

Minutes of the GVAR Committee Meeting
November 19, 2010
Meeting 6
USU 311

In attendance: Rebekha Abbuhl, James Ahumada, Lori Brown, Rosi Grannell, Karin Griffin, Gary Griswold, Diana Hines, Nathan Jensen, Susan Platt, Rick Tuveson, Mark Wiley

1. Approval of Agenda: MSP

2. Minutes of meetings on November 5th, 2010: MSP as amended

3. Announcements

- a. There was an administration of the WPE last weekend (approximately 2000 students) and the reading will December 4th.
- b. An update on the GVAR seamless advising pilot was given. As part of the pilot, we are requiring students who received a 9 or 10 to sign up for GVAR courses or see an advisor. There are 243 students in this category, and advisors have seen 95 of them so far. Only 6 were given permission to test again. Ten have signed up for GVAR courses, but the committee was reminded that students have until December to enroll. On Monday Susan will be sending warning to students who have not signed up for a GVAR course or seen an advisor.

4. GVAR options for distance learning students

- a. We have a number of off-site programs at the university (e.g., social work, professional studies). The Testing, Evaluation and Assessment (TEA) office has been asked in the past to administer the WPE off campus, but it was noted that this leads to complications (e.g., security breaches, time limits that are not adhered to, untrained supervisors). On campus, TEA can guarantee the security of the test, but not off campus.
- b. If we do not do off-campus administrations of the WPE, then (1) students could visit campus to take the WPE; (2) students could take the GRE or GMAT; or (3) the off-site programs could develop their own GVAR courses.
- c. The GVAR policy currently states that students need to take the WPE first before they explore other options, but an exemption from policy has been requested for this group of students so that they can use these other options (e.g., GRE, GMAT, GVAR course) without having taken the WPE first. A motion was made to grant this exception (MSP).
- d. Rebekha will communicate this information to the Executive Committee.
- e. It was noted that we will need to revisit this issue after a year (as the GVAR policy may be changing).

5. Plan and timeline for policy revision

- a. A rough timeline was distributed to the committee to guide our efforts to revise the policy. It was suggested that we make mid-February the deadline for a very rough draft/outline of our proposed changes and then meet with the GEGC and

CEPC for their feedback. A more polished draft would be completed mid-March. At that time, we can consider inviting feedback from other stakeholders, including but not limited to Faculty Council, Associate Deans, and Department Chairs.

- b. A suggestion was made to post information about the proposed policy changes on the Senate blog so as to invite feedback. We can also invite individuals to our meetings.
- c. A motion was made to create a subcommittee to draft some initial wording to be examined by the committee at the next meeting. Members are Gary, Nathen, Rebekha and Susan. MSP.
- d. Concerning the proposed policy, a suggestion was made to have a fourth option for students who excel on the placement examination. For example, they could be placed directly into one of the following: (1) leap capstone in major; or (2) writing intensive course in major; or (3) other writing intensive course (e.g., English technical writing). However, it was noted that exempting students from the 'GE capstone course certified as writing intensive' may make the policy confusing. An alternative could be to grant major program advisors the power to exempt students on a case-by-case basis.
- e. It was noted that the current proposed policy does not distinguish pathways for graduate and undergraduate students. The ultimate writing experiences of the two groups need to be different. The San Francisco State University policy makes a clear distinction between the two groups, so we could consult this as a model.
- f. It was suggested that if "homegrown" freshmen (students who are not transfers) receive an A or B in Composition 100, then they would not need to take the placement examination. It was noted that quality control of the comps courses will need to be addressed if we go this route.
- g. A question was raised concerning the mechanics of deeming students "GWAR certified" and this will need to be addressed at a future meeting.

6. Sample policies (SFSU and Sacramento State)

- a. The GWAR policies from SFSU and Sacramento were distributed to the committee for their consideration. It was requested that committee members read these carefully before the next meeting on December 3rd and identify parts that we may be able to use or adapt in our own proposed policy.

7. Questionnaire to faculty

- a. Under the proposed policy, students who in the past would have received a 11 or 12 on the WPE would now be required to pass additional classes in order to satisfy the GWAR. This idea is based on our experiences as teachers, advisors and administrators that students receiving 11s and 12s are still in need of instruction. However, it would be useful to have information from the faculty concerning their perceptions on students' writing.
- b. A sample questionnaire was distributed to the committee and suggestions were made concerning questions for both faculty and students. Rebekha will type up

these questions and send to the committee for further discussion at the next meeting.

8. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rebekha Abbuhl

(These minutes were approved on 12/3/2010.)