

Minutes
English Department Faculty Meeting
Thursday, January 23, 2020
AC-221 3:30-5:15

In Attendance: Nils, Kara, Kyle, Sona, Jerry, Wade, Ryan, Diane, Sydney, Daniela, Michael, David, Tammy, Katie, Tracy, Jeremy, Brian, and Writing Center Tutor Jasmine. Thanks to Jeremy for these minutes!

Equity in the Classroom. There was a lively discussion about using “they” as a singular pronoun. Jerry asked, “Are we going to have a policy about using the singular pronoun ‘they’?” Katie reported that Meriam-Webster accepts “they” as a singular pronoun. Writing Center Tutor Jasmine added that the APA 7th edition says “they” is acceptable for the singular pronoun; MLA apparently does not. There was some skepticism the lowering of certain grammatical standards and the possible growing use of ungrammatical sentences such as, “They is.” After more discussion, Sydney suggested that we let our students know where we stand on this; she lets her students know that using the singular “they” is technically a grammatical error, but also that language is evolving.

A second equity issue was raised by Tracy, who shared a story about teaching Sherman Alexie’s “What You Pawn I Shall Redeem.” After Tracy told the class, in relation to a theme raised in the story, that diabetics shouldn’t drink, a student reminded her (privately, after class) that that’s not technically true. Tracy was appreciative that the student raised this issue to her.

The Case of the Disappearing Dean. There was yet another lively discussion about losing Dean Sam Lingrosso. Sydney, Katie, and others who attended the Academic Senate meeting on Tuesday, January 21, found President Sokenu very vague in his explanations of what happened to Dean Lingrosso; since this is “a personnel issue,” no one is allowed to discuss any details. Faculty also raised concerns about how so many deans leaving in recent years was being framed as a positive thing, suggesting that Moorpark College’s revolving door of deans was being thought of as a “training ground” for deans to leave for more important positions. Though Nils couldn’t be specific because of the confidentiality required of the BIT team, he suggested that Dean Lingrosso’s leaving may have involved a “clash of cultures.” Sydney said, “There’s no mentoring [for deans], and that’s part of the problem,” and Tracy added, “We were lucky to have Inajane as long as we did.” Carol Higashida has taken over the English hiring committee for spring, and Monica Garcia has taken over handling student complaints.

The Case of the Disappearing Chair. Jerry has volunteered to step in while Sydney is on sabbatical next year. Sydney will still be available via email and will still be making the schedules. She will send out next spring’s schedule request soon. Sydney will be taking a month to get a TOEFL certificate and teaching English in Thailand.

Question about Compressed Schedule. Katie raised a question about whether there was a chance our college would move from an eighteen- to a sixteen-week semester, but Sydney added that it wouldn’t happen for at least a year, if it happens at all.

Enrollment. Low enrollments caused a number of cuts to our schedule just before the semester started. Then a last-minute surge meant reinstating a couple of classes. There were part-timers whose entire assignment was cut. Sydney has the fall schedule ready to go and has left a lot of fall classes “unstaffed” to avoid similar unfortunate cuts for fall. Dean Lingrosso’s idea was to hide the online classes so students could not enroll and thus give on-ground classes a better chance to fill; however, the online classes were opened too late to allow them to fill over break. Since Dean Lingrosso’s departure, we will not hide online classes next semester. Students will be able to register for online or on-ground at the same time.

Writing Center.

- **English After-Hours:** Jasmine, our fabulous writing tutor, is one of the English After-Hours tutors. (Reminder: English After-Hours is drop-in tutoring workshops after English 1A classes; it takes place on Wednesday and Thursday at noon and 3:00 at the Writing Center). Jasmine was present at the meeting to ask faculty for suggestions in getting more student engagement and sending more students to the After-Hours tutoring sessions. She also asked for feedback on the proposed weekly topics. Topics included: The Writing Process and Reading Strategies (week 1), Reading Strategies for College Success (week 2), Thesis (week 3), Run-ons (week 4), Essay Structure (week 5), Fragments (week 6), Audience and Purpose (week 7), Commas (week 8), Academic Language (week 9), Using Sources (week 10), Research Papers (week 11), and MLA Format (week 12).
- There was some discussion about adding some topics that students need and possibly rearranging some of the timing for the topics. Jasmine said that they try to alternate between a grammar topic and a more theoretical topic. Katie suggested a session on integrating quotations. Daniela said that many of her students have only written two-page papers and suggested a session on development.
- Tracy reminds us that English After-Hours was designed directly in response to AB 705, and it's targeted to help C-or-below students. Tracy urges us to send our C students and not our B+ students; students can be required to attend as part of their homework.
- **Writing Center Handouts:** Jasmine also asked for faculty feedback on Writing Center handouts, which are being revised to be less text-heavy handouts and more visually appealing.
- **Upcoming Writing Center Event:** Love Letter Writing/Tutor and Faculty Social: Feb. 6 from 12-4.

The English M01A Co-Req Course. Engl M91AS, a one-hour noncredit course attached to selected sections of 1A, has successfully passed Curriculum Committee, and five sections will be scheduled for fall. The course is designed to support underprepared students (GPA 1.9 or below) who self-place in English M01A. Until the Self-Placement instrument can be amended to include this option, counselors will be asked to funnel students into those classes. The four faculty members teaching this course (Katie, Kara, Jeremy, Wade) will form a "Community of Practice" to discuss best practices; Sydney is seeking reimbursement for their professional development.

CLO Report from Fall 2019. Ryan reported that total faculty participation broke 80% for the first time. As we're nearing the end of our assessment cycle, Ryan reminded us that the campus will begin using new software, e-Lumen, in order to disaggregate results, and so faculty will have to enter their data by themselves. Oleg, the Dean of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, will be taking over, and will be policing those faculty who are not implementing their CLO data. Sydney thanked Ryan for having taking care of the CLO assessment for these last few years. She also notes that even with Oleg and e-Lumen running things, we will still be needing to interpret the data in order to improve teaching.

CHESS program with CLU. Daniela and Brian reported that the CHESS program is a grant through CLU to revise our syllabi to be more student-friendly. As a HSI grant, the CHESS program has ten faculty from Moorpark and ten from CLU, and they are committed to delivering an equity-based syllabus with equity-based curriculum in mind. It's a five-year project with one cohort per year; each cohort will share what they learned with colleagues and incoming cohorts.

Latinx-themed 1B. See Diane for discussing text choice in 1B. Diane will be using Lin Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights* for drama (film version coming soon!), Junot Diaz short stories, and *The Book of Unknown Americans* and *Across a Hundred Mountains* as novels.

FIG—Faculty Inquiry Group. Tracy reports that twenty-nine faculty across all disciplines have signed up for FIG. It's never too late! The next book discussion will take place on February 28 from 11:00 to 1:00. Faculty will be reading *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* by Elena Aguilar. If you're interested in joining the February or March meeting, please email Tracy.

Student Writing Awards. Sona reminds us that the deadline for submission is March 18 at noon. We are looking for any well-written essays from any discipline. Categories include narrative/expository, argumentative, literary analysis, and critical analysis. There will be \$250 scholarships for four students. Sona adds that there is always an abundance of literary analysis papers and a dearth of critical analysis of non-fiction texts.

Norming Session. Our next norming session will be during fall semester. Wade or Diane will collect English M01A research papers this semester, and Kyle will post them over the summer in our department Canvas shell. The reading/evaluation by faculty will occur online at the beginning of fall, and the follow-up discussion will occur at the September or October department meeting.

Reports:

OCOB. Diane has helped to organize three OCOB events for the spring semester. In February, Diane is hopeful that there will be a lecture by a CSUCI professor about entrepreneurship in the developing world (a key element in this year's OCOB selection Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*). In March, Diane will present a lecture/discussion on the British Victorian feminist Olive Schreiner, possibly with an assist from history faculty Susan Kinkella. Finally, there will be a shared student-faculty panel at Multicultural Day about the experiences of being a bi-racial student.

Library Update: Diane showed us the Library's new Interface. There's a new "Everything" search bar that looks more like Google. "It's pretty snazzy and I'm finding that I'm getting better results than with the previous searching," Diane says. The old search pathways are still accessible.

The library has \$30,000 to spend, so if you'd like to request books in your area or any other materials, please send requests to Danielle Kaprelian.

Christie said if you need supplies, please email her.

Transitions. Katie writes that the Los Cerritos Middle School College Taster Day will happen Friday, April 3.

Romeo & Juliet. After seeing rehearsals and working with the performers, Sydney says, "It's going to be great." Sydney is hoping for a sizeable faculty group (including Hart Schulz!) on Friday, March 20: Get your own tickets (discounted through the box office), and we will arrange an Italian dinner beforehand (to go with the Veronese theme).

California Political Primary Coming Up. David encourages us to raise some political awareness in our classes as the California political primary is just around the corner.

Black History Month Events: Tamara plugged upcoming events: David is going to be talking about Colson Whitehead February 20 at noon. Tamara will be screening *I Am Not Your Negro* with a thirty-minute Q/A afterwards, on February 5 in the CCR 10am-12pm. Julius is putting together a panel of Black

Identity and Leadership, with civic leaders from our surrounding communities who will be talking about their experiences.

Women's History Month. If you want to participate, please email Tamara. (She adds, "You do not need to be a woman to do something!")

Census: Get them in this weekend!

Next Meeting: Thursday, Feb 27, 3:30 – 5:00
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