

**Minutes
GWAR Committee
USU 311
1:30-3:00 PM**

**Meeting #8
December 9, 2011**

Members in Attendance: Linda Sarbo, Susan Platt, Rebekha Abbuhl, Mark Wiley, Gary Griswold, Rick Tuveson, Colleen Dunagan

1. Approval of Agenda: MSP
2. Minutes of meeting on December 2, 2011: MSP
3. Announcements:
 - a. WPE Reading tomorrow, Saturday, December 10, 2011. There are 2700 papers.
4. Policy Draft:
 - a. Report on Academic Senate and GE policy
 - i. Sharon Olsen's amendment may not impact our policy. To simplify advising, she proposed eliminating double counting and GE electives. Students would be allowed to take capstones from a new category, F, and capstones would be separate from other GE 2011 requirements. This amendment would also make transfer and native populations follow the same pathways. It keeps the GE requirement at 48 units.
 - ii. Keith Freesemann proposed striking the language that all capstones must have a 35-student limit and instead proposed that only writing intensive capstones would have a 35-student cap. He said that all capstones should have a word requirement of 2500 words but that the writing intensive capstones should be kept at 5000 words. That amendment passed. He also suggested that writing intensive capstones would not be required for students since requiring them at this time would create a bottleneck. He is waiting to see what the GWAR committee comes forward with and whether we would phase the writing intensive requirement into the curriculum. The amendment passed. Some concerns that were raised in the academic senate meeting include: (1) if students are not required to take a writing intensive course, then what incentive would departments have to create these courses; (2) if the academic senate approves writing intensive courses but the GWAR policy doesn't pass, what would happen then. Overall, the senate supported more writing instruction and writing intensive courses. The issue is just how to make everything work in terms of workload and FTEs.
 - iii. Questions in our committee regarding the report:
 1. Do we need to specify the writing intensive requirements in our policy?

- a. The part of the GE policy that defines writing intensive has not been discussed and passed yet.
 - b. Is it practical to have two sets of criteria? Maybe we could put our version forward – that includes the requirements – and if it runs into problems then it could be amended on the floor of the senate.
- b. Susan and Linda: draft wording on section concerning graduate departments establishing
 - i. Proposed changes are:
 - 1. “Graduate students must fulfill the GEAR in one of the following ways: 1) By earning a baccalaureate degree from an accredited US institution 2) By attaining a score of 5 on the analytical writing component of the GRE 3) By taking the GPE and completing one of the following pathways:
 - a. Pathway I: Students with an upper range score on the GPE must successfully complete the following: A writing intensive course or writing activity within the student’s graduate program as determined by the student’s department.
 - b. Pathway II: Student with a mid-range score must successfully complete the following: 1) A GEAR portfolio course 2) A writing intensive course or writing activity within the student’s graduate program as determined by the student’s department (this course maybe taken concurrently with a GEAR portfolio course)
 - c. Pathway III: Students with a low-range score must successfully complete the following: 1) ENGL 301 A or equivalent 2) A GEAR portfolio course 3) A writing intensive course or writing activity within the student’s graduate program as determined by the student’s department (this course may be taken concurrently with a GEAR portfolio course).”
 - 2. It was suggested that graduate programs may elect not to accept option 1) as fulfilling the GEAR and may require all students to complete either option 2) or option 3). Departments that elect this alternative must notify Enrollment Services and the GEAR committee of this election and must include these requirements in the catalogue description of program requirements.
 - ii. Susan raised the idea that we could raise the GRE requirement from 4 to 5 in order to clearly distinguish the use of the GRE as meeting the GEAR at the graduate level. Her concern is being clear that the GRE is not a placement test.

- iii. There was a concern about giving the departments too much autonomy. So, we may not want to use the GRE as a way to meet it. Some departments might argue that the thesis is the document that demonstrates the ability to write. An idea was raised that faculty should be responsible for ensuring students are doing what they need in order to be able to perform at the graduate level. Graduate programs cannot hold graduate students to a lower standard than that of the undergraduates.
- iv. GMAT – there are reservations about continuing to honor the GMAT score. The test was moved to another company a couple of years ago and the test seems to have changed and/or the scoring the test seems to have become weaker. Scores of 4 are showing up in the 19th percentile, which seems troubling. A motion to strike the GMAT as an option was made: MSP. A motion was made to move the GRE score to a 5: MSP.
- v. Pathway II item 2 and Pathway 3 item 3: remove “this course” from the sentence since the requirement may not be a course. Additional note: remove “within the students’ graduate program” and change last part to read “as determined by the students’ graduate program”.
- vi. Do we need to even include the GRE score as an option since it is really there only for international students and we rarely see international students entering with a score of 4, much less 5? Counter argument: perhaps it would be useful to leave it for the time being and track what happens with it. Committee prefers to leave it in at this time.
- vii. A move was made to include the following language: “Any student from a regionally-accredited non-US institution located in a country where English is a primary form of communication is exempt from the GPE on a case by case basis.” MSP
- viii. Last paragraph revision: begin with “Graduate programs may elect” and we don’t need the parentheses. We could say “Departments that do not select option one may select on of these options”.
- ix. Linda will consult Donna Green regarding this aspect of the policy to get feedback.

- c. Move to accept as amended: MSP
5. Page one second paragraph: “in its report datedthe AWTF identified the following student learning outcomes that CSULB students should have achieved by the time they complete their undergraduate degree programs:”. It was suggested that we delete “in their writing students should...”
 6. Portfolio submission policy:
 - a. A question was raised as to whether or not a student could be denied permission to submit a portfolio based on the number of classes the student had missed (poor attendance). The issue has come up in the past but has been raised again recently. The concern is also driven by an instructor appearing to arbitrarily decide who could and could not submit a portfolio. Linda’s perception is that this committee

decided that the portfolio was going to be an independent assessment that was not contingent on anything else including the student's attendance or grade in the course.

- b. The problem is that we have courses like COTA's GVAR course that stipulates that the submission of the portfolio for consideration for the GVAR is linked to completion of assignments and attendance.
 - c. A question was raised as to whether any other course outlines have similar policies.
 - d. A discussion was held regarding how we want to handle this issue. We discussed reasons for mandating whether or not instructors can deny students the opportunity to submit their portfolio for consideration. Right now the committee is undecided.
 - e. We will re-visit the issue in the spring.
7. Adjournment

Submitted by

Colleen Dunagan

(These minutes were approved on 2/3/12.)