

Memorandum

To: Mark Cloud, APSCUF, Roger Johnson, Provost, Elsa Winch, UCC General Education Subcommittee, Cori Myers, Outcomes Assessment Committee
From: University Writing Committee
Date: November 3, 2006
Re: Academic Year 2005-2006 Report

The University Writing Committee met five times during the 2005-2006 academic year and determined three broad areas of concentration:

- Provide guidance in the development of writing assessment on campus
- Recover Writing Emphasis (WE) oversight function in the committee charge
- Reestablish communications with similarly interested committees across campus, including UCC General Education and Outcomes Assessment.

In response to these areas of concentration, the University Writing Committee accomplished the following:

Guidance in the development of writing assessment.

- Submitted recommendations for writing assessment to the Outcomes Assessment Committee (OAC);
- Refined and approved a holistic rubric to assess student writing in WE courses;
- Collaborated with the OAC to develop a two-part assessment program including rubric inter-rater reliability testing and beginning and end assessments of student writing to track semester progress;
- Introduced WE faculty to the assessment program and provided guidance in its administration on February 8 in the Teaching & Learning Center (TLC);
- Piloted the assessment program and awaiting calculation of the results to determine future actions;
- Approached the APSCUF Executive Council and General Membership about the need for writing assessment data across campus to continuously improve the program and to prepare for Middle States Accreditation review in 2010;
- Resolved to propose writing assessment participation as a requirement for all WE classes.

Recovery of WE oversight function.

- Subdivided committee into (5) focus areas: Assessment, In-take Assessment, Faculty Support, Student Support, and Administration;
- Surveyed WE faculty regarding faculty support needs and with a sample size of 12 determined the need for workshops on writing assessment (75%), development of writing assignments (25%), and a central web posting for sample writing assignments (25%);
- Conducted initial TLC-sponsored, interactive Faculty Workshop on writing program resources and survey of ideas for writing across the curriculum in April;
- Generated list of writing support resources across campus with recommendations for the future;
- Gathered materials currently in use by WE faculty regarding assessments, assignments, and pedagogy.

Communications with OAC and UCC General Education Committees.

- Defined advisory relationship with OAC and determined to send a representative to OAC meetings as a writing liaison;
- Approached UCC General Education Committee regarding process for revising overlays.

Recommendations:

The University Writing Committee recommends that in academic year 2006-2007, members continue to explore the oversight function of our charge, pursue the curriculum option for broader participation in writing assessment, develop a three-year plan for writing assessment, and look into recommendations regarding faculty and student support.