

# Institute Writing Committee

Report to Academic Senate – May, 2017

## Committee

Committee members (listed below) met regularly during AY2016-17. It reviewed all “Writing Intensive” (WI) course materials submitted. The registrar was informed of all courses approved as WI by the committee, and an IWC spreadsheet was updated online each semester.

## Membership

Andrea Hickerson (CLA), co-chair  
Michael Palanski (SCB), co-chair  
David Martins (UWP Director)  
Pam Kincheloe  
Steven Day  
Carl Lutzer  
Yossi Nygate  
Nancy Valentage  
Joshua Snyder  
Lorraine Justice  
Tae Oh

## Charges to the Institute Writing Committee

1. Monitor and report to AS on the implementation of the Institute Writing Policy.
2. Highlight RIT “best practices” for use of writing in course instruction, especially WI courses.
3. Report to the Academic Senate and campus community progress on the assessment of WI courses.
4. Collaborate with the University Writing Program to provide resources and consultation to program directors and faculty that will facilitate their assessment? of the effectiveness of their writing intensive (WI) courses

## Implementation of the Institute Writing Policy (charge 1)

Committee efforts to implement the Institute Writing Policy have focused on two areas: monitoring the development and approval of WI course offerings, and working with the UWP to identify areas of support for faculty teaching First Year, General Education, and Program WI courses.

## Course Approval and Monitoring

The IWC has reviewed and approved 18 courses during the 2016-2017 Academic Year.

The committee agreed to the following process to review classes seeking Writing Intensive designation. After approval by a college’s curriculum committee, the college IWC rep notifies the IWC co-chairs of a pending class for review. The college representative and the co-chairs do a preliminary review of the course, and may remand the course back to the college for modification. Once the course is modified, or if no modification is needed, the course is presented to the IWC for review. Once approved, the

college rep notifies the curriculum committee and submitting party, and a delegate of the IWC notifies the registrar's office

### Highlighting "best practices" (Charges 2 and 4)

"The Life of WI: A Celebration of Writing @ RIT" is being planned for Fall 2017.

Invitations to the breakfast will be sent out to all faculty scheduled to teach WI courses during the academic year, along with faculty who have taught WI courses in the past. In addition to the breakfast, two panels of faculty teaching WI courses will present on and showcase their efforts to integrate writing into their courses in engaging and innovative ways.

Also, the committee charged several committee members to discuss ideas for helping convey best practices. The sub-committee's report is as follows:

This year, the sub-committee engaged in the following activities:

1. Discussed the IWC mission statement.
2. Discussed various possible strategies for IWC's outreach, including
  - i. Creating a presentation that could be used by representatives for use in department/curriculum committee/new faculty meetings
  - ii. Increasing committee presence at writing related institute events such as the National Day on Writing, McKenzie and Kearse Award ceremonies, etc.
  - iii. Working on a more accessible and user-friendly website.
3. The committee decided to prioritize work on the website, and has been reviewing the website content. This should be complete by the end of the Spring semester.

### Assessing Writing Intensive Courses (charge 3)

#### General Education Writing Intensive (WI-GE)

Assessment of WI-GE follows the approved General Education Assessment Plan prepared by the Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment (OEEA) and approved by the General Education Committee. This Academic Year, the UWP Director collaborated with Leah Bradley in the OEEA to assess the student learning outcome, "To revise and improve written products." In the Spring Semester, Faculty teaching WI-GE were invited to participate in course-based assessment:

- Faculty review rubric and select assignment providing best opportunity to assess SLO
- While evaluating student writing, faculty will compare two drafts for the assessment
- Faculty will submit a summative report of their assessment results using "data collection form."

Results from the assessment will be shared with the RIT community in the Fall 2017 semester.

#### Program Writing Intensive (WI-PR)

Every program has developed a "Program Level Outcomes Assessment Plan" (PLOAP). The IWC recommends that each program regularly assess its own WI course(s) as part of its assessment plan. Some programs already have a program-level writing goal and student learning outcome. If the assessment of WI-PR courses has not already been integrated into their assessment plans, programs have a number of opportunities:

1. Programs revise their current assessment plans to include a program goal related to writing and a program SLO related to writing, and designate a WI-PR course(s) as the assessment method.
2. Programs align their current WI-PR course-level writing outcome and course to an **existing** program goal or SLO.
3. Programs align their current WI-PR course-level writing outcome and course to a **new** Program Goal and SLO.

IWC members and the director of the University Writing Program can serve as support for programs consulting with program faculty in the articulation of program goals and in the design and implementation of the writing outcome assessment. As those assessments are completed and the results reported to the OEEA, the IWC will highlight the findings of each program's assessment as part of its own yearly reporting on the impact of the institute writing policy.

The IWC, along with other campus programs and committees (e.g., the UWP, OEEA, and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee), will collaborate to develop a Program WI questionnaire that seeks to identify current challenges and opportunities for integrating WI-PR course learning outcomes assessment into existing PLOAPs. That questionnaire will also help identify current practice in WI-PR assessment. Existing examples of programs articulating writing-related program goals and learning outcomes, and their methods of assessing those outcomes, will be made available to the campus community.

Last year, the IWC recommended that each program assess its own WI course(s). Programs were encouraged to revise current assessment plans to include writing-related program goal or SLO, and designate a WI-PR course(s) as the assessment method. Programs could also align current WI-PR course-level writing outcomes and course to an existing program goal or SLO, or can create a new Program Goal and SLO focused on writing. Findings during a preliminary analysis of the Taskstream archive indicate the following:

- 42% of the 79 approved WI-PR courses are identified as data source within “program-level outcomes assessment plans” (1/12/2017)
- In a review of 181 “program-level outcomes assessment plans”:
  - 41% reference “writing” in or as part of a SLO
  - 22% list “writing” in data source title
  - 22% list “writing” within program goals

Analysis suggests the current degree to which writing appears in relation to how programs measure student learning.

## Possible IWC Charges for AY2017-18

1. Monitor and report to AS on the implementation and assessment of the Institute Writing Policy.
2. Review proposed WI courses.
3. Review COF Appendix B for internal consistency, as well as consistency with Appendix A (Gen Ed).
4. Serve as the faculty liaison with the University Writing Program and other writing-related initiatives, making recommendations when appropriate.

5. Make recommendations on how current Institute Writing policy that addresses desired language and level of writing proficiency may be clarified.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Hickerson  
Michael Palanski  
May 2017