**WAC Committee Meeting Agenda**

**Thursday, February 5th 2015**

**GS 214B 12:00-2:00**

**1. Follow up with required training for GTAs teaching WAC courses/breakout sections**There has been no change with this since Fall. **JG** will find out what it takes to make a university-wide mandate and seek input from chairs about the matter, including what TA support is offered at the departmental level, whether they are satisfied with it, and what material should such a TA WAC-training workshop encompass. This has come up because a few groups of TAs feel like they are not prepared for the classroom; they need something different than what the WAC seminar is providing. **JG will contact depts. that have TAs teaching WAC courses to get a sense of whether additional support is needed.**

**2. Update on Writing Enriched Curriculum**LLCL is halfway through the WEC process, and has been interesting, engaging, and complex. **JG** recommended that LLCL discuss and decide upon further departmental involvement in the initiative. The vote was not unanimous, but those present affirmed that they want to proceed.

The LLCL pilot revealed that we initially sought too much detail in outcome criteria and curriculum maps; such comes in subsequent writing plans in the 3rd and 5th year of the process. The experience has helped UMN’s Pamela Flash theorize how she presents WEC to outsiders and helped FAU better understand the process.

The 2015-16 pilot will be Ocean and Mechanical Engineering. To distribute workload, Javad Hashemi **JH** (chair) proposed he serve as main liaison and work with 4-5 others to complete the liaison work. This is not typical to **PF’s** process, but **JG** is willing to try it and see how it works. **JS** commented that the chair stepped forward because he values the process and does not want to overburden busy faculty.

**JG, JC, and JH and team will meet on Tues, Feb. 24th to plan for the pilot and revise the stakeholder surveys. Goal: for faculty, students, and stakeholders to complete the surveys Spring 2015 so that we can process data to prepare meetings in early Fall 2015. Now that two pilots are involved, JG will need to approach upper administration for long term financing. WEC’s future will depend on overall finances for the university. The committee discussed how WEC will impact demands placed on the WAC committee, as it will be the body (at least initially) that reviews, offers recommendations for, and approves about 1-2 writing plan drafts per year. Comments reflected that at this time, the committee is fairly representative of disciplines and that at this time adding WEC proposals does not seem unmanageable. No further discussion about growing the current WAC committee ensued.**

**3. Recognition/Reception for WAC faculty**WAC used to hold receptions to showcase WAC grant recipients and faculty accomplishments, but has not offered grants in order to financially support WEC. The concern is that WAC is not as visible. The committee discussed ways to raise WAC’s visibility on campus. Suggestions included using NDOW and writing groups to showcase and celebrate student and faculty writing projects, like perhaps a symposium. **JG** will talk to Donna Chamely-Wiik about a kind of symposium so as to not compete with OURI’s symposium and to market it as a showcase. JMC also suggested creating a forum to share resources to see what other faculty are doing in their courses.

**4. WAC Assessment**JG presented data from the WAC assessment, showing trends in the upper and lower divisions. Various points of interest were highlighted. For example, there are some differences between 1101 and 1102, but not big ones. From this data, the statistics seem to be consistent. Over time, it shows some distinction between classes in places such would be expected. For example, we would expect that 1930 (Scholars) courses would score higher than 1101/2, but the differences are slight. The scoring system for assessment seems to be working. Based on these results and the cumulative data, **JG** thinks the most valuable approach for departments will be for them to set goals and use future data to help determine whether the department meets those standards.

The current problem is that the website designed and used for the WAC assessment process is outdated and the support staff in OIT who helped design and manage it are now in different divisions. The future is uncertain. Peer institutions use digital portfolio systems for assessment, evaluated by holistic rubrics. FAU’s WAC rubric is analytic. The committee discussed the need for self-assessment of programs. **JG** noted that WAC generates the only data that he knows of in the lower division.

**JG’s plan at this point will be to talk to Tony Ambrosio, the CTL/Undergrad assessment contact in this unit. Then he will talk to Michele Hawkins, the assoc. provost of assessment, and perhaps also to OIT to determine the WAC Assessment’s future and to see if it will be able to run this year.**

**5. Recertification
Update on the status of this year’s History and Philosophy review:** There are about 18-20 iterations of WAC courses in the History and Philosophy departments. **JC** has done a preliminary review of all the files that she received from faculty and in the coming weeks before spring break will divide and send the syllabi that need review among the committee members.

**Update on Lester Embree and PHI 2010:** At the end of Fall 2014, Embree and Harris (dept. chair) forwarded Embree’s revised spring 2015 syllabus in response to the committee’s concerns about the course requiring revision. **[the committee did not discuss this item at the February 5th 2015 meeting]**

**6. English Department and Grammar/Error Tracking in 1000-level courses**There are either unclear messages about the treatment of grammar being sent to GTAs or GTAs are misunderstanding the messages. Many 1101/2 classes do not seem to be following through with requiring systems for tracking error and student accountability. The focus of first year writing should be higher order concerns (HOCs) over the lower order concern (LOC) of grammar, but some GTAs may understand this as grammatical, sentence-level issues should not be covered. The English department discussed the matter in the Writing Committee and Departmental meetings and determined that Instructors of Record (IORs) will have to ensure that a system of error tracking is implemented in the courses, and this will be reinforced in 6700/Methods course. GTAs will get additional grammar support in these forums. WAC committee discussion included having English faculty implement such systems in their own courses, but few English faculty require revision in upper-division and graduate-level courses. Alternatively, English faculty could model how to deal with grammar in their own courses, which perhaps would be productive in the absence of revision. WAC has no control over revision in upper-division courses.

**7. Replacement 1102 courses, like NSP 1195**We need to update the WAC guidelines for 1102 Replacements to include that faculty must demonstrate knowledge of and ability to teach writing in the discipline as an 1102 course.

Two faculty approached **JG** about a replacement 1102 in Nursing that they are teaching for the first and only time. **JG’s** concern with these courses is whether they are actually being taught as replacement 1102s or if they are not addressing some of the primary concerns of such a course. For example, is the replacement course requiring for students to have a system for tracking their patterns of error and making students accountable for those patterns?

**[The faculty shared the course syllabus with JG but it was not available for review during the meeting. JC also raised the question as to whether WAC’s current 1102 replacements would need to be re-submitted to the Writing Committee since the English Department’s 1102 curriculum has changed. The question at stake is whether faculty need extra support when teaching these kinds of courses? JMC commented that it sounds useful based on other topics discussed today like matters of handling grammar, etc. No further discussion as to what such support might encompass ensued.]**

**8. Current status of the WAC program**It is on “auto-pilot,” which is why we are investigating new initiatives to generate interest in and support for writing curriculum revision and development (like with the Writing-Enriched Curriculum initiative). We would like to make WAC more visible on campus. We are planning got co-host a “Brown Bag” session on February 26th with the Distinction Through Discovery program about “Writing and the Research process.” WAC is also looking into collaborating with the DTD program for the National Day on Writing in October. It would be an opportunity to “celebrate writing” as well as possibly be a means for the DTD program to collect data on how many students are publishing their work. JG and JC met with Donna Chamely-Wiik after the committee meeting to brainstorm this further. The programs are determining what might be possible for some kind of non-judged showcase.

**9. Honors College: Proposed Capstone course as an alternative to the Honors thesis
The committee discussed the proposed course. RL gave some perspective on the rationale and intentions for the course.** The course is understood as being like the honors thesis except it has an experiential element plus writing. But the actual production of paper would be like the thesis process. At this time it is a conceptual framework rather than an actual course. **DM** suggested it may help to have hypothetical models of the kinds of projects a student might do, but addition of such is not contingent on WAC approval. **AS** also raised questions about the course number and whether a 3000 level can be considered a “capstone.” In that regard, **DM** suggests the student and faculty consider the student’s sequence of course work to determine how it leads to a capstone project. **[The committee determined that the capstone syllabus fit the spirit of WAC and thus approved it pending minor revisions, which Michael Harrawood subsequently made.]**

**Proposed next meeting: Tues. March 10th from 11:00-1:00. (this is tentative)**