

DATE: October 7, 2024

TO: Jeff Bentley, Chair
Curriculum and Educational Policies Council

Neil Hultgren, Chair
Academic Senate

FROM: Lori Brown, Chair 2023-2024
Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Committee

SUBJECT: GWAR Committee Report for 2023-2024
The Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) Committee convened on September 15, 2023 and elected the following committee officers:

Lori Brown, Chair
Loretta Ramirez, Vice Chair
Alexandra Wilkinson, Secretary

The committee met on the first and third Fridays of each month from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

GWAR Committee Membership

The following individuals served on the GWAR committee during the 2023-2024 school year:

- Eve Baker (Assistant Director, Testing & Evaluation Services)
- Nicollette Brant (Library)
- Lori Brown (GWAR Coordinator)
- Navdeep Dhillon (Engineering)
- Tom Do (English, sub for Matuchniak, Director, University Writing Center)
- Meghan Griffith (Enrollment Services)
- Lorenzo Gutierrez-Jarquin (Academic Advising Council)
- Savenaz Hatami (Linguistics)
- Kerry Johnson (AVP Undergraduate Studies)
- Henry O'Lawrence (CEPC, Health Care Administration)
- Benjamin Perlman (Biological Sciences)
- Loretta Ramirez (Chicano Latino Studies)
- Deepti Singh (Information Systems)
- Katherin Toscano (Student Member, ASI)
- Alexandra Wilkinson (Family & Consumer Sciences)

The major activities of the GWAR Committee will be summarized in the following sections.

CSU and CSULB GVAR Policy New CSULB Writing and GVARC Policy Proposal Process

GVAR Proficiency Exam (GPE)

Testing offered the exam six times both in-person and online throughout 2023-2024. A GPE just for seniors needing to graduate in spring 2023 was conducted in December.

The GVAR Coordinator continued to work with Testing and Evaluation Services and Enrollment Services on planning, implementation, and communications regarding the GPE.

GVAR Advisors assisted students with planning and scheduling the GPE through both Email communications and in-person meetings. GVAR Advisors and Coordinator reviewed student cases and referred to the GVARC when appropriate.

Committee Time Devoted to Future of GVAR and GPE:

The following GVARC meeting minutes reflect specific committee activities directed on future of the GVAR and GPE:

- **September 15** - Discussion of online modules in GVAR policy proposal
- **October 6** – Discussion and analysis of GVAR Coordinator’s report on meeting with CEPC and the questions and concerns they have. Committee responds to the CEPC concerns for Coordinator to take back to the counsel. GVAR Proficiency Exam Advisory Council (GPEAC) has been reestablished and is creating prompts for the GPE.
- **October 20** – GVAR Coordinator reported on additional meetings regarding the GPE proposal. Brown notes that she has met with members of CEPC along with various people on campus for feedback and to answer questions. Generally, the feedback and questions have been more of the same concepts the committee has discussed for two years. However, Brown and many committee members believe many of the concerns are mitigated within the proposal to the policy if they are not addressed in the actual draft policy. More people across campus are reviewing the draft policy, and this has been helpful in catching potential issues. Specific policy proposal feedback was discussed in depth. Committee leadership drafted a letter to CSUB Administration urging for support of funding for the draft proposal and policy. Brown also notes that Jody Cormack (Vice Provost) has asked the University Resources Committee (URC) to develop specific policy costs. URC will analyze the money needed before CEPC can vote on the policy. This policy is currently on hold until specific costs can be presented (per CEPC).
- **November 3** - Brown notes that Griswold and Klink (English) have been invited to discuss concerns about the draft proposal. Griswold has extensive experience with GVAR and has previously served as chair for the committee and assisted with the GVAR Summer workgroup. Griswold was also a part of the

implementation of the current GEAR policy and writing-intensive courses. The committee engaged in discussions regarding the policy proposal from GEARC sitting in CEPC. Klink and Griswold share that funding for the implementation of the plan is critical. The policy proposal and its underpinnings are discussed. Writing instruction overall in high school to college is discussed. Klink and Griswold will support the GEAR proposal if there can be no GPE.

- **December 1** – Policy is stalled in CEPC pending URC feedback. GEARC discussed class size concerns for WI courses and began work on Charter discussed with Griswold in previous meeting.
- **December 15** – Check in with representatives on the feedback they have received from their respective departments regarding the GEAR Policy proposal. CEPC still stalled on the policy review. Chair Brown shared the PowerPoint presentation created for meetings with Deans, Associate Deans, Faculty Councils across campus. The presentation goes over general aspects of the proposal, why the policy is being changed, the impact on colleges and departments, and common concerns. Mission, Assessment, and Budget drafts of a Charter for the proposal were reviewed and discussed.
- **February 2** – Review of feedback from colleges on the policy proposal from committee members. Not a lot of feedback. CEPC still stalled on GEAR policy review.
- **February 16** – Discussion of feedback from the GEAR Coordinator’s presentation to the Provost’s Council on February 14. The presentation went well. Potential compromises and alternatives were discussed regarding some concerns shared at the presentation. Views of the committee on key issues were discussed for preparation of future presentations.
- **March 1** – Information shared and discussion surrounding the GE Policy changes likely coming, CAL GETC, and the impacts these changes could have on the GEAR Policy proposal. Key to the discussion is the proposed second undergrad W course that, if CALGETC is adopted, would be a critical thinking and writing course.
- **March 15** – Report from CEPC meeting reviewing the GEAR Policy proposal. CEPC cannot approve any policy without allocated resources. CEPC has tabled the policy from all further discussion until the URC returns with the costs and resources required to implement the policy.
- **April 21**– GE Chair shared about changes GEGC is working on and the connection to the GEAR Policy proposal.
- **May 3** – GEARC reviewed progress made in CEPC on the proposed policy and addressed concerns being raised in CEPC. Compromises and adjustments that most of the GEARC could support were discussed and agreed upon. The GEAR Coordinator will continue to support these positions in CEPC meetings when invited or asked.

Writing Intensive Course Reviews and Approvals

As directed by Academic Senate procedural memo of July 2020, the GWARC continued to review Writing Intensive (WI) course submissions for the campus.

The GWARC Chair prepared a Writing Intensive submission and review calendar for the academic year. This calendar schedule coincided with the CEPC schedule for WI course approvals. The following courses were reviewed first by the GWARC ad hoc subcommittee and later presented for full review by the GWARC:

- **CHLS 412/A, 512A** *Centralizing Latinx Narratives: Seminar in Writing Self—Autoethnography* – Reviewed and approved November 17, 2023

GWAR Coordinator's Report

The GWAR Coordinator regularly reported to the committee. The GWAR Coordinator served as a liaison between the GWARC and the campus administration, Enrollment Services, Testing and Evaluation, Academic Technology Services and other groups involved with GWAR review and the COVID response.

- The GWAR Coordinator presented **special circumstances waiver requests** to the committee for review and decisions.
- Number of Petitions for Special Circumstances reviewed by full GWARC in 2023/2024 was 10.
- The GWAR Coordinator collaborated with GWAR advisors in response to student questions, concerns, or requests regarding GWAR procedures or requirements throughout the academic year and summer.
- The GWAR Coordinator supervised GWAR advisors in their work with student advising, researching student exception to policy requests, transfer requests, and mass communication with Enrollment Services and Testing.
- The GWAR Coordinator projected portfolio course sections needed to open per semester after tracking of students who will need to take one based upon GPE score.
- The GWAR Coordinator supervised instructors of ~45 sections of GWAR portfolio courses, providing policy, instructions, administrative support, and curricular guidance in fall 2023 and spring 2024.
- Coordinator Brown announced a special opportunity GPE that was given over the winter break in collaboration with GWAR, Testing, and ATS. This exam was for students identified in need of the GPE to graduate in spring 2024.
- The GWAR Coordinator reported the GWARC policy proposal and policy draft have been taken up by CEPC. The Coordinator represented GWARC and reported on each CEPC meeting at which the GWARC Policy was addressed.

- The GVAR Coordinator presented the GVAR Policy proposal to the Provost's Council on February 14, 2024, and led a Q & A.
- The GVAR Coordinator met with Associate Deans of Engineering and College of the Arts to present the GVAR Policy Proposal and discuss its fit with these colleges.
- The GVAR Coordinator presented to the Faculty Councils for College of Liberal Arts and the College of Business regarding the GVAR Policy proposal and led Q & A.
- The GVAR Coordinator presented to the Dean, Associate Dean and college representatives to CEPC and Senate and took questions regarding the GVAR Policy proposal.
- The GVAR Coordinator met with the 2022-2023 Chair of CEPC and CLA representative to CEPC, and the AVP of Undergraduate Studies to review and address feedback from CLA.
- The GVAR Coordinator met with and/or discussed the GVAR Policy proposal with additional faculty members and academic advisors when requested.
- The GVAR Coordinator reviewed and edited 23 GPE writing prompts in cooperation with the Testing Department for 6 GPE testing dates during the academic year and summer 2024.

GPE Advisory Committee Chair's Report

The GPE Advisory Committee that typically presents data on the GPE as part of that committee's efforts to monitor the reliability and validity of the test was repopulated for 2023-2024 after several years of no Senate population of the committee. The GPEAC continued with their charge of the creation of writing prompts for the GPE. The direction of this committee could change dependent upon the outcomes of the GVAR Writing Across the Curriculum Policy Proposal with campus governing bodies.