# Writing Committee Annual Report, 2022-2023

## Writing Committee Members

**Faculty Members**Jessica Dougherty, Missoula College (2023) - Chair  
  
Kate Zoellner, Mansfield Library (2023)  
William Rice, Forestry (2024)  
Stephanie Reid, Teaching & Learning (2024)  
Greg Peters, Applied Arts & Sciences (2024)  
Dora LaCasse, World Language and Cultures (2025)

**Student Members**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
**Additional Representatives** (Ex-Officio)  
Kimber McKay, Acting Vice Provost  
Shareen Grogan, Director, Writing & Public Speaking Center  
Kelly Schirmann, Interim Director of Composition and Faculty Member in English  
Amy Ratto-Parks, UPWA Program Director  
Jeanie Castillo, UMOnline Instructional Designer

**Responsibilities**  
  
The primary responsibility of the Writing Committee is ongoing evaluation and assessment of General Education writing requirements.  The Writing Committee advocates for effective writing instruction, curriculum, and assessment; and reviews course proposals for the writing designation and transfer equivalency appeals for writing courses.  In addition, the Committee monitors the programs of the Writing Center, monitors the University-wide Program-level Writing Assessment, and collaborates with campus groups to provide faculty development workshops.

The Committee continued to meet via Zoom since the Chair and another member are located at Missoula College. The Committee met monthly spring semester.

## Writing Course Review

* The following new Advanced Writing Courses were reviewed and given provisional approval.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course | Title |
| HSTA 463 | Research in 19th & 20th Century Native American History |
| SOCI 425 | Victims and Society |
| SOCI 469 | Homicide |

* The Committee conducting the rolling review of humanities courses. It also reviewed several assessment reports from professional schools’ courses. A total of 22 forms were reviewed by three workgroups.
* The [Rolling Review summary](https://umt.box.com/s/22gymfw9thrczcgr6iza94xv9jnkjcoe) was presented to the Faculty Senate on March 16th. Below is the ongoing status of forms. Four intermediate writing courses were removed from the list because they are no longer offered.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2020-2021- CD WRIT/LIT/Fine Arts** | **Full approval** | **Provisional** | **Extension** |
| Intermediate | 11 | 4 |  |
| Advanced | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| **2021-2022** -CD **Professional Schools** |  |  |  |
| Intermediate | 2 | 4 |  |
| Advanced | 8 | 10 | 1 |
| **2022-2023 Humanities** |  |  |  |
| Intermediate | 4 | 4 |  |
| Advanced | 6 | 3 |  |

## Writing Review Issues

The Committee received a troubling response regarding a course renewal and carefully crafted a communication that led to an adequate revised assessment plan.

Pending:   
The Committee may want to review its questions with a lens toward equality given the standard academic English expectation is very white centric. This could be something to discuss when assessing the review process.  
  
It may be helpful for a few members to have office hour availability in early September to talk through confusion with faculty submitting forms. Or a small workshop could be offered on Zoom and advertised though the Office of Organizational Learning and Development.

## Intermediate Writing Course Appeals

* The Committee considered four [Intermediate Writing Course Appeals](https://umt.box.com/s/35kq9fiwnycnh8ax7aqdhxawlrup2n3t) and four Advanced Writing Substitution requests, including a request pending from the previous academic year. All but one intermediate writing appeal were approved.

Policy Items

* The draft Advanced Writing Distributed Guidelines were discussed at several meetings. Several faculty whom teach courses in units with a distributed advanced writing requirement attended the March 27th meeting to discuss how the distributed writing program was working and whether the guidelines were helpful. The final document was approved after the discussion. The Guidelines will be posted on the website and linked to the Curriculum Deadline Memo.
* After considering the revised Review and Assessment of General Education Courses procedure the Committee decided to update the Writing Course Review procedure with the same language (below). This revised procedure will be considered next academic year. (4/24/23)

In the event that sufficient communication with the professor has not produced adequate assessment information to give the course full approval (evidence that the course is meeting the learning outcomes), the matter will be referred to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the appropriate dean.

## Other Business Items

* Chair Dougherty-McMichael met with Violet Hopkins and Brigitta Lee regarding admissions evaluating transfer courses to satisfy introductory and intermediate writing. The Writing Committee developed a checklist for Introductory and Intermediate Writing Courses to help evaluators assess if courses meet the requirements for those courses. Typically a syllabus is needed to determine equivalency. Brigitta has reported that it has been a useful tool and Chair Dougherty-McMichael will be meeting with new evaluators at the end of the semester to review the checklist. The checklist has also been shared with Brian French and Nathan Domitrovich to help support advisors as they are working with transfer students. Chair Dougherty-McMichael will also be meeting with advisors at the end of the semester to discuss the checklist. The checklist could potentially be posted to the website for transparency. and intermediate writing. Typically a syllabus is needed to determine equivalency. The [checklist](https://umt.box.com/s/bs2kitszi61mamfyzwlzq9yehf7eo0ih) could potentially be posted to the website for transparency.

## Communication Items:

* The [UPWA Report](https://umt.box.com/s/l2y52n21w99cbu6il7ty3i0t91rkpkkp) and survey data was shared with the committee and Director Ratto-Parks provided highlights at the 9/12/22 meeting.
* The Writing Center annual report ([pg 1](https://umt.box.com/s/a4ujade7jtnzx5yrrguh8jsme360y1im), [pg 2](https://umt.box.com/s/9xl7zc4wsxtzwzjn6jpewq43ck2qxw02)) was shared with the committee and Director Grogan provided an overview at the 9/26/22 meeting.
* Amy looked into moving the Writing Placement to Ed Ready to be parallel to the math placement. After conducting a pilot of the EdReady English assessment, she and other placement stakeholders decided that our current in-house process is a more effective assessment that allows us to interact with incoming and continuing students through an organic process.
* ECOS discussed whether ex-officio writing committee members could chair Faculty Senate committees agreed that they could if they are willing. The Committee discussed the chair role and the importance of having a tenure-track or tenured faculty member given the potential for difficult communications and power dynamics.
* Claudine Cellier, Accreditation Liaison Officer attended a few meetings to learn more about how the writing program is being assessed. She will be preparing the year 7 accreditation report in one year.
* The Writing Committee was informed of the possibility that UM could become an [Interstate passport](https://umt.box.com/s/a98x0slnm03t3d53cibps0z4f060fp3h) institution at the 2/27/23 meeting. This would require UM to map general education learning outcomes, including writing, to the Interstate Passport learning outcomes in order to identify the courses or experiences at UM that would be included in the block transfer program.
* The guests invited to the March 27th meeting noted that faculty are also curious how to respond to students’ use of ChatGPT. The Committee was informed that the Writing Center is planning to offer an event by the end of the semester. Anecdotally students are using ChatGPT when they perceive instructors are not reading their work. One suggestion is to require students to provide ungraded reflective work that explains how they incorporated ChatGPT into their work. What is their thinking behind the writing? Using AI should not automatically be linked to cheating.
* The Writing Center hosted a ChatGPT @ UM conversation on Tuesday, May 9th

Writing Symposium and UPWA Workshop

* The UPWA symposium on Introductions, Conclusions and Transitions was held November 4th at noon. There were 11 attendees including several from Career Services. The conversation was constructive and Amy received positive feedback.
* The UPWA Workshop was held on Friday, March 31st from 9a.m. -2:00 p.m. Approximately 17 readers scored close to 100 essays. There was good discussion about what faculty prioritize when assessing writing. A few ChatGPT essays were included. These had perfect mechanics but were mostly rated as a 2. The Writing Center paid for an assistant to help with document preparation.