

Meeting of the Writing Intensive Committee Meeting

September 12, 2017, 11 AM

Writing Center, HCC 430

Members Present: Caitie Finlayson (Assistant, CAS), Emile Lester (Associate, CAS), Sushma Subramanian (Assistant, CAS), Laura Bylenok (Assistant, CAS), Emily Stanley (Assistant, CAS), Gwen Hale (Ex-Officio Member, Director of the Writing Center and Writing Program)

The meeting commenced with a discussion of efforts to appropriately assess the effect of taking writing intensive courses on undergraduates. Gwen Hale detailed an innovative effort to accomplish this goal by comparing the quality of student essays in English 202 courses. The comparison would examine cross-sectional differences in the essays of students who have taken varying numbers of writing intensive courses in the courses' first assignment as well as time-series differences between the quality of essays of the same student at the beginning and end of the courses.

The Committee proceeded to discuss the production by the Writing Center of a Universal Design for Learning module addressing persistent writing issues such as grammar, and sensitivity to audience. The UDL will be available as a Google Doc accessible to all faculty members and open to faculty feedback.

Committee discussion proceeded to consider updating its protocol for the handling of late submissions. The Committee agreed to accept and adjudicate late submissions that are submitted before the last UFC meeting for the semester prior to which the proposal seeks to begin teaching the course with writing intensive designation.

On a related note, the committee discussed ways to streamline the writing intensive proposal process in order to encourage additional proposals. Sushma Subramanian will examine the proposal process for relevant University committees and draft a report on the topic to be delivered at the committee's next meeting.

The committee similarly considered additional ways to encourage the submission of additional writing intensive proposals. Of particular concern was that particular disciplines did not offer a sufficient number of writing intensive courses to satisfy the four course requirement, and that the College as a whole does not offer enough 200 and 300 level so that students scramble to complete their writing intensive requirement in their senior years. Committee members agreed that posting a diversity of sample proposals on the committee's webpage would alert faculty members to the different formats faculty could use to attain the writing intensive designation. The "rubric events" offered by Gwen Hale and the Writing Center, the committee agreed, also offer an opportunity for outreach to faculty whose courses may meet writing intensive requirements but are not aware of it.

The Committee approved course-wide WI designation for COMM 460: Senior Seminar in Digital Rhetoric with the contingency that Caitie Finlayson will e-mail Gary Richards, chairperson of the English, Linguistics and Communication Department with a reminder that the department must insure that all current and future instructors of the course adhere to WI requirements. (The committee had previously granted instructor-level (Jessy Ohl) WI designation for COMM 460 for the spring 2017 semester.)

The Committee approved WI designation for INAF 491: Independent Study in International Affairs for instructor (Surupa Gupta), and student (Megan O'Connell).

The Committee agreed to hold its next meeting on Tuesday, November 14 at 11 AM.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50.

Respectfully submitted,
Emile Lester
September 14, 2017