**WAC committee meeting
Friday, March 18, 2016**

**Present**: Jeff Galin, Dan Murtaugh, Joe Su, Allen Smith (arrived half way through)
**Absent**: Fred Bloetscher, Julia Mason, Rachel Luria

1. **Writing Enriched Curriculum**: update on WEC in Languages, Linguistics, & Comparative Literatures (LLCL); Ocean and Mechanical Engineering (OME); possibility of next pilot in Sociology.

**LLCL:** The dept. has had at least one language teaching development workshop for faculty in February. The guest speaker was Melissa Baralt, FIU assistant professor of applied linguistics. In fall 2015 LLCL’s Spanish unit identified supplementary readings for 2000-level language courses and is incorporating them in Spring 2016. The French unit is working on a bibliography of outside texts. The Linguistics unit is deferring its self-study until fall 2016. There is currently an *in-lingua* writing consultant at the UCEW.

**OME:** The department has had two of the self-study meetings and has identified a list of writing abilities. The liaison team met with **JG** to start defining each ability for the rubric. The liaison team will meet again to finish the process of defining each ability at various levels for the rubric. They will then map where in the curriculum they want for each ability level to occur. Before the end of the semester, the full department will meet again to imagine implementation possibilities for next year. The final report may not get submitted until after the semester is over sometime in May, so **WAC committee** may have to review/give feedback/approve the plan over the summer/in June before the end of the fiscal year.

**Sociology:** we’ve presented the program to the department, but have not gotten a decision from them as to whether they will participate or not. If they decline, we will have to find an alternative to pilot next year so that we do not lose the funding line.

**JG** plans to present the WEC program to the Provost this summer after receiving the final Writing Plan from OME. He hopes to be able to present two programs in different stages of the process as well as one committed for the fall. If WEC gets university buy-in, the implications of program growth will be determined (additional course buy out for assistant? Hiring of a graduate student? Etc.)

2. **Re-Certification**: There are still syllabi that need to be reviewed for English after the first round is completed. **JCZ** sent the first round of syllabi to review in November; she will re-send material to anyone who might have missed it. Please try to review and return any feedback as soon as you can. To simplify the process, you can tell her if a syllabus is approved to save you the time of filling out the feedback form. She’ll begin sending the second round out and will try to screen syllabi before sending them to the committee. **JG** thanked the committee for this work which is a big undertaking for such a small committee. Questions about re-certification were discussed regarding language for 1101/2 below.

3**. WAC Criteria for 1101/2 and English's standard syllabus for 1101/2**:

During the syllabus review process, questions were raised about 1101/2 WAC criteria. Namely how to assess word count when no page/word count is provided; how to assess whether assignments promoted reading of sustained and challenging texts, and analytical writing; and how much of a description of error tracking methods is needed. The committee present reviewed some sample syllabi for 1101/2 that both followed the department’s standard syllabus for the course and that were more individual. Example language that more clearly addressed these concerns was identified in one of the sample syllabi. **JCZ** will summarize the example text and share it with the Writing Program Director to consider for the standard syllabus.

4. **WAC assessment**: updates on the new website being built; updates on benchmarks set by various departments.

WAC has hired an independent third party to re-build the WAC Assessment website. The administrator and student interfaces are mostly completed; the rating interface is in process and is the most complicated of the three. The goal is to have a beta version by the end of the month so that **JG** and **JCZ** can test it so any necessary adjustments can be made. The goal is to use this newly-created interface for the assessment rating process in early May. In the meantime, we are using the current interface website to collect papers this semester/academic year.

5. **Research-intensive designated courses** proposed syllabus format.

OURI wants to know whether current WAC courses that seek the additional RI designation will need to undergo an additional review for WAC purposes. The committee discussed the possibility of reviewing some of the new RI courses as they come in to OURI to assess how they are set up, especially those from disciplines that aren’t usually associated (from a layman’s perspective) with writing. For example, in disciplines like Math, what might a syllabus for an MAT 4971 Honors Thesis in Mathematics that is an RI- and WAC-designated section look like?

The committee generally discussed the matter of whether these kinds of thesis courses included elements like a literature review for the subject/discipline. This question was raised in relation to whether the course demonstrated that students will engage in sustained reading of scholarly texts as per the WAC criteria. Is it typical that such projects have a lit review? If so, it would help clarify some of the WAC elements.

**Allen Smith** confirmed that the content of new RI courses does not change. **JG** thinks that if an existing WAC-designated course is revised so as to add the RI designation, it would only need to be re-certified by the WAC committee if the syllabus changes so as to decrease the amount of writing. **AS** said that some faculty considering the RI designation to be added to their WAC course may feel more comfortable. **JCZ** will draft language to this effect.

**\*Note**: After the meeting, **JCZ** noted the main item in question was the 1000-level WAC requirement that states: “All WAC Syllabi must include assignments that promote critical thinking, reading of sustained and challenging texts, and analytical writing.” This is a criterion for 1000-level but not 2000-level WAC courses. Thus, the WAC committee’s question about the sustained reading of texts as demonstrated via something like a lit review may not be as important since all the newly proposed RI courses are 4000-level.