that is lower and upper division.

Furthermore, departments can specify options. This plan is already written into policy at Chico State, so our campus could borrow from it. The key will be to justify WAC, but our campus could decide what a W course means.

Discussion: O'Lawrence states that this plan is straightforward and will work, Deutschman, believes the plan is very comprehensive, and implementation is a little more streamlined. However, WAC has been a struggle in the past. Brown believes that either writing is essential or it is not, and we need a culture change. This plan would require a modification in student academic planners to track courses. It would also require training instructors to be comfortable with "W" courses. This plan might take time to implement, but it is possible. Another comment includes that our campus can decide how to define the "W" course. Perhaps even something in between a traditional course and a WI class. Hatami states that this plan is an ideal approach and seems very doable. Our campus could even change the criteria. Perhaps to 3,000 words instead of 5,000 words.

Ramirez supports this plan and hopes that this will encourage more students to take composition 2 as a future WI course. Furthermore, Brown discussed that most classes already have some type of writing, even if it is not a formal writing project. For example, communication courses write persuasive speeches, and engineering courses consider aspects of ethics, philosophy, and business when writing and preparing for their final projects. Future WI courses might need to change the course a little to encourage the writing process but do not need to make significant course alterations.

- I. GWAR Coordinator's report**
- II. New Business**
- III. Adjournment: 3:27pm**

Submitted by,
Alexandra Wilkinson