

# Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2016, 10:00 am.

College of Education - Melby Center

In attendance:

- John Hardman - Educational Leadership & Research Methodology
- Dilys Schoorman - Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry
- Hanizah Zainuddin - Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry
- Melissa Mariani - Counselor Education
- Rina Bousalis - Teaching and Learning
- Joe Waters - Office for Academic & Student Services
- Amanda Cuevas – Educational Leadership & Research Methodology
- Andres Leon (by phone) – Educational Technology Support

1. Welcome--Dr. Hardman called the meeting to order with a welcome and introductions
2. The Writing Enriched Curriculum (WEC) --Dr. Hardman welcomed Dr. Jeff Galin, director of FAU's Community Center for Excellence in Writing, University Center for Excellence in Writing, and Writing Enriched Curriculum (WEC). Dr. Galin discussed three potential strategies for the College of Education to consider as the Diversity Committee explores ways to best work with students who are underprepared with writing skills in the College of Education.

Three Strategies:

- a. Writing Center: work with faculty, staff, and students at all levels. Utilize using this resource as often as you can. Encourage students to come early—and for those who are struggling—come often. Students can come up to 4 times a week for 30 minutes each for free. They can also work with staff through GoogleHangouts and GoogleDocs. Please don't send an entire class at a time, but do encourage faculty to identify projects for which students can receive writing assistance. We don't proofread, but we will help students to identify patterns in their writing and develop strategies to address them. If students are motivated and regularly visit the Writing Center over two semesters, will see improvement in their writing. Writing should be enforced by the department.
- b. Writing Enriched Program (WEC): (in-house is best) Courses are certified in writing across campus. Made writing requirements—the teaching of writing—better and that has helped in the lower-division primarily. Difficult to staff these courses as these must be state-certified, and must be taught in a consistent manner. It becomes difficult to enforce these requirements in upper-level courses. Writing Across Curriculum (WAC) committee did research; at least half of students are not FTIC, they transfer from state colleges. It is our responsibility to get them from where they are to where they need to be by the time they leave FAU. Least

experienced teachers (graduate TAs) are mostly teaching first-year writing; few(er) tenure track faculty teach these courses. Although they are well trained, this practice doesn't necessarily translate into effective teaching practice. In the upper-division classes, students are not writing at the lower-division level. This program was chosen out of 4 nation-wide models that FAU is interested in exploring. Faculty learning committee: Pamela Flash, first designer of this program at Univ of Minnesota, to meet on a regular basis as a consortium → she started. The program now works with 53 out of 75 departments at UMN. The university has now taken over and funds her program at \$400-500K/year.

Dr. Schoorman asked if we can flag students with a C- and let them know that they will need to be more proactive to get writing help from the Writing Center if they are going into particular majors. She raised the topic of articulation and identifying students who need writing assistance.

Dr. Galin explained that there is no state-wide standard regarding articulation. It isn't received well when a mandate is given top-down to schools, community colleges, or universities. The majority of faculty teaching lower-division writing at the community colleges are adjunct (teaching on average 5-9 classes per term which often precludes faculty from giving students the support in writing development that they need. A much broader conversation needs to occur and, currently, we are not likely to see more funding allocated at the state-level for teaching and learning. Dr. Galin asked for members of the committee to send him recommendations such as the idea to flag students and he will take to the campus writing committee to discuss.

Dr. Hardman raised the concern over transfer 2+2 'flyover' students whose GPAs appear significantly lower than that required for freshmen admissions, but we don't have a way to block them. We have started to look at our data. We need to do something to help these students when they transfer into upper-division. We also need to support lower-division students with C- or less so that they are better prepared by the time they get to upper-division in the college.

Dr. Galin suggested providing support for writing in the curriculum and reminded the committee that any student earning less than a C must repeat the course—they must pass first-year writing. He acknowledged that most graduate students teaching these courses do have a lot of support and preparation, but there still is grade inflation. However, he doesn't know what can be done to make the process stronger at this time. Perhaps anyone making lower than a B in these courses will need to be told that they will need to focus on their writing in the future.

Dr. Hardman noted that this committee is looking at final grades of students earned in certain courses. Perhaps Dr. Galin can provide a list of courses that are writing-intensive (junior level), and we can search for students.

Dr. Waters noted that Abdulla in FAU Advising Services could then flag these students in Starfish.

Dr. Hardman emphasized that we need those courses that Dr. Galin would recommend that will give us the most accurate information to indicate success. We are most concerned with upper-division courses in the College of Education. We can track students back to lower-division courses to predict a pattern and then correlate with particular economic, racial, ethnic background, for example. This process will allow us to better support students moving forward to help them be more successful in our programs and to help us meet metrics (graduating in 4 years).

Dr. Galin noted that we can search the online schedule of courses: select all courses (Control A); attribute: WAC.

Dr. Waters and Dr. Schoorman noted that we don't have any WAC designated courses in the College of Education although we do have writing-intensive courses. Perhaps we could flag any students who have not completed 4 WAC courses by the time they transfer into the College of Education. Any student transferring into FAU, will have completed 4 WAC courses.

Dr. Galin noted that we won't know what the flagging will mean for those students who transfer from other institutions. Only FAU FTICs take WAC courses, but not all WAC courses are lower-division—some may be upper-division.

Dr. Hardman asked how we could identify transfer students with writing challenges.

Dr. Galin suggested several options. (1) An entrance writing diagnostic could be established, although diagnostics have limited value. (2) Placement could be considered, but students aren't allowed to take "developmental" courses when they enroll at FAU. (3) Give a diagnostic early in the program at the beginning of a course. Faculty can ask for a piece of writing (Pass/Fail) early in the semester and assess in such categories as at, above, or below level. Students who score below level may need assistance, and may need to be tracked.

Dr. Schoorman explained that some years ago in preparation for accreditation, the program decided that students needed to meet all criteria to pass course. Instructors felt that they got the content, but struggled with the writing. However, students were sent through.

Dr. Hardman noted that this in-house program still exists (in Educational Leadership & Research Methodology) in the assessment rubrics in LiveText, but the writing component is not weighted strongly enough to cause a student to fail a course. We shouldn't come up with anything more cumbersome than what we need. We already have LiveText and designated levels, and can use the "boxes lining up" to flag students. Students can revise and resubmit. Sometimes writing issues cannot be solved simply by resubmission.

Let's walk away with something that we CAN do. How do we continue the conversation? What will actually work?

Dr. Galin suggested the Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC) initiative. Part of what you need is a rubric.

Dr. Hardman responded that if faculty are not being truthful, the grade may not tell us if a student needs help. Faculty in each department may need to be willing to tell us who needs help. We may need a more organic system than flagging in Starfish.

Dr. Galin said that the faculty will need to determine: (a) students' abilities and characteristics, (b) where in the curriculum can writing support be given in classes and assignments, (c) assessment, and (d) what kind of change are we interested in implementing. The WEC process involves intake surveys: faculty, students and affiliates (i.e., those who receive the students after graduation such as employers or graduate programs). Data are collected and correlated and then given back to the departments to provide a picture of data. Skills and abilities are discussed by departmental faculty. A liaison will need to be identified in the department who will help facilitate what needs to be done in tandem with Dr. Galin. The next step is to map the curriculum. The liaison would then work with faculty.

In a second meeting, faculty are surveyed again about which writing assignments occur in which courses with a focus on exposure, skill level, and intensive support for skill-building. Through the data, faculty can immediately see gaps to better prepare students for more intensive work. Once mapping is completed, it becomes easier to flush out rubric to be operational. Then develop assessment process that follows. For example, 15 skills may be identified and 5 measured per year for three-years.

WEC initiative: \$20K to implement (no release time for faculty). Currently, Dr. Galin is working with Mechanical and Ocean Engineering, and Sociology. We need to take on up to three programs per year. Proposal is written by the liaison after 4 conversations with faculty and collection of data over the course of a year. Department then has 2 full years of implementation of proposal, assessment, revise and resubmit proposal, \$10K 2 years, [same process], and then another \$5K for 2 years [same process], with the idea that after this cycle, it will be a part of the culture.

Outcomes: curriculum mapped in a systematic way and conversations by faculty about what they value and what the students will get out. Money is invested in various ways determined by the department such as faculty/professional development, workshops for students, LLCL wanted designated an in-lingua consultant, purchased French books for students, Engineering developing online modules. The money gets proposed for whatever you think will be of value; it is department-based, there is no pre-determined model.

Curriculum challenge: judged as most effective. Celebrate quality of student writing. Visibility of recognition of support and quality of writing by faculty and students is essential for sustainability and continuity. The faculty must buy-in; it is a faculty decision to participate.

Dr. Galin then shared the Mechanical & Ocean Engineering data project report as an example.

WEC is an 8-year process; liaison gets paid \$5K for initial report and a lesser amount for follow-up reports. A small amount of committee work will be required. The impact on faculty is minimal: 4 meetings/conversations first year; spend one day on assessment (pre/post; norm faculty—can use for accreditation, university requirements, and learning compacts for State of FL communications so replaces or enhances what is already being done); some transformation in curriculum over time.

Dr. Hardman asked if WEC funding is available for graduate programs.

Dr. Galin said that Dean Pratt will consider for a limited number of programs. What resources can we identify to help our graduate students? We need to better target and provide specific resources for grad students. For example, he has a colleague at Cornell who initially worked with international graduate students and who now works with all graduate students on their writing who he could bring to FAU as a consultant.

Dr. Hardman expressed that he didn't know that we had online writing support for graduate students and wonders if graduate students even know about this service.

Dr. Schoorman responded that the faculty integrate it in her department. It has become a part of the department culture—and that they provide a link to the Center for Excellence in Writing on their Blackboard site.

Dr. Galin shared that he had a conversation with Vicky Brown (CeL) to provide a link in BlackBoard to the writing center, and he needs to follow through on that conversation. He agreed that it would be good to institute this practice campus-wide.

Dr. Hardman asked for the link to online support (<http://www.fau.edu/UCEW/>).

Dr. Galin said that the writing center can accommodate any student who needs help. They just can't support an entire mandated class.

Dr. Zainuddin wondered how to best support international students.

A committee discussion commenced about how to best support students and identifying patterns in writing noting that some characteristics they will not get. We need to identify which are important for meaning-meaning and which will be artifacts/fossilized in their language. We need to help students build awareness.

Dr. Galin suggested that faculty simply need to spend 3 minutes identifying patterns in a writing assignment. He will be glad to come to a faculty meeting and share other tips. He also will work on writing a document on tips for faculty. In the meantime, Dr. Galin will send a 6-page "Poet Log" document of common grammar mistakes that students make. He would be interested in attending a faculty meeting to discuss what is valuable and of use or not in that document.

The committee suggested other resources such as OWL at Purdue and recommended grammar books for TESOL and bilingual education.

Dr. Hardman reminded Dr. Galin about the \$5.8 million grant to revamp Educational Leadership Master's Program (school leaders) to understand APA. This program could use a strategy to support proficiency in academic writing. We must graduate leaders who can write.

Dr. Zainuddin noted that many students often don't have understanding of how to write clear, coherent composition. Native speakers who don't have much writing practice and look like second language learners.

Dr. Galin shared that the Community Center for Excellence in Writing is available to prospective, non-admitted students who would like an assessment of their writing before they get into a graduate program. The cost of this service is \$65 for an hour session and \$100 for the diagnostic process (i.e., evaluation what level student is at; set up curricular goals; timeline for goal implementation/achievement; initial assessment and final assessment).

Dr. Hardman asked the committee what the most relevant points of Dr. Galin's presentation have been.

The committee members shared that these supportive services exist and that we need to use them. We need to share with the College of Education faculty that these supportive services exist and how we should support them.

Dr. Hardman suggested that we need to look at how students improve and that we can't continue to overload faculty. Either we will need to go with the WEC program or design our own. If the latter, we will need agreement from faculty. How far do we want to go down this road to develop this system?

Dr. Schoorman asked how we relate what we do as a committee with what the individual departments do. She asked for clarification in what the diversity committee is trying to accomplish. Perhaps the solution isn't a committee solution, but a department solution. What is the responsibility of this committee?

Dr. Zainuddin questioned whether we want to identify other characteristics for students to demonstrate. Perhaps we should develop a document that indicates the common errors students make that they should not make in any courses and how to fix them.

Dr. Hardman stated that we need to make a declaration that language and writing is correlated with diversity as part of the mission of the Diversity Committee.

### 3. FAU Diversity Council update

Dr. Schoorman expressed that a lot has happened since the last College of Education diversity committee meeting regarding culture, safety, etc. post-election. She asked what is the mission and vision of the committee, especially in this context. Perhaps we should identify 2-3 bullets of concern regarding our college. We have identified academic achievement and progress, but what are the other prongs such as culture/climate of inclusiveness demonstrated in our discourse? We should line it up with what the Diversity Council is doing at the university level to outline a clear approach institutionally to proper (social and emotional) responses.

Dr. Hardman echoed that we operate in academic, cultural, and political contexts.

Dr. Schoorman responded to a question on the discussion at the Faculty Senate Steering Committee to ask President Kelly to declare FAU a sanctuary campus. A proposal is being worked on.

President Kelly signed the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program and our Undocumented Immigrant Students along with the presidents of 441 universities. The Dean of Honors College issued a strongly worded letter regarding discrimination. We may want to consider crafting something by college.

The FAU Diversity Council met twice in the past weeks: The first was at an Open House at the Ritter Gallery to present the council's mission and request feedback from attendees. The main charge to the council is not to focus on students, but cross-campus collaboration with faculty and staff. Among the goals that have emerged are to develop Professional Development initiatives on topics such as inclusiveness, bias, recognizing cultural bias in the curriculum, etc. The council is asking for feedback on professional development topics that we can share in-person or on-line on these kinds of diversity issues. We have emerging issues and need collaboration across colleges to address them. Some areas in colleges are experts in sensitivity training, multicultural training, etc. How do we help our faculty and staff acquire that expertise? We first need to let people know that these courses exist! How significant is it to have a conversation about discourse—it is a sense of national urgency. What do we advertise? Do faculty and staff know that November was Native American Heritage Month.

#### Action Item

Dr. Hardman proposed a motion to add a diversity link on College website where resources can be included, connect people, and connect to Diversity Council. Motion was carried.

#### Action Item

Dr. Zainuddin offered to share a self-directed module grounded in ESOL issues and language issues, a resource already available through Blackboard. Faculty simply need to be invited by the lead instructor. This will be added to the Diversity website as a resource.

Mr. Leon reminded that committee that we already have a Diversity Committee webpage as part of the College of Education faculty website at:

<http://www.coe.fau.edu/facultystaff/committees/diversity.php>

#### Action Item

Dr. Hardman volunteered to draft the components/content of the resources that will be shared including a vision and mission statement.

4. SIP Selected Improvement Plan update – Mr. Andres Leon has added the graduate data to the SIP dashboard. All departments are included, but not necessarily by graduate programs. Mr. Leon will give all members of the Diversity Committee access to the dashboard.

The Diversity Committee – working in conjunction with the SIP Taskforce (which is no longer in

existence) identified two real-time alerts that would serve to monitor student persistence. These were the number of credits that students' dropped at the end of the Drop/Add period of the semester. This would be a flag in the system which would prompt a response from assessment and accreditation. Also, GPA dropping over course of semester raised an alert. We can now better identify and track data. This dashboard now provides more real-time data (obtained at the beginning of the next semester) about students' performance rather than waiting to get from IEA (6 months) or FL Dept. of Education (12 – 18 months).

Dr. Hardman reminded the committee that the creation of these flags in the system then lead to the next step, where does faculty advising with these students kick-in? This is where Appreciative Advising and diversity connections to these students come into the conversation.

Thank you, Mr. Leon, for developing these dashboards!

5. Other:

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled  
Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 10:00 – noon

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!