

## Minutes

Friday, February 6, 2009

Western Connecticut State University

General Education Committee

2008-2009

Attendance: Veronica Kenausis, Daryle Brown, Matt Buchta, Alba Skar, Robin Flanagan, Patty O'Neill, Kerry Walker, Linda Vaden-Goad, Charles Rocca, Lourdes Cruz (Guest).

I. Minutes of December 5 Meeting (Motion to Approve: Rocca/Brown): Approved with 2 abstentions after correction of spelling of guest name "Whittemore".

II. Input from community (none)

III. Old business

a) Update on FYE (O'Neill)

- i) Report from Patty O'Neill: There are currently 7 confirmed FY sections. There is some flexibility in the FY program to recruit faculty and department participation. FY courses can include non-FY students on a course by course basis. Some departments and faculty have requested this due to a small number of sections offered in some departments or a desire to have upperclassmen in courses. Also, some adjuncts are currently teaching FY courses. However, FY is supposed to ideally be staffed with full-time faculty members.
- ii) Problems with recruiting: 1) It is difficult to recruit faculty from departments with small class sizes. 2) Faculty are concerned about the loss of content with added FY expectations.
- iii) Benefits of FYE: 1) The retention rate was 10% higher for students in FY courses vs. those not enrolled in FY courses. 2) There was a positive relationship between FY enrollment and higher GPA.
- iv) Suggestion: There could be small grants for faculty to teach FY courses. It would be an additional incentive that could be similar to the summer curriculum grants. If we can translate 10% greater retention into \$, we could use some of the funding for the reward structure for faculty. However, there are difficulties with compensation to faculty if the FYE is tied to the adjunct budget.
- v) Suggestion: It could be possible to create an FY council for faculty to participate in a "service" category. This may respond to the issue of "reward" for P&T consideration. As it stands now, service to the FY program is not highly recognized, and evaluations of faculty may be lower in FY courses, which could discourage participation by junior faculty.

*b) Update on assessment of General Education curriculum (Flanagan)*

*Robin Flanagan reported that this is not working and suggested that we move directly to our planning with the model from Oklahoma.*

*c) The Writing Requirement (Kenausis)*

*Veronica Kenausis recommended we table this for March in order to allow her to meet first with Patrick Ryan and discuss interest in the Writing Department.*

*IV. New business*

*a) Next step in assessment (Flanagan)*

*Robin Flanagan recommended that we move forward with our assessment of the Writing (W) requirement. All agreed.*

*Suggestions:*

- i) A summer group would assess a random sample of student work taken before any grading by the professor. All identifying information would be removed.*
- ii) Writing samples would be from fall and spring but not assessed until summer.*
- iii) The summer assessment group would be paid for their work.*
- iv) Oklahoma had gophers to obtain samples from faculty and an office.*
- v) Veronica Kenausis proposed a pilot of 2-3 classes this year to plan for next year. There was general agreement to begin assessment in 09-10.*
- vi) Linda Vaden-Goad suggested we create a budget for the resources necessary for this.*
- vii) Oklahoma gave faculty \$1,000 per 70 papers corrected. There could be compensation offered in summer, such as 1 credit per faculty member for a certain number of days to meet as a group, or a certain number of assessments completed.*
- viii) Writing Samples: The assessment should include writing samples at the beginning of undergraduate studies and after completion of the writing intensive requirement.*
- ix) Suggestions for assessment of Beginning Writing Samples:
  - a. We could use the Placement Exam score as an indicator from Banner.*
  - b. We could consider the SAT essay.*
  - c. We could request artifacts.*
  - d. What rubric would be appropriate?**
- x) Suggestions for assessment of Post-Requirement Writing Samples:
  - a. 3 readers per paper should come to a consensus on the score.*
  - b. There should be 50 papers rather than 70 for WCSU since we are a smaller school than Oklahoma.**

*V. Motion to adjourn at 10:30 (Rocca/O'Neill)*