FYS Faculty Meeting - Minutes

Thursday, September 11, 2014 at 8:15 am in Drinko Library 138

**Present:** Jennifer Sias, Mary Welch, Anna Mummert, Chris Ingersoll, Ben Miller, Solen Dikener, Sherri Smith, Karen McComas, Bill Price, Kevin Law, Jamey Halleck, Mindy Allenger, Richard Garnett, Allyson Goodman, Kay Lawson, Allan Horiwitz, Andrew Gooding, and Susan Thomas Frank.

The meeting began at 8:15 am with coffee and tea provided by Academic Affairs.

Today’s agenda and the minutes of the meeting on April 23, 2014 were distributed.

**Old Business/Announcements**

* **FYS Exam** – The FYS Exam will be administered via MUOnline starting this fall 2014 semester. The 2014 FYS Summer Workgroup updated existing exam scenarios and created new ones, which they presented at the iPed Conference in August. Information about the exam is available here: <http://www.marshall.edu/fys/first-year-seminar/faculty/fys-final-exam/>. Jennifer will offer FYS Exam workshops in November for those who were unable to attend the iPed presentation or who want a refresher about the process closer to final exam time.
* **FYS website** – FYS now has a website: [www.marshall.edu/fys](http://www.marshall.edu/fys) this site will be the central place to post course-related information and materials as it is more accessible than SharePoint and MUOnline. Jennifer will investigate the possibility of having a secure part of the site for materials currently in the FYS Hub that only FYS faculty can access (such as practice exams).
* **Spring 2015 FYS sections** – look for an email in the next few days asking for your preferred days and times to teach FYS in the spring.
* **TECI Room Availability** – Sherri consulted with Sonja Cantrell in the Registrar’s Office and Jan Fox in IT to gather information about classroom availability and trends so that we can have a better sense of when TECI rooms are most in demand. She distributed a chart showing peak usage times based on classrooms accommodating 21-40 students and 41-60 students (see attached). (FYS is capped at 22, so in general rooms accommodating 21-40 are scheduled.) Some of the busiest times for classes on the Huntington campus include TR 930-1045, 11-1215, 1230-145 and 2-315. FYS instructors can use this information as they determine when they prefer to schedule their sections and whether they prefer a TECI room. As the data show, one is more likely to get a TECI room for an FYS section 8-915 TR as opposed to later in the day. Instructors may still request a TECI room, and Jennifer will communicate that to the Registrar. However, please be aware that instructors who opt to teach at peak times may not get a TECI room. Instructors may also make use of the iPads they were given. Although we realize this is not ideal, this option does give an instructor one form of technology and connectivity in the classroom. A limited number of projectors may be checked out from the Center for Teaching and Learning.
* **Classroom Activity Funds** – Academic Affairs has provided some funding for innovative classroom activities. Funding is intended for small class projects and activities ranging from $50-$200. FYS instructors may apply for funds here: <http://www.marshall.edu/fys/first-year-seminar/faculty/fys-faculty-classroom-activity-funds/> Deadline for fall funding is September 26.
* **FYS Survey –** FYS Instructor Kay Lawson will be conducting research related to FYS for her dissertation. You may receive an email from her asking for your participation.

**New Business**

* **FYS Textbook –** We are beginning our fourth year of teaching FYS. As with any class, it is good practice to revisit the required course text from time to time to determine if we need a change and what options we might want to consider. This kind of change takes time, so we need to begin this discussion now IF we would want to implement a change by fall 2015 at the earliest. FYS Instructor Mary Welch researched various options we may want to consider and presented some of her findings in the form of a Prezi (available on the FYS website here: <http://www.marshall.edu/fys/first-year-seminar/faculty/textbook-considerations/> ) Options include:
  + No change – continue to use the current custom text Critical Thinking in College (Remember that this custom text was developed under the domains FYS formerly used. Since then, the course has been aligned with five of Marshall University’s nine learning outcomes, so there may be a bit of a disconnect between the text and how we now approach FYS.)
  + New customized text - Create a new customized text – select different chapters and material that more closely align with the five learning outcomes of FYS
  + Use open source material
  + Articles and other materials via MULibraries Databases - Use library databases for articles and other material that align with the 5 learning outcomes
  + Instructor-authored chapters – We could work with Marshall University faculty, who could write chapters focused on the 5 learning outcomes along the lines of the chapter Sherri Smith wrote (Chapter 5: The Marshall Experience)
  + Other possibilities?

Jennifer asked for volunteers who would serve on a textbook subcommittee that would examine the possibilities more in depth and come back to the FYS faculty with their findings and a recommendation that the faculty could vote on. Andrew Gooding and Bill Price, who were present at the meeting, volunteered to serve on a subcommittee. Please let Jennifer know if you are interested in serving on the committee as well.

* **Publishing FYS Themes –** One of the recommendations of the 2013 FYS Summer Workgroup was to publish the themes of instructors’ FYS sections. (Not every FYS instructor teaches the course using a theme, and that approach is not mandated. However, many instructors have found a thematic approach based on the interdisciplinary foundation of FYS and the 5 designated learning outcomes to be a successful, enriching and gratifying way to teach the course.) Members of the 2013 Workgroup recommended that those themes be published when applicable. The FYS Advisory Committee also endorsed this idea. To make sure that publishing FYS themes where applicable is the will of the majority of FYS faculty, Jennifer will send an email soon to the faculty asking for them to vote.

Disband - The meeting concluded at 9:30 a.m.

Notes by Mary Welch