

BCCAT Creative Writing Committee

MINUTES

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL on ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS (BCCAT)

**University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
1866 Main Mall, Buchanan Building, 3rd Floor**

Thursday April 26, 2018

9:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

CHAIR: Leesa Dean

Recorder: Heather Miller

Welcome from Leesa Dean, Chair

1. 9:30 AM Call to Order

2. Introductions/welcome

In attendance:

Leesa Dean (Selkirk College)
Brook Houglum (Capilano University)
Roger Semmens (Langara)
Rob Budde (UNBC)
Kristine Kerins (Camosun College)
Meg Stainsby (BCCAT)
Judy LeBlanc (North Island College)

Graham Pearce (College of New Caledonia)
Elizabeth Bachinsky (Douglas College)
Corinna Chong (Okanagan College)
Billeh Nickerson (Kwantlen Polytechnic University)
John Vigna (UBC Vancouver)
Heather Miller (UBC Vancouver)
Michael V. Smith (UBC Okanagan)

Regrets: Nathan Dueck, COTR, Shane Book, UVIC, Vic Cavelli, Trinity Western

3. Approval of Agenda and Any Additional Items:

Proposed for discussion by Billeh Nickerson:

- Copyright Act Review
- Canada Council's new application process

Added to other business.

Agenda, as amended, approved.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes of the Articulation Committee 2017 meeting

Minutes approved.

5. Election of Chair for 2018-2019

Billeh Nickerson elected by acclamation.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes (if any)

Question re sharing Moodle learning rubrics; deferred to after learning outcomes discussion, time allowing.

7. BCCAT Report + 2017 Joint Annual Meeting

a. Copies of BCCAT Spring Update distributed. Meg Stainsby provided a summary of varied BCCAT research initiatives. Among recently or about to be completed research projects, which have or will have reports/resources available through BCCAT:

- Transferring: interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary courses and programs
- Phase One Indigenous Pathways – looking at barriers and access issues. Phase Two to be launched; this will be a qualitative study.
- Assessment of International credit
- Block transfer

Upcoming research:

- Cataloguing minimums – admission standards for students for whom English is not first language

Also – funding available for research re student mobility and transfer credit – if anyone is interested, would like to propose a study, etc, please follow up with Meg.

Publications and further information available through BCCAT website.

b. K-12 curriculum changes. Meg had advised Ministry of this meeting; as they were unable to send someone to address the issue, they shared talking points with her. Among those: Grade 10 curriculum to be revised and new curriculum ready to go by end of April; new revised curricula for Grades 11, 12 by fall of 2019. There will shortly be an implementation guide, along with summary and explanation of post-secondary responses to curriculum change – check BCCAT webpage Updates around questions related to literacy assessment will be available in the fall.

c. Re institutions not attending BCCAT committee meetings: BCCAT follows up with those institutions and addresses any gaps in representation. Meg also elaborated that many committees have institutional reports submitted to collective prior to meeting, and then use meeting time to explore other issues in depth.

d. Leesa Dean shared highlights from Joint Annual meeting. One was address of keynote speaker Thomas Carey who spoke on innovation, changing workplaces and technology. Also, the identification in All Chairs session of three points of interest and/or concern across all committees:

- Higher numbers of international students
- Indigenization
- K-12 curriculum changes

8. Associate Arts Degrees and transfer partnerships between institutions

a. Overview of existing partnerships

- Corinna and Michael spoke to block transfer, Okanagan to UBCO; greater matching of courses with changes made by Okanagan
- General concern around Creative Writing courses taught and homed within English departments being transferred as English credits rather than CRWR; Meg indicated that there is a subject code that allows for these to be treated as Creative Writing courses for transfer purposes, and that this is established by entering information on initial form for articulation. In response to question re rearticulation if changes made to course/department etc., Meg indicated that this was not automatic, form could be resent/resubmitted for articulation to capture this

b. Review of course outcomes for first year fiction classes:

Deferred to after item c. Immediately prior to lunch break, committee split into two groups, one considered potential 1st year and one 2nd year outcomes; after lunch break, larger group reconstituted and drafted suggested list of outcomes for both 1st and 2nd year fiction: these are included as Appendix A to minutes, as recorded by Michael.

ACTION:

After discussion, agreed that a smaller subgroup (chaired by Michael, with Kristine, John, Corinna and Graham) will work on refining and developing a list of common outcomes to be brought back; timeline (ideally) to have a draft completed by August 31 and then emailed to Google Group for committee members to read and comment. This group will also look at researching and incorporating skills based (i.e. skills wanted by employers) language.

c. Summary of news and information to be shared:

Corrina: first year Creative writing courses (Engl 116, 126) looking to switch multigenre (3 genre) focus across both to a 2 genre and 2 genre focus to better align with UBCO offerings.

Billeh: deleveraging upper levels; in first year, separating into craft and process focused courses, which students can take concurrently. Goal to see more students stream into 2nd year classes. Also mentioned books generously donated to Kwantlen by Kitty Lewis (Brick Books) and their value as a resource to share and give to students.

Brook: Capilano looking at increasing emphasis on skills such as editing, developing a publishing/technical emphasis for program. Actively looking at learning outcomes, in part to address North American accreditation for General Education. Also working to introduce closer reading, around contextual (historical) and cultural understanding.

John: addition of new course in videogame writing, expanding new media teaching, adding speculative fiction workshop.

Michael: varied cross-listed courses/teaching allowing fruitful learning around spoken word, indigenous poetics and also use of story for business/media. Some of these (eg spoken word) have grown out of Summer Intensive program offered through Department of Creative Studies.

Elizabeth: addition of courses in speculative fiction, memoir and songwriting. Also consideration of a writer on residence program in an aboriginal space, to pursue indigenization.

Roger: interest in developing curriculum around indigeneity following Truth and Reconciliation process outcomes; this has been done previously with pairing of course in English and Creative non-fiction to gather testimonies and story from holocaust survivors, interest now is in doing the same with residential school survivors.

Kristine: with availability of funding for indigenization, actively looking to develop creative writing courses around this.

12:30 Lunch

9. Classroom issues and practices

a. Rubrics and grading

General discussion around experience of students of colour, and indigenous students, in workshop based classes; instructors shared getting feedback after conclusion of class on these students feeling ethnocentric bias in what stories are “expected” to be told etc., and also objectionable remarks from other students in feedback. Billeh shared that Kwantlen is working in ongoing project, assisted by Mercedes Baines, around this. Michael asked re practices around reviewing student feedback to monitor – John and Roger indicated that they read all peer feedback, Kristine indicated that VLE allows all comments to be seen. John, Roger and Corrina indicated they give feedback on feedback – ie this is part of what students are graded on; John that feedback is underutilized part of experience of workshop classes and that when reviewed, and students given guidance/ideas on how to give valuable feedback, classroom experience becomes richer.

b. Brave spaces versus safe spaces

Lengthy discussion around techniques used by various instructors to create inclusive and safe spaces, and also to deal with triggered, or otherwise vulnerable students; included discussion around advisers and others sending students to creative arts to explore difficult issues, and need to establish with students a separation between self and object; particularly in creative non-fiction, memoir, aim is not therapeutic production but literary. Shared ideas included:

- Elizabeth begins each new class session with mini interview of student by other student asking what is your chosen name, pronoun, is there anything you want us to know/would like all of us to know about you today. Allows student to communicate on name/pronoun, and also share if they wish disabilities etc. She models by going first and introducing herself this way. Rob added that particularly where he is teaching, with many first nations students, in a large region, also includes a question around where are you from to allow them to locate themselves.
- Billeh uses students in class identifying themselves as available active listeners as a resource for students who will go with another student who is upset or unable to stay in room; make sit clear that this is not therapy, role is not to advise, counsel, just listen and be available to alert if situation demands it. He introduces classes by letting students know that he can't identify what may be triggering and can't guarantee a safe space but recognizes that emotions are felt in relation to topics/themes/work and allows for that.
- Some general concern around active listeners, need to now their boundaries, Leesa advised of a PowerPoint presentation on healthy Campus advising she can share
- Also discussion around dealing with students expressing extreme political, racist, religious or sexist opinions and ideas in their work.
- Roger shared an instance of when he felt he had handled this situation badly by calling out a student publicly and student had become somewhat isolated and targeted within the class for his point of view; now takes students aside and discusses with them individually how their expression may impede or shut down expression of other students. General consensus that conduct rather than harassment policies are useful for these situations, where speech is not aimed at a specific individual but may be objectionable or impede collaboration.
- John also warned of care needed when students are asked to take risks and explore ideas etc. but are then told "not that idea"; this connected also to whether it is a persona or character they are attempting to communicate rather than objectionable idea itself.

10. Presentation of Institutional Reports

Summary given of previously submitted written reports by each attendee. Leesa provided summary reading those of institutions (UVIC) not in attendance; all these are available as shared online documents.

Any Other Business**a. Copyright**

Billeh highlighted the importance of need to support Copyright Act, as education exemption only allows for personal use, but too many institutions exploiting this and authors/literary journals are not being paid for their work. He will be participating in May 11 public consultation on review of Fair Dealings provision and other provisions in Act, and urged others to also become involved.

b. Canada Council

Attendees shared their frustrating experiences of applying for Canada Council funding, and ongoing lack of clarity/certainty around what was expected from applicants, or might be funded; Brook described a successful application she had made, and Michael shared that the Writers Union was also a potential resource for funding.

11. Preparation for Next meeting:

Proposed and agreed date of June 12th for 2019 BCCAT Creative Writing meeting; this to coincide with holding of 2019 CCWWP conference in Vancouver, which is scheduled to open at the end of that week in June next year; UBC is happy to host meeting, and as a sponsor of the conference, will be actively looking for opportunities to work with BCCAT Creative Writing partners on possible collaborations for conference. Suggested that there be some cross-over with English Articulation committee, as many members serve on both, to try and align that meeting with this. Also suggested that first and second year poetry outcomes be discussed/aligned at next year's meeting.

Meeting adjourned 3:30pm.

*Appendix A.
First and Second Year learning Outcomes for Fiction: draft*

1st year:

- 1) Develop a process that involves generating, drafting, workshopping, revising and editing;
- 2) Use, recognize, and critique--both orally and in writing-- elements of literary craft;
- 3) Offer and receive constructive and respectful feedback using craft-based vocabulary of other students' texts as a peer-editor or in workshop discussions;
- 4) Read a variety of short stories and evaluate them from a writer's perspective;
- 5) Demonstrate your writing can:
 - a) develop vivid and believable characters using a variety of methods of characterization
 - b) analyze and manipulate point of view;
 - c) analyze and manipulate elements of a short story's structure (beginnings, division into scenes, dramatic progression, and endings).

2nd year:

- 1) Take a work through the process of conception, research, and revision, producing multiple drafts of said piece;
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to develop characters, plots, settings, and atmosphere that cohere around a unified theme(s);
- 3) Demonstrate the ability to alter narrative technique (i.e. dialogue, narration, action, etc) in a single work;
- 4) Demonstrate the ability to write in more than one fictional genre;
- 5) Demonstrate the ability to coherently analyze elements of craft in both their peers' and their own professional work;
- 6) Prepare a publishable work/piece for publication.