

Meeting of the University Writing Committee—Minutes

October 23, 2015

1:00-2:15pm

Members in attendance: Alice Cheung, Rebecca Dingo, Kate Freedman, Herman Fong, Travis Grandy (English), Judy Goodenough, Julie Hemment, Haivan Hoang, Molly Lehman, Rebecca Lorimer Leonard, Elise Mann, Elise Martorano, Deb McCutchen, Dina Navon, Evan Ross, Michelle Trim

Called to order at 1:00pm

- I. **Review of the Minutes from Sept. 18, 2015**
Approved with amendments (Susan, Julie, Alice, Elise, Elise abstaining)
- II. **Upcoming JYW Workshops**
Upcoming workshops on 11/5 on working with multilingual writers, and 11/13 on assignment design. Please forward emails to graduate student TOs you work with.
- III. **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)**
PARCC is a consortium working on defining and assessing college readiness. The Department of Ed has asked a representative of English and whether the PARCC Grade 11 exam in English language arts and literacy would be appropriate for doing writing placement on our campus. Haivan has facilitated two meetings with UMass Amherst Writing Program administrators and instructors and with local high school administrators and faculty and, based on these meetings, will write a report to Provost Newman.
- IV. **JYWP QQ Reviews**
 - a. [#2068 KIN 355 - Writing Seminar in Kinesiology](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** One reviewer expressed concerns about assignment length and the low stakes writing assignments. The other reviewer felt the syllabus was well constructed. The first reviewer mentioned that there's a research paper that's 4-8 pages and a cover letter/resume that's 3-4 pages. The class also has low-stakes assignments but unclear about how much writing that involves. The UWC recommends 20-25 pages for JYW courses. In past conversations, we've discussed asking departments for a rationale for having a page count that is lower. One possible suggestion for adding page length is to also do a personal statement. A committee member mentioned the instructor's response to the "Writing Assignments" question on the form which gives more information on page lengths for assignments. Reviewers thought it might be helpful to have more information about the notes assignments, and the portfolio, and low-stakes writing.
 - ii. **Decision: Approval contingent** on more information about the notes assignments.
 - b. [#2072 LEGAL 450 - Legal Research and Writing](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** Reviewers felt it was a well-designed course with multiple types of writing and audiences. It seemed to have sufficient drafts and revisions. The second reviewer was concerned about continuity between sections and curious about the arrangement of permanent faculty and graduate instructors. A committee member referred to the responses on the form that mentions a permanent faculty member, and standard syllabus template.
 - ii. **Decision: Approval contingent** on adding JYW requirement to syllabus.
 - c. [#2061 ANTHRO 364 - Problems in Anthropology I](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** Reviewer 1 amended her review because when she checked the system again saw the assignment sheets. Upon further review, a committee member located the JYW requirement listed in both syllabi.
 - ii. **Decision: Approved.** (Julie Hemment abstaining)
 - d. [#2085 ECON 397W - ST-Writing In Economics](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** One reviewer mentioned two main reasons for further revisions: first because they seem to misunderstand the CW question and we should follow-up, the second question is about who is teaching the course, and the Voorheis syllabus was just a printout of the Moodle page, not the syllabus. The other reviewer also felt the notes were really helpful and the proposal included strong syllabi. While the documents weren't especially clear, the form responses were very clear. Some things could be clarified, but the class looks like it meets the requirement.
 - ii. **Decision: Need more information** - asking for a list of the assignments and how long they are, specifically to see the Voorheis syllabus, and make sure the pre-req question is addressed.

- e. [#2088 SCH-MGMT 317 - Sport Management Communication](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** A reviewer did not see a clear description of page lengths on the syllabus and the forms were speaking generally to SOM classes. A reviewer expressed concern about the requirement for submitting to a plagiarism checker, including a requirement for a specific originality score, and whether this was pedagogically appropriate. Haivan shared some institutional context about the institution's use of TurnItIn. The committee discussed the possibility of crafting recommendations for using these services to good effect, rather than requiring it to be used in a certain way.
 - ii. **Decision:** **Send back for revision** to amend form about assignment page lengths, inquire about how they review courses to ensure consistency, and syllabus should include JYW requirement
- f. [#2090 SCH-MGMT 315 - Marketing Communication](#)
 - i. **Discussion:** One reviewer thought the syllabus was very strong, however the form is inconsistent.
 - ii. **Decision:** **Recommend Approval** (Herman Fong abstaining)

Next meeting will be on November 20th in Bartlett 316.