

**Minutes  
GWAR Committee  
USU 311  
1:30 – 3 PM**

**Meeting Number 10  
April 19, 2013**

Members in Attendance: Rebekha Abbuhl, Leslie Anderson, Jason Deutschman, Yu Ding, Melissa Lyon, Maryam Qudrat, Linda Sarbo, Rick Tuveson

**1. Approval of agenda**

- a. MSP

**2. Minutes of meeting on March 15, 2013**

- a. MSP as amended.

**3. Welcome to new member: Jason Deutschman**

- a. Jason Deutschman was welcomed to the committee.

**4. Announcements**

- a. There will be a WPE administration on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The reading will be on May 11<sup>th</sup>.
- b. The scores from the February test were late going out, so GWAR advising is still seeing those students. However, the students the advisors are seeing are generally first-time test takers who took the test in February. It is now rare to come across someone who has taken the WPE twice, which shows that the advising is working.
- c. LING 363 was approved as a writing intensive capstone course. CDFS 319 has also been approved. One WI course is being developed in art, and there are 5 pending review in geology.

**5. GWAR MOU**

- a. The GWAR Memorandum of Understanding was distributed to the committee for their comments. As the MOU had been signed prior to the GWAR meeting, it was not possible to recommend any changes to the MOU (such as adding language about the Writing Across the Curriculum coordinator). However, discussing the MOU is important in order to decide on future courses of action.
- b. The MOU stated that “Students’ experiences in the GWAR courses is [sic] not of a uniform quality from course to course in terms of portfolio requirements and the nature of assignments.” However, the committee noted that the criteria (e.g., page count, word count, revisions, one essay in class, etc.) are consistent. The students, of course, will meet these criteria

in different ways in different disciplines. A discipline-specific course, such as LING 301, will have much more disciplinary-specific writing than a course (such as ENGL 301B) that is open to students from all majors. It was noted that perhaps the MOU was stating that the grading standards differ across departments. However, it was noted that the workshops Linda holds for the GVAR instructors is one mechanism we have in place for ensuring consistency in grading across different GVAR portfolio courses. Another mechanism we have in place is that of second readings done by experienced GVAR instructors. All new instructors receive second readings on their portfolios, and all failing portfolios receive a second reading (regardless of whether the instructor is new or experienced).

- c. It was suggested that perhaps the external reviewer did not fully understand what criteria we have in place already for quality control. Linda will check whether she gave the external reviewer a copy of the criteria.

#### **6. Process of insuring consistency in standards**

- a. The committee noted that the only thing we can reasonably focus on is the scoring process. We can't make the contents of the portfolios the same for everyone because that defeats the purpose of having the courses being relevant to the disciplines.
- b. The committee suggested forming a subcommittee to back read sample portfolios, which is typical procedure for ensuring quality control in a portfolio program. Melissa, Linda, Jason, Maryam, and Rebekha will meet at the end of this semester (May 3<sup>rd</sup>, immediately after the GVAR meeting) and will examine one 301 B portfolio, one LING 301 portfolio, one COTA portfolio, and one FMD 450 portfolio. Linda will help track down the FMD portfolio. The subcommittee will meet again at the beginning of the Fall 2013 semester.

#### **7. GVAR Coordinator's report**

- a. A waiver was presented to the committee. It passed with 7 in favor and 1 opposed.
- b. The next GVAR Instructor's workshop will be May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Minutes submitted by,

Rebekha Abbuhl

(These minutes were approved on 5/3/13.)