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Writing Implementation Committee, Illinois Wesleyan University

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Writing Committee Minutes 1.22.2014

Present: Carole Myscofski, Mary Ann Bushman (chair), Chris Sweet, Diego Mendez-Carbajo, Joel Haefner (ex officio)

Convened at 3:23 p.m.

Mary Ann announced that 25 participants had signed up for Saturday's (Jan. 25) workshop by Joe Bizup on the rhetorical use of sources in student writing. She announced that she had included Diego's executive summary of our assessment data in workshop folders. She further wondered if we should follow up the workshop with a few brown bag sessions on this topic.

Mary Ann also indicated the Program was tentatively planning on having Hillary Oakes, a writing/oral communication specialist from Bates College, visit campus in early June.

Mary Ann also announced that some \$41,000 remained in the Mellon grant budget for curriculum grant money for spring and fall 2014. Discussion about changing some of the guidelines for dispensing the grant money ensued. The idea of opening large grants up to long-time visiting instructors or adjuncts received mixed reviews from committee members; no consensus was reached about broadening the pool of eligible applicants beyond tenure-line faculty for course revision or new course grants. There was consensus for allowing all instructional faculty apply for \$500 assignment revision grants, and for dropping the requirement that new course/revised course grants (at the upper division) necessarily include a librarian, in which case the grants would be funded at the CD equivalent of \$2000. Faculty who have already received one Mellon grant may apply for a second grant in this last fiscal year.

Chris advocated for strengthening our outreach to departments to use grant money to develop learning outcomes statements (LOS). Mary Ann suggested targeting Political Science, History, Environmental Studies, Business, Music, Nursing and Theatre Arts. Carole indicated there might be an opportunity to get Religion involved in crafting a LOS.

The committee approved the YAP draft Mary Ann wrote. Joel urged the committee to think about our long-term assessment plan, perhaps moving beyond a yearly quantitative assessment to another chronological model or to portfolios. Carole wondered if we should consider pre-and post-assessment models.

Mary Ann and Joel gave a brief report about the recently-concluded SLAC-WPA conference at Pomona College. This led to a short discussion about our pedagogical model of mainstreaming international students and other diverse learners, and distributing those students across many, not a few, sections of Gateway and other writing-grounded courses. Joel noted that one take-away from the conference was that we needed to formalize, with the International Office, a one-on-one tutorial model for international students. It was also noted that we were moving in the right direction to hire an ESL specialist (as many other SLACs had such a position), but that her hours

were very limited and that the University has not really worked out how best to use her resources.

New business: Mary Ann noted that there is one outstanding course development grant that has been returned for revision. Chris suggested a modest workshop on alternatives to the research paper. Mary Ann wondered if we could fund an alumni survey on writing in their (alums') disciplines.

Meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Submitted by: J. Haefner