

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**The City University of New York**  
**ACADEMIC SENATE**

**COMMITTEE ON WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES/  
WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (WID/WAC)**

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**TO:** Dr. Joel Kuszai, Secretary, Academic Senate Steering Committee  
**FROM:** Dr. Bjorn Berkhout, Chair, Committee on WID/WAC  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Report for Committee on WID/WAC for 2014/2015  
**DATE:** August 28, 2015

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**Membership**

Officers:

Dr. Bjorn Berkhout (Music), Chair  
Dr. Peter Grey (English), Secretary

Members:

Dr. Kimberly Ambruso (Nursing)  
Dr. Elizabeth Bartels (Social Science)  
Dr. Marvin Gayle (Engineering Technology)  
Dr. Daniel Garbin (Mathematics and Computer Sciences)

Liaisons/Designees

Dr. Glenn Burdi (Academic Affairs), President's Designee  
Dr. Jeff Jankowski (Social Sciences), Co-director of the WID/WAC Program  
Dr. Lakersha Smith (Social Sciences), Steering Committee Designee

## Committee Meetings

The WID/WAC Committee met three times during the 2014-2015 Academic year. The meetings were held on the following dates: October 29, April 29 and May 20. The minutes for each of the meetings are available for review on the website for the QCC Academic Senate (the minutes for the May 20 meeting will be available upon approval by the committee at its next meeting). The Committee acknowledges the service of the secretary, Dr. Peter Grey, in preparing the minutes. In addition, six waiver requests were coordinated via email during the academic year as they were submitted to the Committee by Dr. Glenn Burdi of Academic Affairs.

### Narrative Summary of the Committee Work

The charges listed in the Bylaws are now in agreement with the charges listed on the website. They are as follows:

- a. Oversee and make recommendations to the Academic Senate related to the WID/WAC Program;
- b. Review and make recommendations to the WID/WAC Director(s) concerning the WID/WAC Professional Development Program;
- c. Consult with the Committee on Course and Standing on waiver requests from students on any writing intensive (WI) degree requirements that the Committee on Course and Standing may be called upon to decide;
- d. Make the final decision on the designation and recertification of any course or section as WI;
- e. Coordinate with the Curriculum Committee on issues concerning curriculum.

**With regards to charges a and e:** The Writing Intensive (WI) program, which had been a freestanding entity, has recently been incorporated into the High Impact Practices (HIPS). Along with the other HIPS, the WI program is participating in the assessment initiative of the college. The WI directors will keep the committee informed of the results of this assessment as well as any potential impact resulting from being part of HIPS rather than an independent entity. Any impact this may have on issues concerning curriculum will then be reported to the Curriculum Committee.

**With regards to charge b:** The Committee received reports on the state of the WID/WAC program and discussed ways in which the quality of the WID/WAC program could be maintained and even strengthened. Suggestions for this can be found under **New Recommendations**.

**With regard to charge c and d:** There were six waiver petitions submitted to, discussed in detail and voted on by the Committee. Four were approved and two denied all with unanimous decisions. A list of WI certified classes was presented to the Committee, discussed and approved unanimously.

## New Recommendations

The Committee noted that once a faculty member is certified, there usually is no further involvement or engagement with WID/WAC program or committee. The committee is exploring ways to address this including the idea of a voluntary sampling of WI class syllabi.

## Recommendations from the Academic Senate

The Committee addressed the 11 recommendations from the Academic Senate as follows:

1. Collaborate with Steering Committee to work on Committee Guide, particularly where there needs to be any clarification of committee charge (this may require another trip to the Queensborough archives, located in the Library Building; work with Constance Williams, Senate archivist, [cwilliams@qcc.cuny.edu](mailto:cwilliams@qcc.cuny.edu). Resolve the question about the discrepancy of committee charge on the Academic Senate website to determine what, if any, revisions need be made in the bylaws in order to formulate an appropriate charge for this committee.
  - This discrepancy had been solved prior to the first meeting of the 2014-15 Committee and it is the charges listed in both the Bylaws and on the website that we operated under for the 2014-15 academic year. The discrepancy was first noted in the 2011-12 academic year and has been a concern addressed by all the subsequent committees (see the Annual Reports from 2011-2012 on).
2. Report on difficulty (or lack of difficulty) with student waivers for WID/WAC program—Success of WID/WAC Program
  - The Committee approved the waivers when a student proved the problem occurred earlier during the implementation period of the WI requirements, possibly caused by an advisement issue or a lack of information. The WI requirement is now consistently indicated and the advisement is clear.
  - The program is healthy with 264 sections of WI classes and around 6,000 students served.
3. Receive reports of assessments conducted on WI courses by the Office of Academic Affairs (distinct from conduct of assessments) as well as the WI program more broadly conceived. This would include any evaluations of the effect of Writing Intensive courses as implementation of high-impact activities from the Office of Institutional Research
  - As noted earlier in the narrative description, the assessment is on going and the report has not yet been received. The Committee will thoroughly discuss this issue once the assessment is completed.
4. Evaluate and review assessment process in WID/WAC courses;

- The training program that certifies WI instructors is running smoothly. Around 30 faculty members participated in the professional development program as of 10/29 2014. As noted in the **Recommendation Section**, the Committee would like to begin sampling (on a voluntary basis) diverse syllabi from WI courses.
5. Evaluate suggestions for expanding the number of WID/WAC courses in order to meet student demand for courses that enable them to fulfill WID/WAC requirement
    - The Committee noted that all departments have good representation of WI classes, allowing for students to meet the requirement. Lack of WI classes were not a factor in any of the approved waivers and for the two that were denied it was noted that the students had sufficient opportunities to take a WI class.
  6. Evaluate impact of WID/WAC certification for upper-level English courses, and consider the possibility of certifying upper level electives in other subjects, if they meet various writing intensive criteria.
    - No adverse effects were noted and the Committee would be happy to consider other upper level electives that satisfy the requirements.
  7. Report on any procedural changes in the approval of WID/WAC courses or certification of WID/WAC faculty as a result of new CETL leadership
    - The directors of the WID WAC program felt that this has not yet significantly changed the procedure for approval. The Committee will continue to monitor this issue.
  8. Obtain list of WID/WAC trained faculty
    - A complete list is in development.
  9. Respond to questions related to the need for working during annual leave period
    - One of the six waivers did come during the annual leave period. It remains a potential issue that the Committee will monitor. Allowing email discussions about the waivers proved helpful in the waiver discussions, both during the academic year and during the annual leave period.
  10. Maintain website, and revise committee guide, as needed
    - The website, in agreement with the Bylaws, has 9 members listed (3 TBD), but the description calls for only three (3). This will need to be corrected to nine (9) during the next academic year.
  11. Contribute comment on the impact of WID/WAC for Queensborough's meeting of current Middle States Accreditation standards 11: *“The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational*

*offerings” 12: The institution’s curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency,” as well as Standard 13: The institution’s programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards”*

- As noted earlier in the narrative description, the relevant assessment is on going.

#### **Matters of Interest**

- As of 2014-15 the WID WAC program had three co-directors: Dr. Jeffrey Jankowski, Dr. Jean Murley and Dr. Robert Becker.
- For the upcoming 2015-2016 Academic Year, Dr. Elizabeth Bartels will be replaced by Dr. Christopher Jimenez (Speech Communication). All other members will remain the same.
- At its meeting on May 20, 2015, the Committee elected Dr. Bjorn Berkhout as chair and Dr. Peter Gray as secretary for the 2015-16 academic year.
- The Committee acknowledges the time spent by Dr. Glenn Burdi in preparing the cases for the committee’s consideration.
- The Chairperson would like to thank all members who served on the Committee throughout the academic year.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Bjorn Berkhout  
Chair, 2014-2015