

MINUTES
GWAR Committee
1:30 – 3:00

Meeting Number 8
February 19, 2021

In attendance: Joseph Aubele, Eve Baker, Lori Brown, Jason Deutschman, Annel Estrada, Noah Golden, Sarvenaz Hatami, Eileen Klink, Elizabeth Lindau, Henry O'Lawrence, Cynthia Pastrana, Benjamin Perlman, Shabnam Sodagari, Alexandra Wilkinson

The meeting began at 1:43 p.m.

Approval of minutes: Wilkinson moved, and Deutschmann seconded approval of the minutes from February 5, 2021. The committee voted to approve the minutes. Lindau will anonymize student waiver petitions in these and all future minutes. She will post a key as a separate document linking the students' names to the codes in the minutes.

Baker reported on the **pilot online GPE**. 67 students registered for the exam, and 60 tested. The pilot went smoothly, with only a couple of hiccups: some students had trouble accessing the post-exam survey, while others found the 65-minute testperiod plus 10-minute grace period confusing. Baker recommended doing away with the grace period and simply having a 75-minute exam period. The exam reading will take place on Friday, February 26, with Pastrana serving as first reader. Exams with marginal or low scores will be passed on to a second reader for verification. One week before the exam, Pastrana conducted a successful workshop for approximately 30 students with ATS assisting. (Committee members praised Pastrana's work at several points during this meeting.) Having skimmed the post-exam surveys, Brown reported that responses were lengthier than usual. Lizzet Rojas volunteered to analyze and code the survey responses on the surveys. She will also look at statistics correlating grades in precursor questions to success on the test.

AVP Johnson is attending a **system-wide meeting with the Chancellor** the week of February 22 with GWAR as the top agenda item. The Chancellor asked for questions that had to be submitted in a short time frame. Brown's questions included:

- *What is the new Chancellor's perspective on studies showing the palpable gap between employers' need and graduate skillsets with regard to written communication? (Examples come from the National Association for Colleges and Employers, Glass Door, and Bloomberg, and include articles on cost and investment to train or re-train employees in things like basic e-mail correspondence.)*
- *What are the Chancellor's thoughts about using written communication skills and experiences on our campus to further equity and inclusion? How can writing help support our goal?*
- *What's the long-term plan for GWAR at the CSUs? The top-down edicts have created uncertainty on our campus and discontent among our students.*
- *If the formal GWAR is to be diminished or eliminated at the CO level, what sort of support could our campuses expect to keep writing as a priority?*

- *What is the Chancellor's view of writing preparation for graduate students? What are the priorities in the context of undergraduate education? What goals has the new Chancellor set? Are these more focused on employment skills or academic writing?*
- *What programs beyond academic coursework could to the teaching and improvement of writing skills?*
- *What is the final verdict on the GPE?*
- *Is the new Chancellor's regime open to new protocols? What about digital certifications in writing that students could take into the workplace?*

Klink reported that other campuses still do not know what the GEAR will be. Lisa Vollendorf is the Chancellor's GEAR coordinator, and the new Chancellor seems general critical of standardized testing.

The **ad hoc committee for WI** course certification had a productive meeting during the week of February 15. They group should have a proposal soon.

Klink reported that there were not enough WI courses for the students who needed them this fall. Many students registered for English 300, an advanced composition course. Deutschmann concurred in the chat, explaining that "Waiving the GPE has really put a lot of enrollment pressure on WI courses. Essentially, WI courses offered for specific majors were the only open courses." Klink discussed recertifying 380 and 301B as WI courses. The latter class would be both a GEAR portfolio course *and* WI for those placed into it by the GPE. (If a course is WI *and* GE, it must go through both GEGC and CEPC after the GEAR committee.)

Klink reported her concerns about **Senate Bill 874**—a pilot program to allow community colleges to award Bachelor's degrees. It is unclear how this would intersect with UD writing requirements. The effort to have community colleges award these degrees is being undermined by the new Ethnic Studies requirement, which those institutions cannot fulfill.

Other efforts being pushed at the system level include dual enrollment courses, and faculty exchanges between campuses. Brown reported that online courses are technically open to the entire CSU system, which is germane to these discussions.

Brown reported that there was no blowback from the **denied waiver requests** at the last meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ann Lindau