Writing Liaison Committee Meeting
December 6, 2010 3-4

In attendance: Sonya Lawson, Chalet Seidel, Catherine Savini, Joe Shinn, James Robertson

Materials:
- Assessment handout from Chairs’ Meeting.
- A chart of the published outcomes that indicates which departments include writing specifically as an outcome.

Accessibility of assessment materials:
- Catherine Savini asked: How can we make assessment materials available to departments? How do we follow-up on the Chairs meeting and take advantage of NEASC?

- The group agreed that we could post these materials on MyWestfield and that we could contact chairs via email to let them know the materials are available and to remind them that we would be happy to help.

Sonya Lawson suggested emailing chairs by the end of this week because they will be thinking about NEASC. This will put them in mind that it’s going to be up by the beginning of next semester. We should use NEASC as the motivator.

- Sonya Lawson also suggested visiting department meetings to offer assessment assistance.

Workshops and WI:
- Catherine discussed some of the problems with workshops without incentives: they preach to the converted. The Writing in the Disciplines workshop (WID) held by WLC a few years ago was attended primarily by WLC members.

- Catherine also discussed the benefit and drawbacks of a WI designation:
  Benefits:
  - Students will practice writing between their first year and upper division courses.
  - Faculty members who might not attend a workshop otherwise have an incentive to participate
  
  Drawbacks:
  - WI designations can be problematic because like comp courses, it puts the responsibility of teaching writing in the hands of the few rather than emphasizing writing to learn as an important teaching strategy for all teachers.
  - WI designations will be tricky to get through governance and to record.

- Chalet asked what our larger goal is.

- Sonya discussed the importance of integrating writing to learn assignments into classrooms across campus.
Speaking intensive?

- Catherine returned to the questions of speaking: are students being taught to speak? The ROCCC Report mentions speaking as an important skill but not suggest changes to the curriculum that emphasize speaking as a WI course emphasizes writing.

- James Robertson indicated that he is expected to do presentations regularly in his classes. He is a communications major.

- Joe Shinn emphasized the difference between speaking and writing as skills and it was agreed that our focus right now should be writing.

Conclusion:
All agree that WI courses are an important goal for our committee, but we will put piloting WI on the backburner for now and focus our energy on assessment.

Action items:
Catherine will work on getting the assessment materials from English, Biology and Math on MyWestifeld.
Catherine will email department chairs ASAP.
Chalet will contact the Physical Science Department to gather their assessment materials.

Submitted by Catherine Savini