COMMITTEE: Writing Across the Curriculum Committee

MEETING DATE: 4.13.2015

PERSON PRESIDING: E. Swaggerty

REGULAR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: A. Spuches, E. Swaggerty, C. Bickley-Green, P. Averette, S. Knight, K. Moll

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: T. A. Morse, W. Banks, M. Eble

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Ron Mitchelson, Dr. Jamie Perry

ACTIONS OF MEETING

Agenda Item: Approval of 3.2.2015 Minutes
http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/wc/wcminutes.cfm

Action Taken: Minutes approved 4.13.2015

Agenda Item: Faculty Senate Resolution 13-90: WI Course Cap of 25 students per section of WI courses): Dr. Ron Mitchelson

Discussion: The group discussed the courses with caps larger than 25 from the 2013 fall semester.

- In fall 2013, there were 500 WI sections (excluding English 1100 and 1200) offered across the university.
- Of those WI sections offered, according to the data from IPAR, 54 sections—or 11% of all WI sections offered—had caps higher than 25.
- Of the 54 WI sections offered with a cap higher than 25 in fall 2013, 32 sections—or 6% of all WI sections offered—had actual enrollments of higher than 25.

Dr. Averette reminded the committee that some of these units have very limited resources and large classes therefore it may be difficult to honor the 25 student cap. Dr. Mitchelson stressed that it will be difficult to provide these units with more resources. The discussion turned to the WI requirement in general. Dr. Spuches reminded the group that students are required to take only 3 credit hours of WI courses in their major and that perhaps these courses need not carry the WI designation. Dr. Swaggerty explained that research suggests course caps of less than 25 students per section to be effective in upholding writing intensive characteristics. Dr. Mitchelson agreed that a course cap of 25 students per WI section is best practice and in the best interest of both faculty and students. He suggested that units should explore ways to balance the teaching load to accommodate this goal. It was suggested that a section of the audit require a response to the 25 students per section recommendation. Both Drs. Averette and Spuches agreed that the audit will force these units to evaluate their WI offerings. The information obtained from the audit will allow the WAC to better advise those units with large WI courses. Finally, Dr. Moll stressed that the number of courses with caps > 25 represents a very small percentage (6%).

Action Taken: Dr. Mitchelson requested a more current list of WI courses with caps > 25 from Fall 2014. Also, Dr. Mitchelson asked the committee to revise the audit to include a “Best Practices” statement regarding the 25 course cap. In addition, Dr. Mitchelson would like the units to include in their audit documentation a list of WI courses that exceed the cap. He plans to use this information in
meetings with departments/units. The goal of this meeting is to provide these units with ideas on how to meet the 25 student cap.

The committee requests that Dr. Wendy Sharer obtain listing of courses with caps > 25 for the Fall 2014 semester.

Agenda Item: Course Proposal Request: CSDR 3040: Anatomy of the Speech and Respiratory Mechanism, Submitted by Dr. J. Perry. Lead WAC Reviewer: Dr. Paige Averett.

Discussion: Dr. Averette carefully reviewed the proposal and syllabus and stated that the proposal met all of the requirements of the WI check list generated by Drs. Banks and Swaggert. Dr. Perry was invited to discuss her proposal. She explained how the course is in line with the QEP’s Vertical Curriculum in that it provides students with a WI course in addition to one taken in their senior year.

The committee members felt that the content was important however, there was a concern that there was not enough writing in the course to carry the WI designation. Dr. Tracey Morse noted that the weighting of the WI assignment is only 14% of the overall grade. The committee would like Dr. Perry to consider the following:

- Make formal assignments out of the implied writing happening throughout the semester. For example:
  1. The summary of scholarly articles can be an annotated bibliography assignment that carries weight in the course
  2. Students can use notebooks to summarize and reflect on the anatomy they are learning and make connections to the reading they are doing for class and their research, peer review can be weighted too.

- The committee would like to see writing weighted more for a WI course.

Action Taken: Proposal will be approved pending the above changes.

Agenda Item: Notification of change in course name and number from SOCW 3305: Social Work Policy II (3) (WI) to: SOCW 3306: Social Work Policy I (3) (WI) Submitted by Intae Yoon (School of Social Work)

Discussion: NA

Action Taken: NA

Agenda Item: Notification of removal of writing intensive designation from SOCW 4990 Field Education and Seminar, Submitted by Intae Yoon (School of Social Work)

Discussion: NA

Action Taken: NA
Agenda Item: Notification of change in pre-requisites: ENGR 4010: Senior Capstone Design Project (WI), Submitted by Dr. Ricky Castles (Department of Engineering)

Discussion: NA

Action Taken: NA

---

Agenda Item: Report of WI Course Audit Process Task Force, Dr. Anne Spuches

- Dr. Spuches very briefly discussed the comments she received from the March Faculty Senate Meeting. They are summarized below (taken from Faculty Senate Agenda minutes--March 2015):

  1. **Professor Montgomery** (*English*) asked about the materials that will be required for course review/audit, stating that while she supports the idea of an audit, #4 as it is written is very similar to what is required to apply for WI status for the first time. This could be quite cumbersome for large units offering many WI courses. Professor Montgomery asked that the committee consider that the syllabus and description of assignments would be enough evidence for audit determinations. Professor Spuches stated that she would take this information back to the committee and asked for additional suggestions on how to better facilitate and streamline this process.

  2. **Professor Popke** (*Geography, Planning and Environment*) stated that in reviewing the three bullet points that are highlighted, the articulation of how those materials will be assessed and reported back to the department makes it seem to be an external assessment. In terms of how units are supposed to undertake the reevaluation of courses, the current proposal states that a heuristic will be provided, but nothing is currently attached. Professor Spuches agreed and said that it would be provided.

  3. **Professor Maher** (*Philosophy and Religious Studies*) stated that he liked that the committee had renamed his department “Religion and Philosophy,” that name is actually incorrect and he further noted that there were other interdisciplinary programs that carried writing intensive credit that were missing from this report and he volunteered his assistance with identifying those programs and sharing the information with the committee. Professor Spuches expressed appreciation for Professor Maher’s assistance.

**Discussion:** NA

**Action Taken:** Dr. Swaggerty would like to proceed with presenting a revised audit document to the organizational Faculty Senate meeting. She would like the ad-hoc committee (Drs. Banks, Sharer, Swaggerty, and Spuches) to revise and finalize the document and she will ask Lori Lee about our deadline to make the agenda.

---

Agenda Item: Report from University Writing Program, Dr. Will Banks

- Advanced WAC Academy will occur once again in the summer. Topics will include:
  1. Writing transfer
  2. Threshold concepts
- Annual report of Writing Program will be available in the fall.
- Writing Program looking to hire replacement for Brandi Hasty. Administrative assistant will help with WI Course audit.
Discussion: NA
Action Taken: NA

Agenda Item: WAC Website

- Drs. Banks and Swaggerty have made great progress in updating and revising the Writing Program website. New WI statement, Proposal Checklist, and updated Proposal Form are now available on Writing Program and WAC Website.
- SharePoint site is being reorganized.
- All webpages referring to WI “Models” have been deactivated.

Discussion: NA
Action Taken: NA

Agenda Item: Honors College Update on Seminar Proposal Review, Dr. Elizabeth Swaggerty

- As the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee representative for the Honors College Advisory Council, Dr. Swaggerty reviewed seminar proposals (all seminars are writing intensive).
- Dr. Swaggerty found the proposals interesting, but believes that many proposals should include stronger writing components and that those proposing new courses can benefit from the Writing Program resources.

Discussion: NA
Action Taken: NA

Last Meeting of the 2014-2015 Academic Year

http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/wc/wc.cfm

Submitted by Anne Spuches