# **ASCRC Writing Committee Meeting**

Monday, September 12, 2016, 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., Skaggs 174

Call to Order   
Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: E. Baucom, S. Brown, J. Gallo, A. Ratto-Parks, T. Slater-Smith, B. Sweeney  
Ex-Officio Members Present: N. Lindsay, K. Webster, E. Wecker, C. Winkler  
Members Absent/Excused: J. Pavilack  
Guest: J. Franz  
  
The minutes from 5/2/16 were approved.

Communication

* Members introduced themselves and new members were welcomed. The committee will normally meet on the first Monday of the month.
* The Faculty Senate approved the suspension of the rolling review last week. Chair Brown thanked members for responding to the request for an electronic vote. The General Education Committee will be considering transitioning to either a five or seven year review cycle, or possibly a hybrid that would involve five years of review and 2 years of analysis. The Writing Committee may wish to consider this as well given its role in UPWA and the need to work with the data.
* Jeanie Franz, the Academic Advisor in Wildlife Biology asked to address the committee regarding confusion over transfer courses not fulfilling the intermediate writing course. Students and advisors do not realize the writing designation of a course is not included in courses with the same number/title taken at another MUS campus. In this particular case the student transferred with WRIT 201 from Great Falls College. It wasn’t until the student submitted his graduation paperwork that he was notified by the Registrar’s Office that the intermediate writing requirement was not met. He is now filing a graduation appeal. Students don’t understand that the course taken at another MUS institution doesn’t meet the writing requirement learning goals. There must be an alternative way to ensure transfer students are getting the level of writing needed to graduate, especially given the intent of common course numbering. Using a different course number could have an adverse effect for students transferring from UM.

## Business Items

* The committee considered and approved the revised Transfer Appeal Procedure. The procedure now states: “Students within two semesters of graduation must use the Graduation Appeals Process in place of the Writing Course Transfer Equivalency Appeal process.” The other significant change is in the materials requested from students. Student papers are no longer required. The review is intended to determine whether the course taken by the student met the learning outcomes of an intermediate writing course and required at least 16 pages of writing. Therefore, the syllabus and assignment instructions are requested. Professor Sweeny asked whether a word count (250 words/pg) be included as a standard. The Committee decided this may be something to consider for the guidelines. The intent is to quantify students writing practice. In some disciplines the pedagogy and theory require expressive reflective writing and in other brevity is preferred.   
    
  The Committee will need to initiate a communication campaign to make sure advisors are aware of the procedure and transfer students are informed during orientation and from admissions when their transfer work is evaluated. Advisors will be informed at their monthly meeting. There should be a systematic way of getting the word out to stakeholders. The Committee will need to send a communication to the admission evaluators as well. [According to [BOR policy 301.5](http://mus.edu/borpol/bor300/301-5.pdf) transfer students must be notified of their appeal rights regarding course transfers.] Professor Gallo and Director Webster will work on this.
* One of the Writing Committee’s responsibilities is to monitor the programs of the Writing Center. Therefore, the [Writing Center’s annual report](https://umt.box.com/s/mwefmoiforxlmqbelvhtrhaso6ajm6ct) is provided for members to review. The total number of student visits for the academic year was over 5,000. The Center has experienced an 88% growth rate since 2008. Graduate students had the highest increase visit rate. This year’s report includes assessment of students writing / behavior after visiting the Writing Center. Over 800 students completed the survey. However, only about half were Writing Center users. The Writing Center was awarded the Roving Griz Award from Disability Services for Students. The Roving Griz Award recognizes the commitment of staff and administrators to UM’s Quality of Worklife Initiative, which has the mission of creating and maintaining a work environment that allows faculty and staff to achieve the highest levels of satisfaction. This award rotates yearly from one department to another, with the last winners deciding where the Roving Griz Award goes next. In October Director Webster will attend the International Writing Center Association conference in Oregon. She will present the *Writing Center’s model for building a consortium*.
* The Committee discussed some options for the Writing Symposium. The intention is for the symposium to be a professional development opportunity that is tied to the outcomes of UPWA. It should be of interest to faculty using writing to teach across disciplines. The issues that need some attention according the UPWA report are revision and organization. Designing Writing Assignments, effective use of the UPWA rubric might be other topics to consider. A workshop style event with practical connections (problem solving) would be preferred. The student panel was very informative last year. A suggestion was to have several workshop options with a possible date of November 2nd. Other options would be to initiate a Faculty Inquiry Project or a Pedagogy Project faculty discussion. The accreditation report is due this year. Associate Provost Lindsay will have to describe how we are connecting the UPWA data to improvements in the classroom. The previous sessions have been on Friday mornings, which conflicts with the teaching schedule for many WRIT 101 instructors. Professors Ratto-Parks, Winkler and Director Webster will work on ideas for the symposium.
* The intermediate writing course review form has been transitioned to Qualtrics. It may not be needed this year given the suspension of the rolling review. Hopefully there will be some new intermediate writing courses proposed.
* Professor Ratto-Parks provided an update on the Writing Placement exam issue that was brought to the Committee by Maria Mangold. In the past the assessment was a timed hand written 50 minutes exercise. In January the placement transitioned to Moodle and is no longer timed. Students are limited to one electronic submission. The outcomes of the electronic placement mirrored past performance. UM doesn’t have a way to equate TOEFL scores to writing placement. International students view WRIT 095 as shameful. A college education is paid for by the government of students from Saudi Arabia and China. The remedial course (WRIT 095) has a stigmatism and must be paid for by the student’s parents. Thus, these students attempt the exam multiple times in order to learn the prompts and finally pass. The number of attempts will be limited. English is trying to have a student centered placement process and is working with the students directly. The department is meeting with Missoula College to discuss the policy of using the same placement exam.   
    
  There are no courses that support writing for international students.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.