**WAC Committee meeting
Friday, April 4, 2014**

**Present:** Dan Murtaugh, Fred Bloetscher, Joe Su, Rachel Luria, Julia Mason, Joy McClellan, Jeff Galin, Julianne Curran
**Absent:** Allen Smith
**Guest:** Wendy Hinshaw

1. **1102 replacements**

Language stating that syllabi for 1102 replacements must also be approved by the English department’s Writing Committee is missing from the WAC website.

There is not currently any criteria on the WAC website about the criteria for which the Writing Committee is looking. However, the important thing is that the language “Replacement 1102 syllabi must also be approved by the Writing Committee” needs to be included.

**Julia Mason** pointed out that language about the writing committee used to be present on the WAC website, but was recently removed. **Julianne Curran** suspects that either the language was inadvertently deleted in recent revisions to the 1102 Replacement section of the website, or the language was found on the 2000-4000 level criteria page, where Writing Committee approval does not apply.

**Follow up: JC** **added the appropriate language about Writing Committee approval to the 1102 replacement criteria page, including downloadable documents. She also updated the “Course Approval Process” page to include the Writing Committee.**

The committee discussed the matter of making clear what the Writing Committee recommends for approval for Replacement 1102s. A key thing will be to identify what constitutes “research” for such courses.

Ideally, when research is used, sources should display depth and variety of research and include counter arguments, all of which should be seamlessly incorporated. The Writing Committee hasn’t yet put criteria on the kinds of sources to be used in such courses.

**JG** thinks the WC should consider requiring students to use a couple of peer reviewed secondary sources in such research-based courses.

**FB** Pointed out that a problem many students have is that they have trouble reading and comprehending peer reviewed material. If they don’t read in general, the writing suffers. If you make them use such peer reviewed sources, the hope would be that students will pick up on and adopt some of writing style in academic works.

**Wendy Hinshaw** Added that what constitutes research will depend on what the goals of the course are, especially when it comes to understanding what the goals are in the different kinds of assignments. Sometimes the larger goal is to get students to understand a source in context and to think about how it is working in that context. It’s about information literacy, and as such what is considered “research” may not need to be limited to peer-reviewed sources.

**JG** Clarified that the WAC committee is not trying to suggest that using peer-reviewed sources should be a requirement of replacement courses, but the question of “What constitutes research in these courses?” is the kind of thing that the Writing Committee should discuss.

The committee discussed what the procedure for approving 1102 Replacement courses should be. **Dan Murtaugh** suggested that it makes sense to have the WAC approval come first since WAC has broader parameters in terms of what it requires of a syllabus. Once a replacement syllabus is approved by WAC, the Writing Committee will have the opportunity to overlay and additional specific requirements/requests.

Generally, the procedures for syllabus approval is:

Home Department 🡪home college program committee 🡪 WAC committee 🡪 English Department Writing Committee 🡪 UUPC 🡪 Faculty Senate

It was discussed as to whether JC should articulate this on the WAC website, but it was decided that these should be left a little open should the need for flexibility arise. Thus, this explicit advancement process will not be put on the WAC website.

1. **Philosophy PHI 2010 WAC course**

**JG** followed up with concerns from the last meeting surrounding the structure of PHI 2010, in particular Lester Embree’s sections. The committee reviewed and revised a letter to dept. chair Mike Harris that summarized the WAC issues in the course based on the public document available – the current syllabus. Anecdotal information from GTAs of the section in question was NOT included or alluded to in the letter. The primary concerns were about the criteria by which papers are evaluated (7 “checklist” items), there is no substantial revision, and there are a number of short assignments (2 pages) without any kind of sustained development. **JG** will show the letter to Ed Pratt and Mike Harris before sending it to Embree.

**Follow up: Embree’s section was removed from the Spring 2014 pool of WAC assessment sections. The letter was sent to Embree and he and the chair resolved that Embree would not be scheduled to teach PHI 2010 in the future, but if he is, he must revise the syllabus to meet WAC standards.**

1. **Writing Enriched Curriculum and Faculty Learning Community update**

The committee discussed the challenges of developing an assessment process for WEC. WEC does not want to use the same metrics as QEP, but it also does not want to duplicate faculty efforts for each program. WEC wants to work with QEP as much as possible. The question becomes how can WEC help writing in a department so as to better help the department with its QEP initiative and the QEP communication criteria?

It was decided that in the fall we will pilot the WEC process with Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literatures. Once we have an example of the process in action and more letters of interest from department chairs, then we will present a proposal to the provost. The committee felt that a successful pilot would provide better leverage for university buy-in.

For the future, **JG** invited the committee to share any ideas about how WEC might interface with QEP.

**Joe Su** reminded the committee about creating an outside advisory committee of professional stakeholders, but **JG** is hesitant to institute anything official with this yet before we have established a critical mass of support. We will look into this in the future.

**Announcements:**

The committee will be forwarding the following 3 recommendations from the WAC committee to the next UUPC meeting:
 - recommendation of Joy McClellan to replace Ellen Ryan
 - request to revise the WAC/Gordon Rule sections of the UUPC Policies and Procedures to reflect the most current state guidelines.
 - informational report of the development of the WEC project.

**Follow up: all of this was accepted by the UUPC.**