First Year Writing Program

Actions agreed upon by the First Year Writing Program for the coming academic year (2004 – 2005):

1. Staffing and Support:
   After carefully examining the action items identified by the unit’s Self-Study Report, those attending the MOA meeting strongly supported the following priority items.
   a. The First Year Writing Program will submit a proposal to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences to be the basis of discussions with the Dean of the College and the EVP for Academic Affairs about seeking additional release time/support for program administration. Currently, with the exception of administrators, all faculty within the Writing Program are adjunct and cannot be expected to assist in administrative duties, such as, creating faculty development opportunities, monitoring course quality, conducting annual assessments, and making program innovations. **Completed.**
   b. The First Year Writing Program will develop a “white paper” investigating possible ways to increase/retain in the program faculty experience and expertise that are now lost because many faculty in the program currently work under contracts renewable for a maximum of three years, creating a need constantly to develop new faculty in the program. The paper, which will serve as the basis of a discussion with the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the EVP for Academic Affairs, will examine the various ways this problem might be solved, including designating such persons as long-term teaching professionals, and will consider the costs of and obstacles to such options potentially arising from AAUP guidelines, DePaul/Faculty Council policies, cost constraints, etc. The paper will also include ways in which comparable institutions have addressed this problem. **In progress.**

2. Diversifying Advisory Committee.
   a. Seek to expand First Year Writing Committee to include non-English Department and non-College of Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty as members by first approaching the Liberal Studies Council and English Department regarding changing the existing bylaws. **Planned for AQ06**
   b. The Director of the First Year Writing Program will develop ways, once the committee by-laws are changed—see 2a, to include faculty from outside of the English Department and outside of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences on the Advisory Committee. **Planned for AQ06**

3. Writing at DePaul:
   a. The First Year Writing Program Administrators will create a comprehensive document, to be located on their website, about writing in the Liberal Studies Program in order to assist faculty in understanding and building on the outcomes of the First Year Writing sequence. **Website completed, document in progress.**
   b. Administrators of the First Year Writing Program will work with departments and domains to assist in the design of assignments that build on students’ freshman
writing skills. Underway through University Center for Writing-Based Learning. As a starting point, Peter Vandenberg and Darsie Bowden gave a number of workshops over the summer to domain chairs (or their representatives) in Liberal Studies.

c. During the Autumn Advisory Committee meeting, standards for writing will be reviewed in terms of their stringency and consistency. Planned for AQ06. We will also adjust outcomes statements to align them with national standards as articulated by the Council of Writing Program Administrators.

4. Syllabi Enhancement:

a. Seek to have instructors enhance syllabi through increased attention to: articulation of program learning outcomes; articulation between syllabus and course calendar; articulation between assigned activities and specific learning outcomes; improved visual presentation of syllabi; improved statement of writing expectations and types of writing assignments; and clearer indication of the differences and relationships between FYW 103 and 104. Planned for AQ06 writing faculty orientation on August 31, 2006.

5. Assessment:

a. Give more attention to the assessibility of what occurs in the classroom possibly including a shift from assessing syllabi to assessing teaching portfolios (this will be more feasible if 1a and 1b are successful). Planned for AQ06.