

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

ACADEMIC SENATE

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

TO: Prof. Kathleen Villani, Secretary, Academic Senate Steering Committee

FROM: Dr. Kip Montgomery, Chair, Committee on Writing in the Disciplines/Writing Across the Curriculum (WID/WAC)

SUBJECT: Annual Report for Committee on Writing in the Disciplines/Writing Across the Curriculum (WID/WAC) for 2005-2006

DATE: September 22, 2006

The members of the Committee on WID/WAC for the academic year 2005-2006 were:

Officers:

Dr. Kip Montgomery (Music), Chair
Prof. Marvin Gayle (Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology), Secretary

Members:

Dr. Alex Flamholz (Physics)
Prof. Maryann Magaldi (Nursing)
Dr. Margot Small (Mathematics and Computer Science)

Liaisons/Designees:

Dr. Arthur Corradetti (Academic Affairs), President's Designee
Dr. Rosemary Iconis (Health, Physical Education and Dance), Steering Committee Designee
Prof. Reuvain Zahavy (Mathematics and Computer Science), Committee on Committees Liaison

Ex-officio:

Dr. Peter Gray (English), Co-Director, QCC WID/WAC Program
Dr. Linda Stanley (English), Co-Director, QCC WID/WAC Program

Committee Meeting:

The Committee on WID/WAC met four times during the 2005-2006 academic year: on October 19 and November 16, 2005 and on March 8 and May 16, 2006. Anyone interested in reviewing the minutes of any of these meetings is welcome to contact the Committee's chair.

Summary of Committee Work:

In its first year as a full-standing Committee of the Queensborough Community College Academic Senate, the Committee on WID/WAC acted in accordance with its Bylaws charges:

- a) Oversee and make recommendations to the Academic Senate related to the WID/WAC Program.
- b) Review and recommend changes in the criteria for a writing intensive (WI) class to the Academic Senate for its approval.
- c) Oversee a continuing WID/WAC Faculty Professional Development Program with the Office of Academic Affairs.
- d) Hear and decide student cases requesting a waiver from any WI degree requirements.
- e) Provide a list of current WI certified classes and the instructors certified to teach WI classes to the department chairs who will make the final decision on the designation of a course or section as WI each semester.
- f) Insure through a certification and recertification process that all classes designated as WI meet the criteria for a WI class.
- g) Provide the Committee on Committees with a list of faculty members who are participating in the WID/WAC program.

Responses to Bylaws charges:

- a) The Committee made no formal recommendations to the QCC Academic Senate during the 2005-2006 academic year.
- b) The Committee made no recommended changes in the criteria for a writing intensive (WI) class to the QCC Academic Senate during the 2005-2006 academic year.
- c) The Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program kept the Committee informed throughout the year of its two WI training (Faculty Professional Development) programs, one which ran in June, 2005 and throughout the Fall semester, 2005 and another which ran during the Spring semester, 2006. The WID/WAC Professional Development Program continued this year to work with larger cohorts of faculty, gradually increasing the number of faculty members able to teach WI classes and who use writing as a mode of instruction and learning in their non-WI classes. In recent years, the Professional Development Program has begun working with large numbers of adjunct faculty, shifting from a focus on the development of individual faculty members to the development of collaborative department or disciplinary groups.
- d) This charge occupied the largest share of the Committee's attention during the academic year. The Committee was most concerned initially with the issue of transfer students: should a student who transfers to QCC from another CUNY school, where he or she took WI courses, be exempt from the WI requirement at QCC? There was agreement among Committee members that an appeals process should be made available to students who take WI courses at other schools and who wish to have these WI courses count towards the QCC WI requirement. Dr. Arthur Corradetti, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and the President's Designee to the Committee, drafted an appeals form for the Committee's consideration. Discussion and revision of his proposal led to the creation of the "Petition for Waiver of WI Requirement," an application that subsequently became available in the Office of Academic Affairs, at the Registrar's Office, at Academic Advising, and online at the QCC website. Briefly, the application asks the student to supply a transcript of coursework done before his or her matriculation at QCC (showing WI courses previously taken) and offers the student an opportunity to justify the petition through supporting documentation (course syllabi, excerpts from college catalogs which describe the role of writing in a particular course, etc.). At its third meeting of the year, the Petition was finalized, and Dr. Corradetti (with the assistance of Dr. Michael Roggow, Director of CUE) took on the task of distributing it as described above. He did this effectively: by the Committee's fourth meeting of the year, 4 student petitions had already been received. They were reviewed and acted upon at this meeting (3 were approved and one was returned as incomplete). Because of the relatively small number of petitions, the Committee was able to deliberate thoroughly and at length the merits of each application. We realize that as time proceeds, the number of petitions will likely grow much larger; thus, the Committee understands the need to develop a

set of guidelines that will assist them and future Committees in deciding waiver petitions more quickly. It was agreed to take on this work in the Committee during the 2006-2007 academic year.

- e) The Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program provided copies of all lists of current WI- certified classes and the instructors certified to teach WI classes to all Committee members. They reported on their communications with department Chairpersons. Further, all course offerings with WI designations for Spring 2006, Summer 2006 and Fall 2006, as supplied to the Committee by the Co-Directors, were unanimously approved and certified by the members of the Committee at its March 8, 2006 meeting. (Lists of certified faculty and WI course offerings for each of these semesters is available upon request to the Chair or to the Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program.)
- f) The Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program worked closely with the Committee on WID/WAC this year, to ensure that all courses which were designated as WI in the Registration Guide and Schedule of Classes were taught by WI-certified faculty (or by faculty who were simultaneously enrolled in professional development training). In addition, the Committee monitored closely the submission of faculty portfolios, which contain sample writing exercises and assignments, as a means to help ensure that all classes designated as WI meet the criteria for a WI class.
- g) The Committee on Committees has a list of all faculty who have completed professional development training and who are WI-certified. The Committee on Committees will receive a list in the Fall semester of 2006 of those faculty members currently enrolled in training.

In addition to the specific responses the Committee made to the Bylaws charges, the Committee throughout the year discussed a number of topics related to the WI requirement at QCC, including:

- Is the college meeting the needs of students covered by this requirement through its course offerings? Are days and times of WI classes sufficiently varied? Are the needs of night and weekend students being addressed?
- Are incoming freshmen being advised effectively regarding their WI requirements? Are transfer students being made sufficiently aware of the WI requirement?
- Can student records (transcripts, SIMS, etc.) more clearly reflect WI classes and completion of the requirement?
- How, if at all, can the use of Writing Fellows assist faculty who have completed training but desire classroom support beyond their first semester of certification?

These and many other issues (along with, of course, the responses to the new Bylaws charges) will occupy the Committee on WID/WAC in the 2006-2007 academic year.

Finally, it should be noted that Dr. Peter Gray and Dr. Linda Stanley, Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program, Anna May Jagoda, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, and graduate writing fellows Julian Brash, Simone Nunes, and Tammy Zielinski produced a document in the Fall of 2005, entitled “A History of WID/WAC Assessment at QCC and What We Have Learned.” This document, a self-assessment of the WID/WAC program in its first years at QCC, is based largely on faculty and student surveys that were administered between the years 2002 and 2005. Any faculty member interested in reviewing this document (or any other documents related to the WID/WAC program at QCC), is most welcome to make his or her request known to the Chair of the Committee on WID/WAC or to one of the Co-Directors of the WID/WAC program.

The members of the Committee on WID/WAC for the academic year 2006-2007 are:

For their service on this year’s Committee, thanks are due to Marvin Gayle and Alex Flamholz. A welcome is extended to the new members of the Committee for 2006-2007, Prof. Sandy Marcus (Library) and Dr. Peter Gray (English). At the Committee’s meeting of May 16, 2006, Dr. Kip Montgomery was re-elected as Chair and Dr. Margot Small was elected Secretary.