

NOTES - 2016 Spring Faculty-to-Faculty Conference - April 15, 2016
GENERAL Session – Writing Requirement Discussion

1. Issue raised that Written Communication competency (WC) should be able to be used throughout the content areas (esp. AHUM, S&BS).
2. Positives for requiring WC:
 - a. Writing is important across all disciplines – it's a foundational skill.
 - b. Essential skills for communicating knowledge include writing. It must be (is) one of the basic skills for communicating. Without writing students will have a hard time succeeding.
 - c. They have to have communicating skills.
 - d. Writing is a skill that students can lose – it needs to be continued throughout their educational careers.
 - e. Writing is the number 1 skill requested from businesses.
 - f. Writing encourages critical thinking and analysis; it is important for future education.
 - g. We are talking about GT Pathways (GTP) courses – so (we are) not sure if students have had the writing they need.
 - h. We are not saying to take away the other competencies chosen by content areas; we are asking to add the WC competency to these content areas.
 - i.
3. **Negatives**
 - a. Too many students in a class to require writing; too many writing assignments to grade.
 - b. Writing component can be a secondary competency for a course. What is the competency that should be the main focus of certain content areas – is it writing or something more particular to that content area?
 - c. Current WC criteria force one to use high-stake writing assignments.
 - d. We don't teach writing in all disciplines – we have to do some other activities in class. Writing should be imbedded in these other activities. Change curriculum for writing assignments.
 - e. There are other competencies that are equally important, i.e., oral communication. [People don't read very much anymore: Students don't read and write as much as they used to – our culture is changing – we read and write on our phones – our communication styles have changed.]
 - f. Resource-poor institutions don't have the time/people to grade all those WC assignments.

- g. Ten competencies can't go into each course; consider the "breadth of study" notion at FRCC.**

4. General Comments

- a. There are two strands regarding the "across the curriculum" idea: 1) the right to communicate; and 2) writing used for learning (it's a high-impact learning mechanism). The right to learn – "low-stakes" writing?**
- b. 20+ different campuses who do writing differently; GTP is to assist *transfer* students.**
- c. Low-stakes writing v. big, polished projects. We need explicit language to value low-stakes writing. We need to define "writing competency." We need to balance the demands made on students that are often too heavy for polished writing and final work.**
- d. Where does writing fit in the discipline and how to use it best?**
- e. CO is unique among states through this work incorporating SLOs in content area criteria/competencies; CO could be a national model. There will have to be compromise.**
- f. Pragmatic compromise will allow us to assess student progress across the array of competencies in light of transfer students. Present the compromise in light of the "writing to learn" language. Indiana is using this language in its assessment program vis-à-vis transfer students.**
- g. We will have to be selective of where we do assessments within the GTP curriculum.**
- h. Need to be provisional. Need to figure how to keep going with this issue.**
- i. Writing to learn; speaking to learn; problem solving to learn....**
- j. We must compromise to get GTP to work.**