The Core Review Committee met on November 28, 2006 in Kirby 108. Members/guests in attendance: Brian Whitman, chair; Agnes Cardoni, Susan Hritzak, Andrew Miller, Gina Morrison, Amy Patton, Marianne Rexer, Philip Simon, Ernie Trujillo, Diane Wenger, and Robert Tuttle.

Minutes: The minutes of Nov. 9, 2006 were approved.

New Business: Dr. Tuttle was present to discuss the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) proposals for Criminology, Sociology, and Political Science.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Criminology Program’s WAC proposal.

Discussion: Dr. Tuttle noted the department is pleased with the three semester capstone sequence; there is a new faculty member on board this year and the department is changing courses to include writing. Dr. Cardoni asked if there are writing opportunities beyond those geared to the capstone; Dr. Tuttle noted that criminology includes some focused writing, while sociology is more varied. The capstone is very flexible in the type of research project; depending on career focus, it may be quantitative or qualitative.

Dr. Whitman pointed out that it is hard to see where students are taught writing in the sociology sequence with the number of electives they can choose from. Dr. Cardoni suggested that some mid-point assessment on the 200 level would be useful—perhaps a portfolio.

Dr. Tuttle noted that more writing and assessment could be done if the class caps were lower, but it is hard to do with 50 students. Furthermore, it is difficult to expect adjunct faculty to teach a lot of writing in addition to their other responsibilities, given the small amount they are paid. He further pointed out that sociology is a very small major (currently there may be 5 majors); most students double major in sociology and criminology or psychology, and he is comfortable with the writing and assessment ongoing for criminology majors—indeed, the WAC proposal is more focused than the sociology proposal.

Dr. Rexer asked how the CRC committee can help the Sociology department with this issue; Dr. Tuttle indicated he is open to coming up with a way to include more writing and assess sociology majors at the 200 level. Dr. Cardoni suggested adding small writing assignments, exit tickets, etc. at 200 level; this might require capping courses or using a writing mentor (from writing center.)

The committee voted unanimously to approve the Criminology WAC proposal and turned the discussion specifically to the Sociology WAC proposal. Dr. Whitman identified two issues: how to make sure students are monitored through the process and the adjunct question.

Dr. Tuttle explained that a typical 200 level sociology course has 30 students; more than half of the courses are taught by adjuncts. Discussion followed on how to assess 200 level
courses, adding a 200 level methods course, whether assessment should follow course or student (via portfolio); the final recommendation was that the sociology proposal be revised to include more assessment and be brought back to the committee before the end of next semester.

It was moved and seconded to approve the political science program WAC proposal. There was no discussion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Morrison represented the Education Department in presenting their WAC proposal for approval; it was moved and seconded to approve the proposal. Dr. Morrison explained the department feels confident about student writing skills; they involved Dr. Cardoni early in the process and also had to look at writing in preparing for the Pa. Department of Education review. In addition, they expect all students to write (and all adjuncts and full time faculty to teach writing.) The proposal was approved unanimously.

Old Business: Dr. Wenger presented a plan to ask those departments that teach selected courses in the core (HST 101, FYF 101, ANT 101, EC 102, PS 111, PSY 111, SOC 101) to assist in selecting goals and objectives for multi-cultural/global awareness for their courses. John Hepp has volunteered to represent the history program. In addition to these courses, the Core Review Committee recommended that the performing arts, computer science, philosophy, communications, and English faculty also be invited to participate in this initiative. (Dr. Miller noted that there is not a lot of global awareness in these offerings.) The committee identified a list of faculty who will be invited to a future CRC meeting to discuss this issue.

Dr. Cardoni announced that there is now a link to WAC on the Wilkes Home Page; she also commented that there is a lack of awareness (interest?) on campus about WAC. She is willing to help those who ask for assistance, and she asked the committee for suggestions about to make this happen.

Because of conflicts, no meeting date was set for December.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Wenger