Program in Writing and Rhetoric Strategic Plan, 2010-2015

The Program in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR) seeks foremost to offer Stony Brook University (SBU) students the highest-quality writing and rhetoric instruction. The PWR faculty is very well qualified for this task, and is eager to expand the scope of its excellent work. Achievement of these goals depends upon the administration undertaking a number of professional and curricular steps that will support SBU students in their undergraduate and graduate work, as well as in their professional education and employment, and that will empower the PWR to reach its full potential: institutionally, regionally, and nationally. The most significant of these steps are noted below as an outline for a five-year plan.

This outline was prepared by the PWR Strategic Plan Committee based upon input from the following sources: (1) an anonymous live survey of full-time faculty on 5 March 2010, (2) a Program meeting on 1 September 2010, (3) an anonymous online survey of full-time faculty from 1-15 September 2010, (4) the PWR Self-Study of May 2005, (5) a 15 September 2010 memo from Dr. Gene Hammond, Director of the PWR, (6) pedagogical, curricular, financial, and labor-related best practices in the field of Rhetoric and Composition undertaken by comparable research institutions, and (7) consultation of the Committee members during September 2010, including: Dr. Peter Khost (chair), Dr. Jennifer Albanese, Ryan Calvey, Dr. Jackie Corrigan, Dr. Cynthia Davidson, Ann Horbey, Dr. Robert Kaplan, Dr. Rita Nezami, and Barrie Stevens.

Changes in Professional Conditions

1) Salary increases, to be competitive with comparable institutions, regionally equitable, and commensurate with experience
2) More professional development resources, including better travel funding, and research and publishing support
3) Making our full-time lecturers on campus eligible for as many privileges and responsibilities (e.g. eligibility for grants and ability to serve on university committees) as are appropriate to their rank
4) Instituting senior lectureships for lecturers who qualify, including, in addition to 1-2 above (and with reference to the guidelines endorsed by the Arts & Sciences Senate Executive Committee and adopted by the Arts & Sciences Senate on 23 March 2009):
    a. Improved job stability (promoting longer contracts, academic freedom, better respect among colleagues of superior rank)
    b. Improved reappointment procedures (easing their frequency and burden)
    c. Leave time for professional development
5) Restoring the unfilled tenure-track positions of associate director and writing center director
6) Creating new tenure-track positions, such as a digital media director
7) Returning to at least 26 full-time lecturers
8) Minimum salary for part-time teachers of $5,000 per course

Changes at the Undergraduate Level

1) Establishing a writing minor, including:
    a. Expansion of WRT200 courses (Grammar) so that we can serve the true number of students who need this training either for their own writing or to become teachers of writing themselves
    b. Expansion of WRT301 courses (Advanced Disciplinary Writing), such as Technical Writing, Business Writing, Legal Writing, Writing about Sociology or Writing about Music (potentially cross-listed)
    c. Expansion of the range and number of WRT302 courses (Writing in the Humanities) for improve opportunities for Stony Brook students to get upper-level writing practice
    d. Expansion of WRT303 courses (The Personal Essay), currently serving too small a percentage of the Pre-Health student community
    e. New courses with particular emphasis on rhetoric, including non-traditional rhetoric, new media, and semiotics
    f. New creative writing courses (all genres, including creative nonfiction)
2) Increased PWR involvement across campus, including:
    a. Expansion of the roles and requirements for undergraduate writing instruction in the upper division, writing in the disciplines, writing across the disciplines, and writing in the first-year experience (learning communities)
    b. Influence on the standards for, and on the assessment of, the upper level writing requirement in every department in the University
    c. Writing-intensive courses in every major, renewing emphasis on critical and creative thinking using writing
3) Improved investment in training for Non-Native English Speakers (NNS) throughout their time at Stony Brook
4) Continued improvement of writing assessment procedures
5) Expanded usage of e-portfolios

Changes at the Graduate Level

1) Developing the Graduate Certificate Program in Composition Studies, including significantly increasing the number of enrolled students, and better advertisement and awareness of Rhetoric and Composition's comparatively favorable status in the job market
2) Increasing the number of cooperative courses we teach in writing, rhetoric, and grammar for graduate students across the University
3) Further involving TAs from across the campus in the graduate study of composition and rhetoric

Changes in Resources

1) More SINC sites for the PWR (reasonably accessible), or at least making available carts of notebook computers
2) Expanding the Writing Center, including more specialized and intense tutoring for NNS students, and better outreach to help students in all their courses across campus
3) Expanding our distance learning options
4) Improving and developing library skills instruction
5) Developing service learning opportunities

Changes in Community

1) Better communication with departments across campus, including interdisciplinary faculty development and discourse on writing, so that the whole faculty at Stony Brook understands the value of writing to their missions
2) Better communication with administrative offices, including academic advising
3) Providing editorial review for faculty across campus (e.g., writing grants and articles) and for students writing dissertations
4) Creating bridge programs to high school and middle school efforts on Long Island
5) Hosting more scholarly conferences, seminars, and guest speaker occasions
6) Participating in existing or potential across-the-disciplines communications initiatives