Faculty conversation about WP Self-Study, 1/31/13

Jim’s notes
WP Self-Study Conversation 1/31/13 (attending = Jim, Heather, Elizabeth, Amy, Terry, Roxi, Phil, Emily, Pam)

Update on Summer Pedagogy Retreat (focused on teaching composition to multilingual students):

Dana Ferris, UCD, is scheduled as retreat leader

August 22, 23, 24 as possible dates? Videotaping? Pedagogy follow-ups throughout the year? (~VPDUE and campus advertisement)

Roxi: Workload Study is complete and "voluminous"
***most stressful for faculty is working with ELL students***

Heather:
Online Education and Courses (UC Irvine)
***What does WP want to know???***

Amy: what did the researchers discover? ~academic engagement? how does it track with later academic success? student population at UCI not the same as UCSC?

Terry: what is the teacher reward? ***and shouldn’t the WP have further and new conversations about technology and writing pedagogy??***

Roxi: what of new courses for ELL, etc. students?

Amy: Amy and Carol years back proposed W122B for upper div and international students

Jim: W22B will be offered for first time (one section) in spring 2013 with possibility of more sections in spring 2014

***Stephen and Phil have been working with Heather***

Phil: international courses are gamed by students to gain admission to U.S. universities. Oakes "stretch" students (and "stretch" students at other colleges) demand new pedagogy skills from us!

Emily: yes, these are the "high-risk" students--and the grammar concerns are often not as important as being overwhelmed and shut down by academic cultural challenges.

Roxi: yes, building a culture of academic success is needed--along with new "resources"

Terry: C8 demographics have changed/fallen, so confidence and skills must improve and be enhanced hand in hand

Terry: continues to create library/C2 template as model for other C2 instructors
Roxi: W2 form is becoming outdated?

Jim: Hum Div online eval forms: coming changes and possible implications on Unit 18 review process.

Roxi’s notes
Jim: Dana ___ from UC Davis will teach a 3 day ELL retreat end of August, primarily for WP faculty and in Colleges who teach 80A (@20 total to attend, 15 WP folks about?)
Lunch and 2 books will be covered.  Leaning toward Aug. 22

Eliz: could it be 3 one day workshops rather than a 3 day retreat?

Amy: really different audiences and purposes across different courses.

Jim: could focus on ELWR Core day? Writ 20 day? Blended day?

Eliz: we have different audiences, but one criteria should be that everybody should have taught at least one quarter of Core. I wouldn’t be too strict about WP and Core ratio of faculty.

Jim: I like the idea of a 3 day intensive. Learn new tricks of the trade. Then share with writing colleagues, then several others.

Roxi: Brought up “What Would Don Do” idea: work on a wider profile for WP and the teaching of writing campus-wide. Could we share the ELL info (and any other pedagogy colloquia) by advertising through the Humanities announcements, like Creative Writing’s Living Writers Series etc. readings are announced? Share our teaching ELL issues and online learning strategies, etc. knowledge more widely than just amongst ourselves.

Jim: I’ve asked Amy to edit Don’s book.

Amy: commit to two follow-up meetings to talk amongst the people at the workshop. How did you use it in the fall, etc.?

Eliz: Get one person from LALS and Environmental Studies to attend? Whatever report we write should be sent to these folks and VP DUE, etc.

Roxi: Workload survey: the data confirms our informal conversation last self-study meeting about how ELL issues and lack of student preparedness for University-level work represent the most daunting challenges to our teaching. We can make this survey available to everyone and hope it would be a good resource for the self-study. We’d like to present a summary to faculty at the next WP meeting. We’re collaborating on a 4 page doc.

Jim: Please make it one paragraph.

Heather: What do you want to know about what UC Irvine and Davis are doing with their on line pilot programs? They have a report. They suggested that in 2nd year, there’s no discernible difference in quality of writing. What questions do you want me to ask them?
Amy: What did the non-on line incarnation of the classes look like? Before we compare apples to brussel sprouts.

Roxi: were there other measurables beyond “quality of writing” like students' experiences of learning? Did they learn things in class v. on line they could use in other classes in the future, like their major, etc.?

Terry: What about the instructors' experience of teaching?

Jim: UC has pressure to admit international students because they get $25K additional per student. There are more international students who want to take on line courses. Stanford etc. has free courses to advertise themselves, etc. We will have pressure to have a curriculum for a small but increasing international student population. UCSC is last in attracting international students. We need to develop infrastructure to bring them in. Michael M. is asking questions about how we’re doing this. Graduation rate is poor across the country.

Roxi: Where/when/how can we ask that some of this additional funding from international student tuition get funneled into the front-line educators like Writing faculty who are responding first to their linguistic challenges?

Pam: Rebenching: the process by which the campuses get more money. We’re at the bottom per student. With CEP and ? there should be a formula for how the money gets distributed.

Amy: Carol and I proposed a Writing 22 for International students, etc. Courses we already have that attached to needs or populations of students. Or a 120.

Jim: I’m working towards that. We’ve got a pilot Writing 22B that Bill has not objected to. They’ll focus on grammar and research skills. I’d like to be able to tell Bill we need 5 sections. Bill has to decide if the funds are well-spent or not. The campus is more receptive to a 120. We don't teach DC, but there’s nothing that says we can’t teach a DC-related course. The administration is listening to arguments about retaining international and multilingual students than they were before.

Amy: online comp looks different if you have real courses to supplement. We offer so many fewer resources and classes than others. They almost all have some midlevel courses.

Philip: Regarding summer courses. Companies in China will do these courses to satisfy their requirements. International students may be taking such courses. Some Universities accept these “courses” for credit (U. Mich.).

Jim: Such courses are vetted in the admissions process. The TOEFL score (you can get into UCB or UCSC with score of 83; Stanford: 100). Michael M. wants to require higher TOEFL scores here so engineering students can succeed/graduate. Interesting intersection of ELL and technology issues in this discussion...
Emily: In 203 we talked about this: students who are first in their families to go to college are the highest risk population of dropping out. I’ve had students who have “linguistic” issues but who could survive. Those who have both issues (lack of university preparedness on top of ELL issues) are the most difficult.

Roxi: Leslie Lopez is a resource. She is training graduate students at Oakes to be writing assistants. She knows a lot about how secondary schools prepare Latino students for success—or not—at the university.

Amy: admissions massively based on GPA. There’s a perception that a lot of students who are “first in their families” etc. get in, but that’s just small percentage.

Roxi: These populations intersect: “first in family” and those who get in due to massive grade-inflated GPAs.

Philip: Lack of study skills that middle class students have put these students at a disadvantage.

Terri: Only 25% of students do the reading before writing the assignment! It’s that fundamental a problem.

Jim: If we’re getting a B equivalency, we could take on IAs in the class. Anyone with a B equivalency can have an IA, but there have to be clear distinctions. Writing 20, not Writing 2.

Amy: Course assistants would reduce our workload! Frustrating.

Jim: It’s a union issue to take up with them.

Roxi: And we’re still bargaining the contract reopeners for 2012 when this decision was made, ironically, so maybe we still could talk to UCOP about this issue, though it doesn’t look like they’re engaging much with us on anything of substance (especially salary) during our bargaining sessions.

Jim: ELWR almost 50% of our curriculum. IAs can meet with students outside of class but they can’t help with their papers.

Philip: They can help with their time management, which they desperately need.

Jim: Some of the union restrictions are driven by Southern California in languages.

Terri: I could help design templates for library instruction.

Roxi: Evaluation forms: our committee discussed how our comprehensive evaluation form focuses our merit reviews on all the categories the form lists. We all want to address each of these issues and many of us are working harder and longer to address each of them in additional conferences with students, etc. But some of our responsibilities inevitably get short shrift, like research instruction (especially now that we are losing library instruction), and some of our greatest responsibilities (responding to ELL issues) aren’t listed on our form.
Jim/Pam: We’re likely going to a standard online form to reduce staff work.

Terri: Response rate with online is atrocious.

Pam: Return rate is not looked at by Div Cap, etc.

Jim: We need a caveat, in this transition period: return rate will not affect faculty members.

Roxi: So maybe it’s a moot point, changing the WP evaluation form if we have to revert to a campus-wide form anyway?

Jim: Teaching is paramount in our MOU and our reviews (including student evaluations) should reflect this.

Heather: That’s my concern.

Jim: We need to ask them not to ignore our recommendations based on these online evals. (Lots of back and forth discussion).

Heather: In Crown/Core, we had a 98% return rate of the evaluation form: bring laptop to class. My biggest concern as an instructor is that evaluations are more negative when on line. They’re not in an academic space when writing it.

Pam: The classroom visit—departments don’t have that. That’s what’s unique about this program.

Pam/Heather: organize space/time to go to computer lab to do the evaluations or bring laptops.

Jim: On that happy note...thank you everybody.