

TO: Sue Abbotson, Chair of Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC)
FROM: Mike Michaud, Chair of Writing Board (WB)
DATE: 11/20/15
SUBJECT: Report on WB Activity (Oct/Nov)

Work of the Writing Board

The WB has now met three times this term and completed its primary fall event, the First Pages reading and exhibit. First Pages was well attended; ten faculty from across the disciplines shared their writing. Food was eaten, community was felt, writing was discussed. This event, now in its third year, was a success.

The Board's primary work since the First Pages event has focused on planning for the 20th Annual Faculty Development Workshop. We are in the final stages of preparing and will begin promotion when we return from the Thanksgiving break.

Our speaker this year will be Dan Melzer, whose recent research examines writing assignments across the curriculum. Melzer will join us on January 13, 2015 to talk about his research and share advice for faculty on designing writing assignments that do more than just test students' knowledge in skills of summarization. Melzer's central argument is that we spend too much time asking students to write papers in which they simply regurgitate ideas from textbooks and lectures. He wants to encourage faculty to think of writing as having other uses, including argument, synthesis, evaluation, proposition, and reflection. We look forward to his visit.

Work of the WB Chair

This semester has been a busy one as I have worked to plan and facilitate the First Pages event and to plan for the Faculty Development Workshop in January. Additionally, I have continued my work with faculty participants in the Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing, holding follow-up meetings and meeting with each participant for an hour-long one-on-one conference. Additionally, I have worked to recruit faculty for our spring Co-Op series with the FCTL and introduced a new set of talks for next semester which focuses *not* on the teaching of writing, but on the practice of writing among faculty. We have two faculty members with whom I will collaborate on this new topic.

In addition to leading the Board, planning events, and assembling a professional development schedule for spring, I have spent this semester working on a series of

video projects (with the help of a course release). I have two projects underway, the first a tutorial series for faculty on how to facilitate peer review, the second, a sequence of testimonial videos recorded with faculty who have participated in the Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing. I'm excited to share this work with the campus community.

Finally, the Board has held discussions this term about a proposal for a revised funding mechanism for the WB. We have been revisiting our mission, our typical engagements, and our campus needs to rethink how and why we allocate our funds. We'll be sharing this proposal with members of the administration in the next few weeks.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report and for ongoing support for the Writing Board.