

MINUTES

GWAR Committee

ZOOM Conference

1:30 – 3:00

Meeting Number 1

September 4, 2020

In attendance: Joseph Aubele, Lori Brown, Annel Estrada, Noah Golden, John Hamilton, Sarvenaz Hatami, Eileen Klink, Tina Matchuniak, Henry O'Lawrence, Ben Perlman, Shabnam Sodagari

1. Introductions: The committee welcomed new member Ben Perlman, Lecturer in the Department of Biology.
2. The agenda was approved.
3. No minutes were recorded at the May 15, 2020 meeting.
4. Officer Elections for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Recording Secretary were held.
 - The committee voted unanimously to retain Brown as Chair.
 - Aubele nominated Hatami for Vice-Chair. She accepted, and was unanimously elected.
 - Lindau agreed to serve as Recording Secretary, and was approved.
5. Academic Senate Writing Intensive Course Approval Procedural Memo.
 - Brown explained developments in Writing Intensive (WI) course policy over the summer. These courses were formerly “capstones” overseen by GEGC. Since WI courses are now Graduation Requirements rather than GE requirements, it was decided that they will temporarily (that is, for the 2020-2021 academic year) fall under the jurisdiction of the GWAR committee. Approval of new WI courses and review of existing offerings is now part of our charge.
 - We will approve courses that satisfy the WI requirement. Courses that satisfy both WI and GE requirements will go on to GEGC for approval after GWARC.

- We will need a WI subcommittee in the fall semester, as courses are currently awaiting approval. The deadline for course catalog changes will be sometime in November.
- Golden expressed his interest in serving on the new subcommittee, and suggested linking writing to disciplinary practices in the new review process.

6. GPE Waivers for fall 2020.

- Brown reminded committee members that they had voted to waive the GPE for fall semester. As a result, all new transfer students this fall may bypass the exam and go directly into a WI course. Native and continuing students with more than 30 units also received waiver of GPE. Roughly 11,500 students total received a waiver, and a new coding system was developed through Enrollment Services. However, the 30-unit figure did not take into account AP or international baccalaureate requirements, which means that some students were missed in this “sweep.”
- Because so many more students are moving on to the WI course, all seats are full in this semester’s offerings, and we will need new courses and more sections to meet the demand for spring. This increases the need for the new subcommittee.

7. GPE online progress report

- The testing department and ATS have collaborated and developed strategies for putting the GPE online. Lockdown Browser and Respondus were chosen as the best options for maintaining the integrity of the exam. The hope was that it would be available for spring testing. However, the Chancellor frowns on students being required to appear on camera, and to high-stakes testing generally. Hamilton reported that testing was ready to pilot but for the camera issue. Because our exam is a *placement* exam, we may still be able to continue as planned if we provide an alternative for students who do not want to be on camera. We may be able to test up to 20 of these students at a time at an on-campus site.

- Hamilton offered to report on how the other CSU campuses are handling this situation. He noted that ATS has been a great partner to the testing department.
- Brown shared that the GPE currently identifies some 1200 students per year who need extra help with writing. This is a good reason to find a way to keep using the test, and not simply send those students into WI courses without remedial help.

8. Sub-Committees – GPEAC and Writing Intensive

- More members are needed for the GPEAC subcommittee, also known as the GPE prompt writing committee. Its numbers have dwindled.
- It may be time to reconsider the GPE's format. If the exam is no longer pen-and-paper, it needn't fit onto one page anymore. Brown reported that the average GPE pass rate is very high at 94%. She has asked an analyst to break that data down into demographic sub-groups.
- Lindau said that the GPEAC's BeachBoard site is in need of reorganization. It is difficult to tell which prompts are approved for piloting, approved for use in the exam, and which have already been used. Brown suggested that the OneDrive system being developed for GVAR portfolio classes might help.

9. Waiver requests

- 20-21-HM waiver of the WPE was granted unanimously.
- The committee discussed 20-21-EV's waiver petition at length. Estrada and Brown noted that he applied at the last minute, and that he waited until the end of his degree program to fulfill this requirement. Golden and Lindau suggested that he receive accommodations from BMAC to help him meet the requirement. Hamilton suggested that he be directed to CAPS. Klink and Aubele agreed that his case would be more compelling if he had written a narrative explaining his situation and demonstrating his writing skill. Klink suggested that his department be asked to vouch for his writing skill. It was agreed that 20-21-EV be directed to these

campus entities. He should also be encouraged to write a letter making his case, and to solicit letters from his department.

10. Agenda items for fall 2020 and New Business.

- Klink brought up a current discussion on the CSU English listserv, and suggested a CSU system-wide discussion about GVAR. Some campuses are using Canvas to test students, while others abandoned the test temporarily. She praised Brown's representation of the committee to the Academic Senate.
- Brown shared that the Global Studies group's recent study of writing across our campus did not show successful results.

11. The meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ann Lindau