University Writing Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2011
2:00 pm -3:00 pm, English & Philosophy Department Conference Room

Present: Peter Murphy, Josh Adair, Marcie Johnson, Taufiq Rashid, Paul Walker

Not Present: Misty Evans, Jeff Osborne, Kelley Wezner

Meeting was opened at 2:05pm as there was a quorum.

September 22, 2010 Meeting Minutes were approved.

Murphy asked for updates from sub-committees.

Faculty Survey Assessment

Walker was disappointed with the lack of participation in the pilot assessment, but he would like to use the survey again this Fall. Results were helpful in identifying objectives that students weren't doing as well as they should be. Murphy asked to see the survey results. Walker said that this information will be useful in designing Professional Development (PD) sessions. Murphy noted that the survey provides another vantage point of assessment. WAC informs its work based on a holistic scoring rubric. He wondered if there was a correlation between individual writing samples and the holistic rubric score for the group (?). Walker was not sure that this is possible.

Murphy said that he is working on balancing this year's QEP budget in order to create next year's budget. He would then be in a better position to commit QEP funds to these PD sessions. Presently, the English Department has contributed snacks and faculty have volunteered their time for these sessions. It was also noted that there are funds available from WAC for these sessions.

Essay Contest

Rashid said that he needed to set some specific guidelines. He intends to contact the Writing Ambassadors to get information on writing intensive courses, the types of assignments, and examples of good, quality essays. It was suggested that Wezner would be a good source of information.

Murphy expressed concerns that this was still in an exploratory stage. It was previously discussed that Chrysalis could be a vehicle for presenting the essay winners. Murphy noted that Chrysalis did not come out this year due to budget constraints. Questions to consider:

> Consider reinvigorating Chrysalis
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> Type of writings to include
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> Student/faculty collaboration required
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> Online publication with a very limited run for winners and the necessary administrative offices.

The first idea was to take Chrysalis as is and add our work to the publication: MSU Reading Essay Contest Winners, Sophomore/Junior/Senior in each discipline, Best Freshman Essay. It became clear that this was going to be too much material. Also, Chrysalis content tends to be heavy in the sciences.

It was decided not to award prizes and that the publication would be more journal-like in nature with the reward being the "fame and glory" of having an essay chosen for publication. There could be a publication party for writers and parents that could take place during Scholars Week.

Another suggestion was to move away from Chrysalis and the publication would be the Best of MSU Writing 2011/2012. Market exclusivity "the best undergraduate writing for a particular year, and select the top 10 essays plus MSU Reading Essays (4). It was noted that there are other essay contests on campus (Cinema International Essay Contest). The question was raised about whether other essay winners should be included in this publication. Murphy said that he would email the Deans to find out about other essay contests. Murphy said that an Editorial Board would need to be selected. It was suggested that WAC could play a role in this. Another option would be for each college to select the writers/writings to submit for publication.

QEP/WAC

Promotional ideas for Fall for students were discussed. One suggestion was to offer workshops for students in residential Colleges for CIV and HUM required classes. The Writing Center offered workshops in Fall for ENG 105. Johnson stated that it was important to run these workshops through the Writing Center to keep it visible. It was suggested that students might find the name "workshop" unappealing. Johnson was okay with this because it would be work. It was suggested the workshops be affiliated with the Writing Center, but not held there. Murphy said that there is some value in having the workshops in the residential colleges.

Murphy has been asked to come up with ways to make students aware of QEP. Walker asked whether there is value in promoting QEP to students as the focus is on faculty. Murphy rephrased the question as how do we find ways to enhance writing for students. Walker is concerned that workshops offered outside of class leads to confusion for students. For example, when a workshop is offered do students wonder why this material isn't covered in class? Is it possible to ask faculty to do this in their classes rather than having workshops? The model for "Health Matters" was suggested as a possible format. The materials would be generated by the Writing Center or WAC. This would need to be cohesive and seamless for students. One advantage is that teachers would not be referring students away from class to learn writing. The objective is to demonstrate to students how to be better writers. A monthly electronic format was suggested and faculty would be encouraged to talk about the topic in class. Another possible format would be a YouTube video.

Murphy will send an email to set up the next meeting. He also expressed a desire to set up a regular meeting schedule beginning with the Fall semester.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.