

**Minutes of the GVAR Committee Meeting**  
**September 17, 2010**  
**Number 2**  
**USU 311**

In attendance: Rebekha Abbuhl (Linguistics), James A. Ahumada (ASI), Karin Griffin (University Library), Gary Griswold (CLA), Bron Pellissier (Advising Council), Susan Platt (Testing, Evaluation & Assessment), Maryam Qudrat (COE), Linda Sarbo (GVAR Coordinator), Sue Stanley (CEPC), Rick Tuveson (Health & Human Services), Mark Wiley (Academic Affairs), Carol Zitzer-Comfort (CED)

1. **Approval of Agenda: MSP**
2. **Approval of Minutes of 5/7/10 & 9/3/10: MSP, with corrections for 9/3/10**
3. **Announcements**
  - a. New BeachBoard site established for GVAR Committee
  - b. Updated GVAR Committee roster sent to Mary Walker
  - c. Nathan Jensen now GVAR Committee member
4. **Overview of Academic Writing Assessment Task Force (AWATF) Report, Pilot Schematic, & Self Study Report of 2006; Brainstorming Session**
  - a. Committee chair handed out and summarized contents of AWATF report, Pilot Schematic, and highlights of 2006 self study, and noted that AWATF report hasn't yet gone to AS Executive Committee
  - b. Brainstorming: what would an ideal writing program look like; how can writing best be assessed?
    - Separate kinds of assessments for students we serve, such as freshmen, transfer students, non-native English speakers
    - Anchor assessments at different points: after first semester, 45-units, 75-units, 90 units
    - Ideal writing program needs to happen before assessment; students don't get enough writing
    - Lessons from other campuses: capstone in major, integration of skills mentioned in learning outcomes of the AWATF report; more GE in major; designate courses as "W" (writing) courses; get started early with writing instruction instead of at the end; approach grad students differently from undergrads
    - Require GRE for grad students
    - WAC (writing across the curriculum) program geared to two distinct populations (native v. non-native English speakers)
    - Help troubled populations before they take writing intensive courses
    - Offer buffet of language acquisition courses; create full-time position to oversee, coordinate teaching of writing & writing instruction on campus
    - Avoid tracking; now have freshman comp for different populations; stigmatized students
    - Use multiple assessments approach
    - Get away from over-reliance on WPE type exam
    - Consider more appropriate assessments such as Collegiate Learning Assessment
    - Issue with WPE passing 95% of students

- Move away from centralized test
- Assessment should occur throughout departments
- Transfer student issues: capstone course should be writing intensive; students should not be able to take three at once
- Issue of WAC (writing across the curriculum): tough on faculty without appropriate training
- Should be more comprehensive approach for transfer students from moment they arrive
- Should consider revamping “capstone” idea; restructure
- San Marcos plan: every course requires 4500 words of writing
- Change name of WPE to “Writing Placement Exam”
- Ideas pertaining to senior thesis project- start at beginning, tie to discipline
- Purpose of a test- may not want to allow students to “test out”
- Create strong curriculum first, then help troubled students along the way
- Still need demonstration of what students can do in GE and major
- Two broad models emerging from this discussion: diagnostic test leading to coursework; strong curriculum

**5. GVAR Coordinator’s Report:**

- a. Three WPE waiver requests
  - i. First request: more evidence to be brought to future meeting
  - ii. Second/third requests: not enough time; tabled for future meeting

**6. Next meeting: October 1, 2010 from 1:30 to 3:00 PM.**

**7. Move to Adjourn - MSP**

**8. Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Platt

These minutes were approved on 10/1/10.