

DEVW Minutes

Friday, April 13th

HBC 411

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Stacey started the meeting with congratulating and welcoming the adjunct faculty representatives for academic year 2012/2013. They are **Louella Tate, Kim Martinez, Joy Clark, Anne Fletcher, Joe Wiseman, and Bill Martin**. She also gave an update on the DEVED conference she attended in Newport Beach, California. The theme was that DEVED is going to have to continue to be innovative and think of new ways of offering courses, such as integrating reading and writing courses and offering learning communities of DEVW and college-level courses. She also mentioned that she will be attending the AtD meetings on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Friday, April 20th is reserved exclusively for DEVED, and everyone is invited to attend.

Attendance

Jenifer brought up the issue of attendance and whether it should be mandatory or not. The attendance policy states that “students **may** be withdrawn”. The consensus was it should remain this way as it gives faculty leverage and flexibility.

Request concerning data

Joe wanted to know if our students who exit DEVW immediately enroll in ENGL 1301 and what type of sessions they enroll in: distance learning, 12-week, and 8-week. The implication is that if our students are not doing well in ENGL 1301, other factors need to be considered. Caryn responded that this is something that she is currently working on.

Exit Essay procedures

Laura brought the discussion of our exit essay standards to the table. She shared the following document and the department discussed these issues in depth.

Proposal for Exit Essay Modifications

Retain

Exit essay (argument written from a prompt during a three hour span in class)

Pass/Fail Scale (as written and as possibly modified in the future)

Standards for success in academic writing

Modify

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Essay writings sessions (students no longer need to write in an uncomfortable group setting)

Essay grading sessions (instructor evaluates essays in an atmosphere conducive to accuracy and fairness)

Essay's impact on the final grade in the course

Add

Student success (currently not happening according to our data)

Instructor's academic freedom

Respect for professional decisions

Opportunities to come together for meaningful discussions

Extended Mentor/Mentee relationships beyond the first semester

Laura believes that there are plenty of reasons to discontinue the use of the exit essay *in its current form*:

- it makes one teach to the test;
- it is a violation of academic freedom as the instructor on record does not determine his/her student's final grade;
- there's no data regarding the exit essay's effectiveness or ineffectiveness; and
- if a student were to challenge his/her grade because of this exit essay, ACC would probably lose for lack of data regarding its use.

A discussion ensued and faculty agreed on some of the issues and disagreed on others. The majority felt that this was not a violation of academic freedom and some faculty stressed that they appreciate having clear standards with which to judge a student's final grade. It was noted that no other department in the college uses an untested measure, and no one measure should determine whether a student passes or not. Some faculty also thought the department should consider weighing the exit essay differently, using model paragraphs to determine what "passing" looks like, and allowing for some latitude between most experienced faculty versus least experienced faculty. It was a clear consensus that the calibration sessions are necessary and should continue. This discussion brought up a lot of issues that need to be discussed further, so a committee will be created to determine what, if anything, should be changed regarding the exit essay procedures.

P/F scale revisions

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Patti revised the current P/F scale allows because it allows some students to pass with minimal skills. As a result, a revised P/F scale was introduced, which is posted on Bb. This revised scale reflects a change in the paragraph development portion as well as a major change to the language portion. This scale will be piloted this summer and discussed at our beginning of semester meeting in the fall. Anyone interested in piloting this scale should contact Rahelina.

Uniform exit essay procedures/student survey/DEVED Plan

Deanna shared concerns regarding the lack of uniformity among campuses regarding our exit essay I. Some concerns regarded the testing center and different policies; whether students take it over two days versus one 3-hour block of time; the fact that faculty are not adhering to the departmental policy regarding the readings and faculty are not giving the exit essay the designated week; and some students may use computers but others are not afforded this opportunity. It was also added that students who take exit essay I may write it over the course of 2 days, but students who take exit essay II do not have this opportunity. Because of these many discrepancies, she expressed that any one of us could be challenged by a student, and there's a good chance we would lose. It was stressed that faculty need to adhere to departmental policies, such as giving out the reading 7 days in advance of the test. However, the other issues need to be resolved so that the departmental exit essay is fair to all students.

Deanna and Joy put together a student survey that should be piloted either this summer or next fall. She is also thinking about asking ENGL faculty to share this survey with their students as well. Caryn talked about the DEVED plan and its minor edits/changes based on departmental input. This plan will be sent out to faculty for comments/suggestion so that it can be submitted to the respective committee.

WS I exit essay

Jeanne shared that the WS1 exit essay is now written in a consistent format. It is now bulleted, divided into two parts, and has a question to help students form their thesis statement. This prompt is posted on Bb under the exit essay link.

OSD

Frank shared that there will be an opportunity for OSD training at one of our Brown Bag sessions for next fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.