

DATE: September ,72021

TO: Danny Paskin, Chair
Curriculum and Educational Policies Council

Neil Hultgren, Chair
Academic Senate

FROM: Lori Brown, Chair
Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Committee

SUBJECT: GWAR Committee Report for 2020~~2021~~

The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Committee convened on September 4, 2020 and elected the following committee officers:

Lori Brown, Chair
Sarvenaz Hatami, Vice Chair
Elizabeth Lindau, Secretary

The committee met on the first and third Fridays of each month from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

GWAR Committee Membership

The following individuals served on the GWAR committee during the ~~2020~~ school year:

- Joseph Aubele (Library)
- Lori Brown (Information Systems)
- Jason Deutschman (Coordinator of Academic Advising, College of Engineering)
- Noah Golden (Teacher Education)
- John Hamilton (AVP University Access and Retention, Interim Testing office director)
- Savenaz Hatami (Linguistics)
- Kerry Johnson (AVP Undergraduate Studies)
- Isaac Julian (Student (ASI))
- Eugenia Kim (Director, Center for International Education)
- Eileen Klink (English)
- Elizabeth Lindau (Music)
- Tina Matuchniak (Director, University Writing Center)
- Henry O'Lawrence (CEO, Health Care Administration)
- Benjamin Perlman (Biological Sciences)
- Shabnam Sodagari (Electrical Engineering)
- Alexandra Wilkinson (Family & Consumer Sciences)

After two semesters of GPE waivers due to the pandemic, the GWARC began addressing the need for more WI courses on campus to meet the demand for the thousands of students who would pass through to the WI course requirement sooner than usual without the GPE semester. The committee examined statistics for the needed WI seats in spring 2020 and fall 2021 and approved the WI course application in spring of 2021.

Pandemic GPE Waivers and Online GPE Pilots

Due to the pandemic and campus shutdown, the GWAR Proficiency Exam (GPE) were paused for fall 2020 and eventually also for spring 2021. All incoming transfer undergrads and native students who had earned 30 units were granted GPE waivers. The committee evaluated several scenarios for moving the GWAR forward after the pause and decided to continue the transition to an online GPE for spring 2021 which would need to be piloted before a universitywide rollout. Academic Technology Services was brought in along with Testing and Evaluation to inform the decision and create the online GPE. GWAR Coordinator, AVP of Undergraduate Studies, VP, Provost, Graduate Studies Director, Enrollment Services, GWAR Advisors, Major advisors throughout campus, and the Testing Office were tasked to collaborate once again (as in spring 2020)

- (1) ensuring the imminent graduations of students impacted by the GPE cancellations were not delayed due to GWAR.
- (2) executing the waivers of the GPE for fall 2020 and spring 2021.
- (3) messaging the ongoing changes and guidelines to various advising and student groups.
- (4) creating a secure and effective online GPE test capable of piloting in 2021

The collaborations proved successful after a few hurdles, the Online GPE was piloted first with graduate students needing to fulfill GWAR for imminent graduation. In February of 2021 the first pilot took place and in June a second pilot exam was completed. The Online GPE pilots provided insights and data into the execution and scoring of the online version of the GPE. The GWARC left the spring 2021 semester feeling confident that a hybrid GPE (Online and In-Person options) would be well suited for fall 2021.

Continued Review of the GPE

The committee continued to review the GPE as a placement exam for the GWAR Pathways. In October 2020, Lizzette Rojas, Data Program Analyst for the AVP of Academic Affairs Office, was invited to join the committee and present on “pass” and “fail” rates of the GPE by demographic. Rojas took questions from the committee in a lengthy and robust discussion ensued. The committee requested further data on the GPE and student writing on campus to

help determine correlations of GPE results and success rates in Upper Division coursework, graduation rates, and success in WI courses. The committee also requested data on Freshman Comp grades as predictor of GPE scores and the impact GWAR Portfolio courses have had on WI course grade success.

Improved versions of the GPE, writing prompts, resources students are allowed to access during the exam, and various versions of a placement instrument were discussed throughout the academic year. The Chair met with GWAR Coordinators and Writing Directors of other CSU's to learn and share about how campuses are adapting their GWAR requirements to the Chancellor's Office memo and "suspension of single examinations that fulfill the GWAR." Because CSULB uses an exam as a placement instrument for more writing instruction, our GPE was allowed to remain, but improvements are being considered in the GWARC and the Graduation Proficiency Exam Advisory Committee, a subcommittee to GWARC. The committee continues to look at other campus responses as potential models for our own. End goals - These questions were discussed as the GWARC continues to look for ways to improve writing assessment for graduation: What does it mean to be writing proficiently at graduation? Do we want summative assessments of quality? Or integrate formative assessments over time? Do we want to emphasize process or product?

The Chancellor's Office shared with all CSU AVP's that a discussion of the GWARs across the CSU