

Meeting of the University Writing Committee—Minutes

December 12, 2014

1:00-2:15pm

Members in attendance: Kate Freedman (Chair), Herman Fong, Judy Goodenough, Christiane Healey, Haivan Hoang, Molly Lehman, Dina Navon, Deb McCutchen, Rebecca Lorimer Leonard, Travis Grandy (Minutes)

Meeting called to order at 1:05pm

I. Review of the Minutes from November 14, 2014

Passed without amendment.

II. JYWP QQ Reviews

a. #1545, GERMAN 391G - German Studies Junior Seminar

i. Discussion: Taking off of Reviewer 1's comments, the committee discussed whether and how it wanted to track career development and information literacy since they are recommendations. The data would certainly be useful for the committee and other campus stakeholders such as the research librarians. Some departments do this in the IE course as opposed to JYW. This could also be a good topic for a future workshop. Just as we don't require the course include particular genres, whether these recommendations are part of the undergraduate major is beyond our purview. Regarding having CW as a pre-req, we've adapted the approval letter to include instructions on how to change this in Spire.

ii. Decision: **Approved**.

b. #1377, DANCE 368 - Writing About Dance

i. Discussion: The committee expressed questions about how directly the course communicates expectations for writing (showing models of a genre as opposed to descriptions). The syllabus for the course itself was brief, so this was augmented by the additional files provided. It could be useful to refer this department to Mei Shih at CTFD for specific consultation on structuring a syllabus.

ii. Questions were about clarifying the sequence of the course and specific expectations for writing assignments. The committee also expressed questions about the grading system since it uses a non-standard weighting system.

iii. Decision: **Approved** with the requirement that the department clarify the grading scheme.

c. #1538, THEATER 321 - Medieval and Renaissance Repertory

i. Discussion: The committee expressed questions about how the course addresses peer review and revision. The proposal refers to the responses on the previous and proposal (#1509) from Theater. This is because CESD is currently unable to copy proposals.

The committee posed questions about how thoroughly the form was filled out because of how it responds to questions with "see syllabus". For future proposals it would help the committee if we send proposals back for revision that don't have complete responses.

Regarding the proposal itself, there was a question about whether students are getting feedback for revision, and how that fits into the writing process.

- ii. Decision: Tabled pending communicating with the instructor about where the teacher of the class gives feedback and how this fits into the writing process.

III. Policy Discussion of JYW Courses Paired with Other Courses

a. Example: Judaic Studies 398W

<https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/1516>

b. Example: Chinese 391G

<https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/1521>

c. Questions for discussion:

- i. If a department pairs a JYW course with an upper level major course, what information and documents should the department submit to the UWC?
- ii. If the department wants to offer that same JYW course decoupled from the major course, would we allow this?
- iii. Should a JYW course also hold Gen Ed designations?

Discussion: While the Gen Ed council describes the writing requirement as consisting of two three-credit courses, this has never been discussed as a policy by the UWC. Currently there are courses offered in a few departments of 1-2 credits. Some are coupled with specific courses, others are just taken in addition to any upper level course.

The committee has questions about how these courses are integrated, so some sort of description of how the add-on supports the mission of the course. This might be a good occasion to ask departments for a statement describing how the course meets the goals. Some fundamental questions include: which course syllabi would we ask for (like if it's linked to multiple courses, what documents they submit), what additional work is being done in the JYW course, a summary of how the course is distinct from content courses, how the content and writing course is integrated.

The committee agreed that a single class can't count for multiple requirements (no double-dipping). Also, given JYW should be about the discipline, then it would conflict with the purpose of Gen Eds.

Decision:

Question i: **Approved**

Distinct syllabus naming the purpose and requirements for completing the writing course.

List of courses it can be paired with (with at least 2 representative syllabi)

Rationale for how JYW supports writing in the discipline and integrates into the content and purpose of the other course.

How much writing happens in the writing course versus how much is done in the linked upper-level course.

Question ii: **Rejected**

No. This would conflict with the rationale for having it as a linked course, however it could in theory be paired to an independent study.

Question iii: **Rejected**

The committee considers JYW to be about depth in a specific discipline which serves a different purpose than the breadth of Gen Eds.

IV. Any further discussion items?

V. Next Meeting - February 20, 2015 from 1:00pm to 2:15pm

Adjourned at 2:20pm.