MINUTES

GWAR Committee

1:30 – 3:00

Meeting Number 4

November 3, 2023

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

Call meeting to order: 1:33 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Baker motions to approve the agenda and Singh seconds the motion. The agenda is unanimously approved.

Approval of meeting Minutes for October 20. 2023

Perlman motions to approve the minutes from October 20th, 2023 as amended, and Baker seconds the motion. The amended minutes are unanimously approved.

Announcements

Brown notes that Griswold and Klink have been invited to discuss concerns about the draft proposal. Griswold has extensive experience with GWAR and has previously served as chair for the committee and assisted with the GWAR Summer workgroup. Griswold was also a part of the implementation of the current GWAR policy and writing-intensive courses.

Time Certain: 1:45 Gary Griswold (ENG) and Eileen Klink (ENG) – Response to WAC GWAR Policy Proposal

Griswold begins by stating that policy is well thought out and thanks the committee for putting it together. However, Griswold has some reservations. Griswold's greatest concern involves students being placed in WI classes who are not ready for the writing involved in the class. Griswold understands the GPE is not perfect and does not recognize it as the best practice. Ideally, a portfolio that students collect over time would be the best way to assess students' writing ability.

Griswold also notes that resource implications are a concern. The policy wants to resurrect a Witting Across the Curriculum program, but unless it is funded, nothing can happen. Griswold states that developers and implementers should get assigned time to make it happen rather than a stipend.

Griswold also notes concerns about adding two classes to a student's load. Griswold is concerned about hiring faculty, instructors, and TAs for all these courses. Griswold also discusses concerns about the need for a WAC director and potential staff to assist. Griswold's final concern is if the proposal does not secure funding and is there is an alternative position. Or funding may be provided but then removed.

Stammler notes that Griswold's concerns are valid, but the committee may not have answers to all of them at this time. Brown states the funding question is fundamental. Brown notes that she has been waiting for official word about support for the proposal. Once the proposal went to CEPC, Brown was given very short notice that the policy was going to be looked over. Brown understands that without funding support, it would be very difficult for departments to commit to the draft proposal. Brown notes that the executive leadership wrote a letter to the Provost, Vice Provost, and AVP for curriculum to request funding. Brown notes that VP Cormack has assigned the University Resource Committee URC to look at the policy and determine a resource need before moving forward. CEPC has put this policy on hold for faculty to review it with their colleges and departments.

Griswold discussed when the English department was hiring the Writing Center director, the department had concerns about getting the position funded. The Writing Center needed basic requirements to remain staffed and functional. To mitigate this concern the English department included a Charter of basic requirements of the program and the university's commitment to this program. Griswold notes that since the implementation, there have not been large difficulties with the center's budget.

Brown asks Griswold what the process was for getting the Writing Center Charter approved. Griswold does not recall but notes that the provost and the hiring committee signed it. Klink states that there was a series of meetings with English, the college Dean, and Kerry Johnson, which was essentially written up in Charter form.

Brown notes, in retrospect this committee was trying to thread many needles together. Many requirements needed to be met. Originally this committee was changed with changing GWAR policy. This committee decided to model the WAC idea based on what other schools already have. Brown notes that a larger interpretation of WAC could be implied. Although Brown favors this, it was not fully what GWARC had in mind. GWARC is not proposing that the school create an entire WAC program. However, this committee is hopeful that despite the challenges with the previous WAC attempt, with policy and adding a Charter, this version of WAC could be successful. If the policy aligns with the Chancellor's view while demonstrating best practices, this policy may be the best chance to improve writing on this campus. Browns notes that this policy combines the requests of removing the GPE, removing the $25 fee for the GPE, removing perceived high-stakes testing, and removing units that do not count as part of a degree.

Brant asks a question about the process of editing the policy after receiving feedback. Brown notes that CEPC has what the committee gave them. CEPC is open to amendments from us or anyone on the campus. Brown also notes that there are parts she would like to make clearer, such as the concern over adding extra units for students. Browns notes a need to add a line about W courses being already existing classes or classes in the process of being created.

Brown asks the committee about the policy development process and if GWARC could have any input on proposal changes. Griswold notes the CEPC will most likely come back to the committee with questions and proposed changes, but the Senate may not. Griswold offers to help Brown write a Charter for the draft WAC proposal.

Brown asks Griswold and Klink if funding is provided does the English department has additional concerns with the proposal? Klink notes that she supports the proposal and will support GWARC. Griswold has concerns about losing the GPE. However, he believes if the college adds two additional writing classes, it could help catch students who need additional help.

Brown states that there will be a new policy written and implemented by someone on this campus. Brown preferred that GWARC had the opportunity to draft a policy and the future of writing on this campus and have a say. What CEPC proposed could have been different without our policy draft. Brown also recalls data presented to the committee in past GWARC meetings. The research revealed how little writing is being done on this campus by analyzing campus syllabi. Brown understands that calling the proposal WAC could be confusing, but our proposal is a smaller version of WAC. However, Brown believes encouraging any additional writing on this campus will be a major improvement.

Stammler's concerns include the necessity of a WAC director for oversight and quality control. This question is a concern now, but it will be more important if students are required to take four writing courses. Stammler's additional concern includes English language learners. Stammler asks if portfolio classes can continue in some capacity. Klink states that 301A could continue as a recommendation basis. If faculty believe that students need additional support, they could recommend the portfolio class. Klink notes that she would combine 301 A and 301 B if needed and convert the class to a WI. Brown states that this is a great argument for requiring the third class. Brown notes that she has already heard a desire to remove the third class. However, the committee believes that this class is essential for our students. Brown states that the only class the proposal adds is the third upper-division class. The first class would be met by freshman composition, the second class could be met by critical thinking or whatever the GE course may be, the third class could be department-recommended or supplied, and then the WI class. Brown notes that if the GE policy requires students to take a critical thinking class, it may help support this policy.

Brown circles back to Stammler's question on the impact of removing the GPE and second language learners. If the campus cannot add more units, GWARC proposes online modules to help students hone their skills. Instructors can also use the modules for support. However, the development of the modules will require funding. Brown asks if the online modules are an acceptable pathway to assisting English language learners. Brown also adds, if the GPE is not replaced by something, it could be replaced by nothing.

Griswold states that if an instructor believes a student needs additional support, modules could be assigned along with the tutoring could be helpful. As long as the modules are well-developed and access to tutoring is available. Griswold notes that is better than not supporting the students. Griswold believes that adding a course and having support is better than the WI class only. Stammler believes the modules are a great idea but worries about students' ability to self-teach

and the potential of having others complete the modules for them. Griswold is also concerned about instructors being able to utilize modules. Klink also mentions modules would need to be updated to prevent cheating. Brown notes that consistent updating is being asked for in the proposal.

Brown asks Stammler if any solutions for the modules have been discussed. Stammler notes that most feedback is receptive to the modules, but concerns about the integrity remain. For example, if a student completes a module on punctuation, well, then the student learns about punctuation. However, without faculty oversight, students could struggle with the application. Brown notes that this committee may not be able to answer this at this time and to leave it to the committee responsible for module development.

Brant asks if the modules can be a part of a class. For example, if the instructor notices a student needs more support, they can assign a model. This would mean that the application of that module should appear in future writing assignments within the class. The instructor should be able to provide feedback. Brown notes that this campus can provide support, but it may be difficult to access the application within the modules. Stammler suggests having composition instructors make recommendations for the writing classes as they can often catch students who are struggling. Griswold states that this would miss transfer students. Brown believes that the modules could have a strong presence in the third class that incorporates writing. Brown asks if the committee supports the third class that integrates writing. GWARC overwhelmingly supports the third class. Brown notes that GWARC initially thought that the module task force would be allowed the flexibility to determine what the modules entail. Tutoring will also play an important role.

Griswold and Klink state that they will support this proposal, given the parameters.

Brant asks if faculty can meet students at the writing level the student is at. Griswold notes that it is not that simple. It takes time to acquire language. Perlman notes that he meets students where they are, but often needs to refer students to the writing center because they need consistent exposure to writing. Perlman notes that many classes can be converted to writing classes with the help of the guide Perlman, Wilkinson, Golden, and Hatami developed. Brown notes there is an incentive to convert classes into writing classes because it means students can take more writing classes within their major.

Old Business

WAC Proposal – Online Module Ideas were not discussed at this meeting.

Adjournment: 3:11 pm

Submitted by,

Alexandra Wilkinson