

MINUTES

GWAR Committee

Meeting Number 5

November 19, 2021 via Zoom

In attendance: Joseph Aubele, Lori Brown, Jason Deutschman, Navdeep Dhillon, Meghan Griffith, Eileen Klink, Henry O'Lawrence, Benjamin Perlman, Loretta Ramirez, Alexandra Wilkinson

Brown called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Lindau moved, and Aubele seconded approval of agenda. The committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Dhillon moved and Ramirez seconded approval of the minutes from the meeting of October 15, 2021.

Brown began the meeting with several announcements. We expect news soon from the Chancellor's office regarding the future of GWAR in the CSU system.

Since the previous meeting, the committee voted via BeachBoard and e-mail to approve Philosophy 360 as a WI course. The course had been returned for revisions., and the WI subcommittee was impressed with the result. In total, the committee has approved WI courses this semester. There is currently a one-year lag between the committee's approval of a course and it and "counting" as WI. Thus, the Journalism course approved last spring will count *next* semester, the ones we just approved will officially count in Fall of 2022.

Kerry Johnson and her new analyst will attend the next meeting to present data on GPE and success in WI course.

The remainder of the meeting was spent in small breakout rooms of 2-3 members. Brown circulated among the rooms after posing the following questions:

- *If the GPE can no longer be used, would it be acceptable to have the WI course as the only GWAR requirement with no prerequisite?*
- *If that is not acceptable, what alternatives would be?*

What follows are notes taken in each room.

Room 1: Lindau (notetaker), Aubele, Wilkinson, Dhillon

Wilkinson shared her experiences teaching WI courses. She also wondered what will happen to the portfolio courses if the GPE is retired. Dhillon (new GWAR committee member from Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering!) asked for an explanation of the writing intensive courses and what the GPE is testing.

Aubele asked whether there were other ways of identifying students for additional instruction if the GPE is retired. What resources would the university be willing to commit? He also wondered whether students would put off the WI courses in the same way they put off the GPE currently? He noted that some departments are addressing writing within their own curricula—criminal justice is an example. Finally, Aubele shared anecdotally that he sees lots of students who are using the library for the first time in their 3rd or 4th years of university.

Brown (visiting the room) asked about pressure on WI instructors working with students, especially in the final semester.

Lindau floated the idea of the GPE as an optional exam that students may take to “pass out” of the portfolio courses. If they prefer not to take it, they can take a portfolio course.

Room 2: Perlman (notetaker) and Ramirez

- remove GPE
- keep WI courses
- maybe require two WI courses?
- one WI course could be lower division students
- a second WI course could be upper division students
- maybe require both WI courses to be in same department
- maybe require each WI course to be taken in different departments/colleges
- what about transfer students? would they take only one WI course? what if their previous institution didn't have a WI course?
- maybe have a stretch composition course with 12-18 students per cohort that take a WI course as lower division students and they same cohort then takes an upper division level composition course (WI)?
- there are coordination and registration issues with students and faculty if locking a cohort across years

Room 3: Deutschman (notetaker), Griffith, Klink, O'Lawrence

Klink: It would be fine but concerned about students who fail the WI. If D or lower referred to GEAR Portfolio course.

Other data/metrics for “precursors” or placement indicators/mechanisms for WI courses.

O'Lawrence- Also shared concerns about those students who do not do well

Klink: Concerns about the data of WI results and potentially more lenient grading in WI courses during pandemic. Also mentioned potentially offering other writing instruction

embedded in the curriculum (more discipline specific) at the lower division including at community colleges.

Griffith: Perhaps add more writing instruction across additional lower division GE areas.

Klink: Teacher credentialing process (recent) changes may have some longer term and different impacts. Some core courses may need a “B” or better.

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When the full group reconvened, each group shared what they discussed. Perlman and Ramirez noted the GPE’s high pass rate, and suggested two WI courses instead, perhaps one in the student’s department and one outside. Ramirez also brought up the idea of a stretch composition course – a small cohort of students doing composition assignments over a year.

Brown reported an uptick in students challenging the results of their GPE. The Chancellor’s office is wanting to eliminate it not necessarily because it is ineffective, but because it is perceived as inequitable.

After committee members wished one another a fun and relaxing fall break, the meeting adjourned at 3:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ann Lindau