

FRESHMAN ENGLISH POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes

May 4, 1984

Attending: Ruszkiewicz, Daniell, Jarratt, Jolliffe, LeClercq,
McMurrey, Myers, Trachsel, Underwood

Absent: Simon, Westbrook

- I. Call to order at 2:05 p.m.
- II. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- III. Since David Hadley failed to submit a statement explaining how he intended to use the variant text he proposed at a previous meeting, we assumed he is withdrawing his request.
- IV. Discussion of Revised Grading Standards:
LeClercq opined that descriptive documents, i.e., those containing "unbound" terms, are meaningless. He believes that because of the subjective nature of judgments on what constitutes "interesting" or "informative" writing, the department cannot and should not adopt a set of standards to be used by all its instructors. Underwood concurred. Daniell offered that, based on her experience in the writing lab, such a document would be useful in making explicit expectations of students which are now implicit.

Myers noted that some sort of departmental grading statement would be useful in handling plagiarism cases, though he agreed that descriptive terms are troublesome and a vaguer statement than the one at hand might be more useful in forestalling debates over differences in judgments of good freshman writing.

Jolliffe observed that such a document would be useful if the department instituted an exit exam.

Ruszkiewicz was in favor of some sort of departmental statement.

Jolliffe suggested that, without standardized assignments, it may be impossible to escape complete subjectivity, in which case each instructor may be asked to submit his/her own grading standards along with the policy statement.

Myers recommended having each instructor submit what he/she considers to be an "A" and an "F" paper so that, in case of grade disputes, the department could compare the paper in question with those on file.

Jolliffe then submitted that the department could solve the grading standards problem by buying a new book to be out by next fall, Assessing Writers: Knowledge and Processes of Composing, authored by some obscure academics: Faigley, Cherry, Jolliffe, and Skinner.

A move to table consideration of the Revised Grading Standards until next fall, allowing for their use on a trial basis this summer and for examination of the Faigley, et al. book, passed unanimously.

V. Proposal to Use AI's in the Writing Lab:

Trachsel gave us a summary of a report she wishes to submit to Kruppa. Some of the arguments emphasized the value of AI teaching experience in working with students, and in handling administrative duties, and in developing and improving materials. Myers suggested some changes in rhetoric to aim the proposal more directly at the interests of the staffing committee, and we agreed unanimously that Trachsel should circulate the finished proposal to committee members on a protest/no protest basis. If it passes, she will send it in the form of a letter to Joe Kruppa with copies to the department chair and the chair of the TA/AI Committee.

VI. Adjournment

Submitted by
Susan Jarratt