

MINUTES OF THE WRITING COMPETENCY SUBCOMMITTEE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
5241 North Maple, M/S TA 43
Fresno, California 93740-8027

Office of the Academic Senate
Ext. 8-2743

October 22, 2010

Members Present: K. Putirka (Chair), E. Hughes,
D. Nef, B. Sethuramasamyraja, S. Sivek.

Members Absent: C. Ogaja (excused) V. Crisco,

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Chair Putirka in Library Room #4164.

1. Minutes. MSC to approve the Minutes of 9/23/10.
2. Agenda. MSC to approve the Agenda as distributed.
3. Communications and Announcements.

There were none.

4. Discussion Items.

Dinosaurs proposal (W course) returned from minor revisions

We agree to conduct a review of current W courses. Dennis's office will provide syllabi. We agree that at the upper division level, the focus of our writing efforts should be evaluating whether students can write complex sentences and articulate complex ideas, and not on the mechanics of writing.

The mechanics of writing grammatically intelligible sentences should be treated very shortly after students transfer to or enter our campus. We agree that either the writing exam and/or W courses may be useful "gatekeepers" in that if we require students to pass one or the other before they begin taking upper division courses, then it will be easier for faculty to focus on the higher order thinking skills that should be treated in such courses. Most students take a W course or the writing exam just prior to graduation; we may consider recommending that individual departments require that students pass the exam or a W course much earlier than this. We may also consider whether W courses should emphasize writing over content with regard to grading (i.e., to ensure that if students exhibit poor writing skills, that it will then be impossible to pass a W course).

It is unclear that the Writing Center is meeting the needs of students that lack competency in writing mechanics. We will invite someone from the Writing Center to attend our next meeting, so that we better understand the goals of that institution.

MSC to adjourn at 12:00 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Writing Competency Subcommittee will be Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 11:00 a.m., Library, Room #4164.

Agenda.

1. Approval of the Minutes of 10/22/2010.
2. Approval of the Agenda.
3. Communications and Announcements.
4. Examine syllabi from existing W courses; consider changes to the W course policy with regard to grading, or other items.
5. Meet with representative from the Campus writing center.