Date: March 19, 2009

To: G.G. Weix, Chair, ASCRC

ASCRC

CC: Andrew Ware, Chair, ECOS

Writing Committee Members

Re: Transition year for Writing courses and Upper-division Writing Expectation

The Writing Committee is formally recommending a transition year during AY0910 for Writing course and Upper-division Writing Expectation in the major (UDWE) requirements for current students. During this year, we recommend that current students be allowed to continue to use courses approved for W or UDWE in the major, either those listed in the 2008-09 catalog or those approved at the 11/13/08 Faculty Senate meeting, to fulfill the writing requirements listed in catalogs in effect prior to 2009-2010. We use the following reasons to justify this request:

1. unlike changes to the other General Education requirements, W courses and the UDWE in the major affect junior and senior students to a greater extent – GenEd requirements are usually met in the first couple of year whereas the UDWE is usually met in the last two years and, in fact, should not be met prior to that time;
2. in past years, changes to the list of approved courses and expectations result from changes to the course content, writing expectation, and or syllabus, and not, as in this case, to changes in the requirements themselves;
3. this removes the need for appeals to obviate the problem; any reduction in the number of appeals is desirable as it retains control of curriculum in the purview of the Faculty rather than transferring it to Administration;
4. this likely affects a small number of students but the negative consequences of dropping those courses with respect to student dissatisfaction, retention, and graduation far outweighs the few negative impacts of allowing flexibility during this transition.

From discussions with faculty, it appears that there is some misunderstanding about the expiration of the W courses and UDWE requirements listed in prior catalogs. Normally, courses and UDWE requirements are transferred forward to the following catalog unless action is taken to remove them during the review process; the exceptions are one-time designated W courses. The current change in guidelines is an unprecedented shift in that the catalog language, as applied to this case, would completely remove ALL courses and UDWE requirements. We contend that the current catalog language is appropriately applied to the normal procedure of adding and removing courses from approved GenEd lists but is inappropriate for a sweeping change such as a shift in guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that a separate list of W courses from the 2008-09 catalog and the new courses approved at the 11/13/08 Faculty Senate meeting be linked to the online catalog for use by students who chose to use an older catalog for the 2009-2010 academic year.

IMPLEMENTATION:   
  
Excerpt from 3/24/09 ASCRC minutes:

There was concern that previous writing courses may have changed and no longer meet the previous writing course criteria. Programs likely decided not to submit courses on purpose. It was recommended that the Writing Committee contact departments and inquire whether courses not submitted for the current writing designation will be taught using the syllabus that was previously approved. If not the courses will not be included on the list. If the course(s) will still meet the old writing course guidelines then it will be included in the writing course lists with an asterisk indicating valid for one year only.

3/26/09   
ECOS did not agree with ASCRC’s suggested implementation of the transition year.  It would rather have a separate list for old courses then to include the old courses in the new list with an asterisk.

The list below is the result of contacting departments as recommended by ASCRC.

ANTH 340H, 359

AS 340, 432  
CHIN 315L, 432  
COMM 410, 421, 422, 424

FOR 340

GERM 303H  
HIST/ GEOG 401 (HSTA 462/GPHY 442)

LS 315L, 321H

MAR 450

MCLG 330, 432

MGMT 348

MKTG 461

NAS 329

NAS 403

PHIL 461

PSC 300

Pending response:

History