Members present: Tamra Donnelly (staff), David Fencsik, Julie Marty-Pearson, Sally Murphy, Sarah Nielsen, Sue Opp, Margaret Rustick, Nancy White, Donna Wiley

Agenda:

1. Potential of moving scoring responsibility from testing to first-tier teachers (Margaret)
2. Providing analytic readings for WST and portfolio evaluation (Julie)
3. Tracking and restricting number of times students can take the WST (Julie)
4. Academic dishonesty incident (Margaret)

Rustick mentioned that Rosanne Harris will be retiring. Harris will provide a list of all graduate courses that have been approved to satisfy the UWSR. Wiley pointed out that there are only four departments with approved courses: Business, Teacher Education, Music and Public Administration. She emphasized that it is not a section by section approval, every course offering must follow the approved format.

The members discussed the current options available to students to satisfy the UWSR. Two attempts at the Writing Skills Test are allowed, but this is not currently enforced. There is no system in place for preventing a student from more attempts. In fact a student recently passed on the fourth attempt. In addition, a third attempt involved alleged plagiarism and is under investigation.

The need for a first tier composition course was discussed. If a student fails the WST they need somewhere to go to improve their skills. If there were a writing in the major requirement students would need to enroll during their junior year, it could not be included in a senior capstone course, because that would not allow any time for skill improvement if needed.

Nielsen plans to ask instructors in ENG 3000/3001 what level of proficiency they believe their students will receive on a portfolio review, independent of the course grade.

The Testing Office budget was the driving force behind the evaluation and scrutiny of course fees related to portfolio evaluations, not the approval and implementation of the A2E2 fee.

Options to the WST, 1st Tier and 2nd Tier courses were discussed. Rustick mentioned that a pilot program aimed at students who did not pass the WST did not result in improved scores. Suggestions for improvement included workshops to train faculty; requesting A2E2 funds to hire a permanent staff member to supervise a GWA program; rubric based feedback to students to provide areas for improvement; electronic scoring of tests; remove limit from number of times WST may be taken in an effort to reduce test anxiety.
Opp mentioned that the current process has been in place for approximately 10 years and it is time to review all options and consider ways to better serve the students.

Marty-Pearson asked for direction regarding the letter that is sent to students offering an analytic reading of the exam. The one reader who was available resigned. Testing will remove the language from the letter to students offering analytic readings, and for those students who request it based on earlier commitment will be referred to Rustick.

A case of apparent plagiarism during a WST administration was discussed. The investigation is ongoing. Committee members would like to be kept informed.

Next meeting: March 21, 2013 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm, SA 4350.

Minutes prepared by Tamra Donnelly

Respectfully submitted,

David Fencsik, Secretary