

Minutes
GWAR Committee
USU 311
1:30 – 3 PM

Meeting Number 6
November 18, 2011

In attendance: Nathan Jensen, Rebekha Abbuhl, Colleen Dunagan, Susan Platt, Diana Hines, Linda Sarbo, Rick Tuveson, Leslie Anderson, and Bron Pellissier

1. Approval of agenda

- a. MSP

2. Minutes of meeting on November 4, 2011

- a. In members in attendance change “Dinah” to “Diana”
- b. Announcements: change “not many” to “any”
- c. Approval - MSP

3. Announcements

- a. Nancy Sommers was here giving a workshop on composition this morning. She discussed how to motivate effective revision in student writing and worked from examples of student writing from our campus. She showed a useful video about students’ responses to instructor comments on writing.
- b. A WPE exam is being given tomorrow, November 19th. It looks like it will be a fairly big turnout. There will be a uniform police presence in order to help enforce a calm, orderly environment and to assist the staff in maintaining order.

4. Policy Draft:

a. Report from Academic Senate meeting

- i. They did not get to the GE amendment in yesterday’s meeting, so the GE policy and amendment will probably be on the calendar for the December 8th meeting.

b. Email from Chris Brazier concerning content

- i. Rebekha emailed Brazier to just let him know what we were thinking about. He gave feedback primarily on the format of the policy itself, rather than on the actual content. He thought we only needed a couple sentences from the overview section to remain in the policy. We do not need to directly address executive orders. Some of what we have here might be footnoted so that Senators can see it as they read through the policy. Sections 4 and 5 are charge policies, and the campus is moving toward making committee charges separate documents, so that they are more easily changed without having to change the policy itself. However, the CEPC can separate those documents out once we send the policy forward to them.

c. Further revisions

- i. **Graduate Students:** Susan is raising the issue that we could waive the requirement for any graduates coming from an accredited English-speaking university. Nathan says we could explicitly indicate which countries are

considered English-as-a-primary-language locations so that students from universities in those countries would be exempt. Graduate students have a 98% pass rate on the WPE. Even 75% of International students manage to pass the WPE in the first year. Which wording would we like?

1. “Any student who has earned a baccalaureate or graduate degree from an accredited US institution,” or “**Any student who has earned a US baccalaureate degree from an accredited university from a country where English is the primary form of discourse.**” What standard are we holding graduate students to? Should the graduate students be left to the departments and kept out of the GVAR sequencing entirely? Sacramento State and San Francisco State both have graduate level writing courses that graduate students can be placed into if needed; however, San Francisco State decides placement based on their version of the WPE. Graduate students who have not demonstrated baccalaureate level competency in writing may fulfill the GVAR through the GRE, the TOFEL, or the pathways in the policy. We could try to encourage the GRE as an admission’s requirement, but say that it is the GRE or one of a set of possible options. Rebekha will email us sample statements to provide feedback on.
- ii. Formatting still needs to be revised to match formatting of existing policies.
- iii. Comments regarding any other possible revisions:
 1. Rick – wondering if we might want to address the difference between assigning writing vs. teaching writing. Rebekha raised the issue that the current wording defines writing intensive in a way that speaks to the importance of teaching writing in the course, rather than simply assigning writing.
 2. Linda – we may need to modify the items in section three where we list the criteria for writing intensive courses, once we know how the GE policy is being amended/worded. We may want to say “designated as writing intensive by the GE policy” rather than as designated as writing intensive by the GVAR Committee.

5. GVAR Coordinator’s report

- a. More than three hundred holds have been set on students who have not passed the WPE and have been told how to proceed on their pathway but have not begun to pursue/follow the required pathway.

6. Adjournment: 2:33 pm

Minutes submitted by,

Colleen Dunagan

(These minutes were approved on 12/2/11.)