MINUTES
Academic Standards Committee Meeting
April 22, 2009

Attendees: Shane Drefcinski, Kevin Haertzen, Chris Schulenburg, Beth Frieders, Irfan Ul-Haq, Mary Rose Williams, Nancy Turner, Roxane Gunser, David Van Buren, Phil Sealy.

Guest: Dennis Ciesielski
Topic: Assessment of Freshman Writing Program

A copy of the Incentive Based Basic-Skills Assessment that was prepared in August 2005, was distributed. A grant has been received to perform another assessment activity this summer. Process for the assessment is as follows: 450 papers from the 123 class are chosen at random. Ten readers are hired to read 40 papers each. They evaluate in a holistic manner.

ASC’s recommendation is to norm the rating system in order to have some degree of inter-rater reliability.

Based on the 2005 results of the assessment activity, the Freshman Writing Assessment committee concluded that overall, students write at a low “C” average. The claim was made that we compare to most schools of our size.

Some general problems with teaching writing at UWP were discussed. These include: There are approximately 30 people teaching English composition, mostly adjuncts. These folks are practicing triage; they do not teach the fundamentals of grammar and syntax. They focus on trying to help students formulate thoughts and practice critical thinking. They are overloaded.

Ideally, we need a strong writing across the curriculum program. Also, we need a director of writing to work full time with the writing center and faculty.

Meeting Adjourned 5:01 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mary Rose Williams