**WAC Committee Meeting**

**Friday, October 5, 2012**

**11:00-1:00, GS 214B**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Jeff Galin, Dan Murtaugh, Fred Bloetscher, Chris Ely, Joe Su, Julianne Curran, (Ellen Ryan arrived at 12:30)

**Absent:** Julia Mason, Allen Smith

1. **National Day on Writing**

**Julianne Curran (JC)** gave an update on the National Day on Writing. There will be activities on the breezeway and Barbara Hamby will be the guest reader at the evening reception on Thursday, Oct. 18th at 6:00 p.m.

1. **Recertification of English**

**Julianne Curran (JC)** updated the Recertification of WAC classes in the English department. There are approximately 60-65 syllabi to review. She will start sending 3-5 syllabi at a time for review. Please return feedback within two weeks. The committee held a norming session for a sample syllabus. On the feedback form, it was clarified that “evaluation criteria” for assignments can be a general description regarding quality of writing and does not require significant detail or rubrics. Also, the language stating “Substantive written feedback from the instructor is provided on all writing that leads to a grade” will be changed to “Students are informed how substantive written feedback will be provided.”

1. **Update on course cap issue**

**Jeff Galin (JG)** Administrative questions and pressure still surround the class cap issue from last spring. In a meeting with the Faculty Senate executive committee, **JG** explained that since WAC is university-wide, decisions about WAC course caps are made outside of departments, where such decisions typically lie. Caps in WAC courses are a result of the faculty governance process, and if there is a change, the decision must go through a similar process. **JG** shared an e-mail to the Provost that looked to some of FAU’s peer institutions regarding how their first-year writing programs are structured and capped, as well as provided an estimated breakdown of the amount of time instructors spend for each first-year writing course. **Fred Bloetscher (FB)** added that emphasizing the issue in terms of student retention and graduation might make a stronger argument for the administration. **JG** will include that angle when he explains the issue at this afternoon’s Faculty Senate meeting.

1. **Writing-Enriched Curriculum Initiative**

**JG** clarified that this initiative would not be connected to Gordon Rule. The key questions to help inform how to go about proposing the plan are “What kinds of writing are happening?” and “What are writing outcome goals in each discipline?”

***The committee looked at the drafted faculty survey from last WAC meeting about the current state of student writing and made proposals for revisions. The committee looked at the Writing Plan format questions from University of Minnesota to help inform revisions.***

An important point of the revision was including a question about whether writing expectations are clear for both faculty and students. **[\*Note: a revised survey has been shared in Google Docs]**

**FB** suggested sending he survey through an “official” channel, such as the Dean of Undergraduate Studies office, to ensure a better return. Also, tagging the survey with something like Z numbers may help to identify faculty members who might be interested in participating in the planning phases.

**JG** is trying to meet with Jenny Peluso and Donna Chamely-Wiik to perhaps tie the WEC initiative into the QEP. However, “communication” is only one element of six that falls under the QEP, and it does not only encompass writing. Furthermore, the QEP requires that the elements are tied to conducting research.

**FB and Joe Su (JS)** noted it is important to consider that research is only as good as one’s ability to communicate it, namely through writing. They also noted that writing skills are necessary in order to conduct research in the first place because students need to write proposals to get approval or funding, and that they will need to write periodic reports about progress.

It was suggested that development of a Professional Writing Center might provide an opportunity to get “buy-in” for a WEC plan. Such an effort would require resources, and there may be potential for outside support.

**JG** relayed that the new Strategic Plan states that it aims to increase the number of upper-division WAC courses or initiate a WEC program, but funding for these efforts needs to be determined.