

Minutes

GWAR Committee

1:30 – 3:00

Meeting Number 3

October 20, 2023

Call to order: 1:33 p.m.

In attendance: Eve Baker, Nicollete Brant, Lori Brown, Navdeep Dhillon, Tom Do, Eileen Klink, Meghan Griffin Pina, Lorenzo Gutierrez-Jarquin, Sarvenaz Hatami, Benjamin Perlman, Loretta Ramirez, Deepti Singh, Katherin Toscano, Alexandra Wilkinson

Approval of Agenda

Wilkinson moves to approve the agenda, and Perlman seconds the motion. The minutes are unanimously approved.

Approval of meeting Minutes for October 6. 2023

Perlman motions to approve the minutes from October 6th, and Singh seconds the motion. The minutes are unanimously approved.

Announcements

The chair of the GPE Advisory Committee, Ramirez, notes that the committee released three prompts. The prompts are ready for Brown and Baker for final review.

Testing Update

Baker notes that testing dates are coming up. More than 1688 are scheduled to take the test online, and 555 are testing in person.

GWAR Coordinator's report

Brown discussed additional meetings regarding the GPE proposal. Brown notes that she has met with members of CEPC along with various people on campus for feedback and to answer questions. Generally, the feedback and questions have been more of the same concepts the committee has discussed for two years. However, Brown and many committee members believe many of the concerns are mitigated within the proposal to the policy if they are not addressed in the actual draft policy. More people across campus are reviewing the draft policy, and this has been helpful in catching potential issues.

Policy Proposal Feedback

Brown moves to the specific draft policy and proposal feedback. Klink notes that CEPC member Paskin sent comments from CEPC to the Senate Executive Committee. These comments were

then sent to the Department of English. Klink notes that the major concern is that there is currently no commitment of funds. Klink urged English instructors to send concerns to Brown and GWARC. Some other concerns include insufficient buy-in from departments and administration and a possibility that writing instruction would be minimal. There is also a concern about identifying students who may not pass the GPE for additional support from qualified people.

Do notes that writing is important and beneficial for all students. However, he states that not everyone knows how to write within their discipline. Those in rhetoric and composition understand that writing is complicated and cannot be left to just anyone to teach. Do notes that the campus needs to ensure that the people teaching writing are well trained. Do reflects on research he sent to Brown to review that confirms the need to train writing faculty to ensure consistency across the campus.

Brown notes that the 90+ writing intensive courses are often not taught by writing experts holding an English degree. However, when the plan was created, there were opportunities for faculty to get training and develop courses. Brown also notes the possibility of getting all writing courses on this campus to be taught by writing instructors is slim. Brown notes that the campus needs to rely to some extent on instructors who are experts in their discipline and understand the type of writing required in that field. Otherwise, the campus may need to eliminate the writing in the discipline component if it cannot be taught by trained composition instructors. Brown also notes that to meet the statewide GEAR, students must take writing instruction within an upper-division class. Brown sees no option other than relying on disciplinary experts while providing additional training and funding.

Brown states that committee leadership drafted a letter urging for support of funding for the draft proposal and policy. Brown also notes that Jody Cormack has asked the University Resources Committee (URC) to develop specific policy costs. URC will analyze the money needed before CEPC can vote on the policy. This policy is currently on hold until specific costs can be presented.

Wilkinson understands the concerns that Do is expressing. However, Wilkinson notes that this proposal calls for four writing classes for undergrad students. Students will still be taking freshman composition taught by faculty with formal English degrees. However, writing is so diverse and needs change across disciplines. Providing students with a list of approved writing-intensive courses from their discipline will supplement and expand students' writing abilities from what they learned in English. A strong writing foundation and exposure to writing from various disciplines will make them an asset for future careers. Of course, instructors teaching writing in any discipline should be provided training and support.

Klink states that 928 on general education requirements will impact lower division coursework. Many freshmen are coming to the CSU system and will never take an English class on this campus. Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) classes taken in high school may count towards the students' English requirements. Requirements for receiving a teacher's credential are also being altered. The English department is examining high school courses, and Klink notes that they can be taught by non-English faculty as well. Klink notes that there is an urgency to get students finished with their degrees as quickly as possible.

Klink states that she does not have an issue with WAC, but the proposal needs to be strong enough to ensure funding and commitment from the campus. A WAC coordinator will also be a necessity. Klink also states that classes are dealing with enormous issues with AI and Chat GPT concerns.

Ramirez notes that funding is, of course, essential and is located on page five of the proposal. Ramirez reviews the draft proposal with the group circling back to Do's point about training. The draft proposal requests 18 people with various backgrounds who are experienced with writing instruction. Ramirez stresses that the first group of faculty responsible for setting up and launching WAC will have robust backgrounds in composition and rhetoric. The second part of the budget stresses that funding be allocated to training for students and faculty. The committee wants to catch students who have been underprivileged in their writing instruction. Ramirez addresses the concern of not asking for writing experts when the proposal requires that experts take leadership of this program. Another group of experts is also called for in this proposal to create online modules to distribute across the campus. A diverse set of writing experts are called for throughout the proposal. The proposal also calls for a WAC director. More details of the funding proposal and the creation of the WAC program proposal can be found on Canvas.

Klink applauds Ramirez for her description of proposal funding. Klink notes if the English Department pushes back on the proposal, it will be because of a lack of funding commitment. Klink worries that much responsibility will fall on lecturers and worries that release time and stipend payments may not be enough to support the new workload. Klink also notes that the university writing center will need support. Ramirez states that the proposal also calls for fewer students in a class. This will help with the workload. Ramirez also reminisces about the Summer 2022 workgroup that Griswold was a part of. Ramirez believes that Griswold and GWARC were of like mind during this time and can come up with solutions if explanations are not already provided in the proposal.

Brown notes that when CEPC began reviewing the draft policy only they did not want to review the draft proposal. Therefore, the draft proposal may not have been distributed to the appropriate sources. However, when reviewing the draft policy and the proposal together, many of the questions and concerns are addressed. Brown also notes that the details of the policy and proposal are negotiable. However, having writing on our campus is not. Brown asks Klink if what GWARC is proposing receives funding that meets most of the needs is there is any other component of the policy that English is concerned about. Brown notes that Griswold is suggesting keeping the GPE. Klink suggests that this policy should be connected to funding. It does not need to be specific, but funding needs to be in the policy.

Brown briefly discusses how CSULB's policy is very similar to Chico State's. Brown met with Chico State to ask about funding and department buy-in. Chico State notes that writing classes with 30 students are funded as if they have 50 students to persuade department buy in.

Brown also notes that looking over the last two years, there has been so much push to remove the GPE altogether. This committee was tasked with finding a replacement for the GPE that supported our students. It was clear that keeping the GPE would be a difficult road with much of the higher administration supporting removing it altogether. The test has also sparked concerns about equity. Klink notes that the English Department is concerned with writing instruction

everywhere, from this campus to the high schools. Klink echoes the concern of workload placed on lecturers.

Do notes that this proposal is getting rid of the GPE. However, there are many who support keeping the GPE. Do notes that it is a safety net to locate students, particularly second language learners and writers, who may need additional support. Brown notes that this committee has been discussing keeping and not keeping the GPE for 2 years. The committee has had a tremendous push to manifest three key concepts (remove the perceived high-stakes exam, discontinue the GEAR student fees, and discontinue units that do not count towards a degree). This proposal accomplishes all three of these concepts. Brown also notes that last year the GPE was almost removed without anything to replace it. The Chancellor's Office has stated that exams cannot be used to meet the GEAR. Our test is technically not used to meet the GEAR but is used as a stepping stone to meet the GEAR.

Brown briefly goes over the letter that is being sent to administration. The letter is available in detail on Canvas. The letter summarizes what a WAC program is, why the GPE was asked to be removed, what the committee is proposing for a WAC, and an urge for the necessary funding. Brown notes that this proposal has been discussed consistently for the last year. The committee has looked at this proposal and the potential removing of GPE from multiple angles. This proposal meets key needs being asked for by administration and will support and bridge students throughout their time on campus.

Brown concludes the meeting with a discussion on the previous WAC attempt. The previous attempt was pushed onto one department and often one person to make it successful. While this policy is not perfect, it calls for multiple departments across campus to support it. This WAC program would also be policy-driven which will mandate campus support. With funding it can be successful.

Old Business

WAC Proposal – Online Module Ideas

New Business

Adjournment: 3:13 pm